

## *The Life of Miriam Barber Judd*

Miriam was born in 1904 in India to missionary parents, who were working with the YMCA in Calcutta. The family traveled back to the United States in 1912 to settle in Montclair, New Jersey. Graduating from Montclair High School in 1921, she then attended Mount Holyoke College, graduating with the Class of 1925.

It is evident from Miriam's following activities that her parents instilled in her the importance of being of service to her fellow humans. After college, she went to work in New York City as Editor of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM) Bulletin. She held that position from 1926 to 1928. She then returned to India to teach English at Kodaikanal International School in Kodaikanal for two years.

While in college, she had briefly met Walter Judd through her work with SVM before he went to China as a medical missionary for six years. In 1930, she returned to New York City and her work for SVM, and studied for an MA in English at Columbia University. Walter also had returned and they became engaged on September 20, 1931. They were married in Montclair on March 13, 1932. They moved to Rochester, MN in April so that Walter could begin a fellowship at the Mayo Clinic.

The next two years were a picture of domestic tranquility. Miriam completed her Columbia Master's Degree and was commissioned by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in anticipation of their plans to serve in China. Their first child, Mary Lou, was born January 1, 1934.

The young family arrived in China in October, 1934. Walter went on to run the Mission Hospital in interior Fenchow, while Miriam and Mary Lou remained in Peking for language study. They joined Walter seven months later.

From 1935 to 1938, Miriam's life was impacted by world events more than she could have possibly imagined. Daughter Carolyn was born February 24, 1936. Two days later Communist aggression forced Miriam and daughters to evacuate for six months to Peking and the Pacific coast. In September they returned to Fenchow, but a year later, they fled invading Japanese and evacuated to Hong Kong – again, without Walter. They boarded a ship for the United States and by Thanksgiving arrived at her parents' home in Montclair.

Third daughter Eleanor was born on Valentine's Day in 1938, a small consolation for a young mother half a world away from her husband. Miriam had her hands full even after Walter arrived from China in August, 1938. He commenced two years of traveling and speaking throughout the U. S., focusing on the risk to the United States of Japan's militarism and China's civil war, while Miriam cared for the children and managed his correspondence and schedule from Montclair.

Early in 1941, the family moved to Minneapolis, where Walter practiced medicine and continued to speak, and Miriam managed the home, children, volunteered and did some speaking. While there, Miriam suffered the loss of premature twins. She reluctantly participated in Congressional election activities in the fall of 1942. They prepared to move to Washington when Walter won the election.

From 1943 to 1962 Miriam lived the life of a Congressman's wife in Washington D.C. She attended political events, participated in ten reelection campaigns in Minnesota, provided hospitality for many guests, traveled for conferences, and raised their daughters. She volunteered with the Red Cross, Congressional Wives Club, United Givers Fund, PTA, ran religious education programs in their Congregational Church, and served as a Trustee of Mount Holyoke College.

Wherever she was, Miriam was always active in YWCA programs, and was especially effective in leadership of the Washington YWCA Boards and the National Board. During the turbulent 1960s, she led the integration of three 'white' and two Negro YWCAs into The National Capitol Area YWCA. She continued other volunteering, travel, study and spiritual reflection. She supported many friends, and especially cared for her daughters and seven grandchildren, who were all out of town. She and Walter often reminisced by reading aloud their letters from the early years.

In 1988, they moved to a Life Care Community in suburban Maryland. Miriam suffered a stroke in 1991, and died on June 24, 1994, four months after Walter.