

Marshall Rutherford Nason Passes Away in Albuquerque

NASON -- Marshall Rutherford, 86, a resident of Albuquerque for 57 years, succumbed to illness on April 19, 2004. Born in Manitoba, Canada in 1917 and a citizen of the United States, he served in the Signal Corps of the Army of the US during World War II. He is survived by his wife, Marilee Schmit Nason; a sister, Natane Nason Nutting of San Diego, California; a son, Marshall of Atlanta, Georgia; three grandchildren, Shelley, Bartram and Sienna Nason; and a daughter-in-law, Kathleen Nason. His former wife, Thelma, predeceased him in 1989. He received his early schooling in Chicago, Illinois and Berkeley and Oakland, California. Subsequently, he earned B.A. and M.A. Degrees at Louisiana State University and a Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago. The central focus of his professional life lay in university teaching and administration, largely at the University of New Mexico where he served for 35 years as a professor of Spanish and Latin American literature as well as director of the Latin American Center and its successor the Latin American Institute that he was largely instrumental in organizing. His later interests involved extensive travel experiences and periods of residence in Latin American countries where he was engaged both in academic pursuits and government service. In 1982 he was awarded the Regents Meritorious Service medal for his "significant contributions to the University's development into one of the nation's leading centers for Latin American Studies." He also established the Andean Study and Research Center at Quito, Ecuador, a facility that met the educational needs of more than 500 undergraduate and graduate students. He served on many federal commissions on educational policy and participated in a White House



Professor Marshall R. Nason

Picture courtesy of UNM

deliberative session on the Panama Canal question. He served as overseas program evaluator for the Fulbright Commission and Ford Foundation. Marshall Nason was called upon in 1960 to play a role in the early development of Peace Corps program and its operations in Latin America. During the early days of the Kennedy administration, he opted for field service rather than the Washington administrative hierarchy, undertaking program exploration in Venezuela and Chile, later assuming the directorship of the Peace Corps in Chile and the Southern Cone with residence in Santiago and exploratory travel in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Upon his return to the United States, Marshall Nason organized and directed, at the University of New Mexico, the Peace Corps' first year-round training center for Volunteers, through which passed hundreds of young men and women destined for assignment in Latin American republics. His last official duty for the Peace Corps, before returning to full time teaching, was to conduct a field evaluation of Peace Corps training among volunteers after six months of fieldwork abroad. The survey called for site visitations in Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil. Other activities on the

UNM campus involved the organization and/or direction of the State Department's Seminars on Higher Education in the Americas. This program brought together University Presidents and Deans from American republics for evaluative deliberations in Latin American capitals, at the National Science Foundation and at the Universities of New Mexico and Kansas. Additional campus functions include a decisive role in the creation of a Faculty Senate, chairmanship of the Faculty Committee on Human Rights in Central America, and Director of the Ibero-American Studies Ph.D. program. His publications include, in addition to articles and reviews published in Argentine and US journals, collaborative works such as *Charlar Repasando* with Thelma Campbell, *Bibliografía de Benito Lynch* with Horacio Jorge Becco, *"Radiografía de la universidad en las Americas"* with Pedro David, *Tres problemas universitarios* with Dinko Cvitanovic and Jaysuño Abramovich, and three chapters in Kern, et al. *Oligarchical Politics and the System of Caciquismo in the Luso-Hispanic World*, as well as some 30 professional papers presented in the US, Colombia, Spain, Chile and Argentina. Subsequent to his retirement in 1982, Marshall served as member and president of the Maxwell Museum Association, board member and chairperson of the Mayors Advisory Board to the Albuquerque Department of Senior Affairs, and as president and member of the Advisory Council, Highland Senior Center where he also taught a course in intermediate Spanish and served for 5 years as instructor in the AARP 55 Alive driving course for seniors. The Sunrise Cremation Society made the final arrangements. Neither funeral services nor a memorial service will be held. Friends are invited to pay home visits. If desired, contributions may be made to the Animal Humane Association of NM, 615 Virginia SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106, or the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, 3301 Menaul Blvd. NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107.

From the UNM Campus News, May 10, 2004:

Marshall Nason, who taught Spanish and Latin American literature at UNM for 35 years, died recently at 86 years of age. Nason helped establish, then served as first director of, the Latin American Center, which later became the Latin American and Iberian Institute.

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Nason participated in a White House session on the Panama Canal and served as overseas program evaluator for the Fulbright Commission.

In 1960, he was called upon to provide expertise in the early development of Peace Corps programs and operations for Latin America. He directed the Peace Corps in Chile and the Southern Cone while residing in Santiago and traveling in Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay. Nason directed and provided oversight of the State Department's Seminars on Higher Education in the Americas.

Friend and colleague Raymond MacCurdy had known Nason since 1937. "Marshall had an incredible ear for language. Colleagues said he was the only American they met who could pass as a native speaker in any Spanish speaking country," he said.

Contributions can be made to the Animal Humane Association or New Mexico Symphony Orchestra.