

Robert Dana Redington

Died: January 2, 1988

Bob died of heart-related problems on Saturday, January 2, 1988, shortly after his arrival at Rockville General Hospital where he had driven himself from his home in nearby Vernon, Connecticut, east of Hartford. He was 48 years old.

The Hartford Courant newspaper obituary days after his death provides an inspired description of Bob's achievements, calling him a "musician, organ builder, avant-garde potter and bonsai gardener, teacher and a promoter who was a highly visible and influential figure on the Hartford arts scene in the late '70s and early '80s."

Bob was a native Californian, growing up in Carpinteria, where he attended the Cate School. He graduated cum laude, was editor of the school newspaper, business manager of the yearbook, and on the tech crew in the theater. He played soccer and tennis.

At Dartmouth Bob majored in French, and was in both The Players and the Madrigal Singers all four years. Ever alert, our classmate Tom Conger reports that Bob played the organ in Rollins Chapel. "From California and reed thin," Tom writes, "Bob got cold even inside, thus wore gloves with the fingers cut off to try to keep his hands warm while he played."

After graduating from Dartmouth, Bob was on the faculty of the Wooster School in Danbury, Connecticut, where he was choirmaster and taught French. He also taught at an experimental, and no longer existing, school in Simsbury, Connecticut. He then served as director of performing arts for the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock for several years.

Beginning sometime in the 1970's, Bob assumed a leadership role in enriching the arts in Hartford. "The tall, long-haired, bald-crowned 'Bob' Redington brought numerous concerts to Hartford," says Bob's obituary.

Traveling musicians, classical musicians, jazz, bluegrass, and rock musicians, dancers, singers, and actors, all brought their talents to the community with Bob's help as impresario. The beneficiaries were not just audience members who bought tickets, but schoolchildren who often saw the performances for free. Much of his work in this connection was with an organization known as the Peace Train Foundation and TAPCO (the Traveling Artists and Performers Company). Bob left TAPCO in 1984.

From about 1984 until his death four years later, Bob worked for the New England Hobby Shop in Manchester, Connecticut, creating model train layouts and custom dollhouses for adults.