

JANET HART SYLVESTER
1917 - 1987

Janet Hart Sylvester, who died at the age of 70 on September 20, 1987 in Washington, was an original member of Friends Meeting of Washington. She became so in 1930 as the thirteen-year-old daughter of Hornell and Ella B. Hart. She was born July 10, 1917.

While much of her early life was spent elsewhere, Janet and her new husband, Harry Sylvester, settled in Washington in 1954 and soon became active in our Meeting.

Janet's interest in the Meeting, including service on committees, continued thereafter. However, her Quakerism, which ran very deep, found its greatest expression over the past three decades in the way she combined marriage, motherhood and career.

When Janet and Harry married in 1954, they brought together seven children from previous marriages. They created a united household and family in which the five younger children grew into well-formed adults. At the same time, while Harry pursued his own career, Janet served as a lawyer on the staff of the Federal Reserve Board. She became the first woman to head one of the Board's divisions, concerned with truth-in-lending consumer protections.

As one of her daughters remarked, Janet, when needed, was always there. Others, too, if their need was important, would find Janet there. In character she was gently firm, ready to listen, quick to understand, open to healing laughter. She developed an abiding faith. This sustained her in life and, facing death, it gave her a calm and glowing acceptance.

Janet is survived by her husband, Harry, by her children Barbara D. Wick, John B. Diebold, and Beatrice O. Hart, and by her stepchildren, John C. Sylvester, Anne R. Sylvester, Joan S. Wise, and Clare S. Strickler.