

## HOWARD E. QUIRK



He was a minister and a counselor; a raconteur and an entertainer; a story-teller and witty tour guide. Above all else, Howard E. Quirk (1924-1994) was passionate about people – the people whose futures he brightened as long-time executive director of The Victoria Foundation of Newark, New Jersey; the people whose eyes he opened during his famous “vertical tours” of St. John the Divine Cathedral; the people whose lives were touched by his association with Frost Valley. **In the five years before his death in 1994, Howard had become, as Halbe Brown once put it, “the heartbeat of Frost Valley.”** He worked full-time as a volunteer at Frost Valley’s office in Montclair. He directed our Endowment Fund, and served as liaison with the Tokyo-Frost Valley YMCA Partnership Program.

Before volunteering at Frost Valley, Howard had led The Victoria Foundation from 1968 to 1989. “In the world of foundation grant-making,” he once wrote, “there is no direct correlation between effort and success.” Still, he contended, we must try – and make the supreme effort. And try hard he did. By the time Howard retired from the foundation, Victoria was awarding \$10 million in grants each year. Howard’s leadership enabled the Foundation to sponsor projects such as Tri-City, North Ward Education & Cultural Center, Kids Corporation, Unified Vailsburg and PCCI (Protestant Community Center Inc.) – several of these programs quite familiar to Frost Valley people because through them, with Howard’s and his staff’s tireless help, we brought to summer camp children whose families could not afford the tuition but who desperately needed time away from the city. In a reflective note describing one grant request asking Victoria to fund support for victims of child abuse, Howard mused: “What is being done to explore and alter the forces that dehumanize society? Foundations are not under the same pressures as government to produce instant results. Why not, then, take advantage of this extraordinary latitude and invest time and substance in looking beyond and beneath the usual? We should be addressing all-encompassing issues.”

Howard Quirk passed away in October 1994, just as his Frost Valley voluntarism was really getting underway. His successor at Victoria was Cathy McFarland Harvey, now herself a long-time Frost Valley trustee. “Finding and hiring Cathy in 1971,” Howard once wrote, “and recommending her promotion in 1974 may well turn out to be my greatest single move with Victoria.” Though his death was untimely, Howard was able to make certain that his legacy and impact here would be strong and continuous, through his talented successors at the Foundation; through the very idea of high-level voluntarism at Frost Valley (which he inaugurated); through the extraordinary success of our various urban partnerships, enabling kids who would hardly otherwise have a chance to come to these mountains, to grow and to make friends; through his memorialization in 1998, in the naming of Quirk Lodge and of its meeting room, Victoria Hall; and, now, through the honoring of the late Howard E. Quirk, a generous and much-beloved man, with induction into the Frost Valley Hall of Fame.