

## **Marvin London**

Died: November 30, 2011

Marv died unexpectedly on Wednesday, November 30, 2011, in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine, after suffering what was reportedly a massive heart attack. He was 72 years old. At the time of his death, he was supported by family and friends.

Marv grew up in New London, Connecticut, and went to New London High School, where he was in the National Honor Society, on the staff of the school newspaper and yearbook, and on the debating and track teams.

At Dartmouth, Marv majored in psychology and was a member of Tau Epsilon Phi fraternity. He was in the Jewish Life Council his first two years at the college and in the Film Society his fourth. He graduated cum laude and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa.

His obituary in the *Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram* on December 4, 2011, a few days after his death, reported that Marv:

“... received a Ph.D. in industrial [Ed. Note: Marv said it was experimental] psychology from Johns Hopkins University.

After employment at the CIA and Citibank, after living in Washington, D.C., and New York City, he made the decision to move to Portland; he embraced an independent and creative life.

It was a choice he never regretted. He designed beautiful and intricate stained glass pieces at London Stained Glass. He became an avid participant in Portland's cultural life, and he made many good friends.

Marvin served as a docent at the Portland Art Museum, welcomed visitors to his studio on First Fridays, and attended concerts and museum and gallery openings regularly. He participated in the Documenting Maine Jewry project and enjoyed classes at OLLI/USM [the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of the University of Southern Maine] .

He worked as an artist for over 25 years and then retired still sustained by the city's art, music and theatre. His intellect and enthusiasm for the arts will be missed by those who enjoyed his spirited personality and quirky sense of humor. His favorite author was Saul Bellow and his favorite music was classical string music especially the cello. He loved his Maine coon cat, Cello.”

Marv identified himself as a “craftsman” in his 1986 reflection for our 25<sup>th</sup> reunion yearbook, and said he was self-employed as the owner of a stained glass studio in Portland, Maine.

For his entries in both the 25<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> reunion yearbooks, Marv chose to express himself through a series of quotations, drawn from the likes of T. S. Eliot, Carl Jung, John Lennon, Albert Einstein, Hans Christian Andersen, Walt Whitman, Noam Chomsky, and others.

In each of the two reunion yearbook reflections, the last quote he offered from the string of notables was from someone he referred to only as “M. London.”

In 1986, Marv quoted “M. London” for the following wisdom: “Platitudes feed the illusions they create.”

In 2001, 15 years later, Marv offered another, slightly longer, catechism from the individual he identified as “M. London:”

“To say one has a choice or can make a choice, as if that awareness bears a causal relationship to what is ‘chosen,’ impresses me as errant nonsense, both psychologically and philosophically speaking. And that attitude has had for me the most profound implications, for how I experience my passage through life, indeed my very experience of who I am.”

Marv did not offer a reflection for our 50<sup>th</sup> reunion yearbook.

His obituary notes that he was an active member of First Parish Church, Unitarian Universalist in Portland. A few months before Marv’s death, the minister of the church, Rev. Henry Warren, spoke about people who are aging and have been helping the church. There’s a long list, he said, and he singled Marv out, who, he said, “after 70 years as a wandering Jew seeking clarity in Buddhism, has signed the book at First Parish and thrown himself into the life of the church.”

Marv had no children, and was survived by his dear friend, Nancy Bills of South Portland.