

The Fairfield Ledger

A tribute to Norman Zierold

By Jim Turner | Mar 22, 2018

To the editor:

Norman Zierold was a highly successful author, editor and businessman. He wrote many books on Hollywood, edited an autobiography of Anthony Quinn, and was managing editor of Theater Arts Magazine in New York City for many years.

He earned his BA degree from Harvard University and went on to complete graduate degrees at the University of Iowa and the Sorbonne in Paris. He studied French literature and was fluent in French, German and English. He watched the coronation of Queen Elizabeth with the President of France. He met almost anyone of note at sometime or other in NYC, LA, or somewhere in Europe with the notable exception of Mae West who he met in Chicago in 1945.

He was on the Today Show with Barbara Walters to discuss his bestselling book Little Charley Ross. He was ready to appear on Merv Griffin to do the same when President Kennedy was assassinated. He had a long chat with Charley Chaplin on a long distance call to Switzerland. Norman was a popular dinner companion and cocktail party guest in Manhattan for many years. He dined with Tennessee Williams at the Plaza Hotel during one Christmas holiday season.

Norman told all of these stories and more in his charming memoir “That Reminds Me.” I enjoyed the book so much I called it “another Norman conquest.”

But with all he accomplished - all the famous people he knew and met, and all the places he had been - Norman would not have placed any of this at the top of his life experiences. He valued what he learned from Maharishi Mahesh Yogi most of all. He learned Transcendental Meditation, became a teacher of TM and then devoted his life to making it possible for others to learn the technique. He spent many years living on the MUM campus - making friends, telling stories, and minding his own business. Very few people actually knew the whole story of his previous life and I believe he preferred it that way.

For anyone who knew Norman even for a short time, two things were immediately apparent: He was extremely intelligent and clever, and he knew this and did not feel a need to talk about it.

By the end of his life, March 7, 2018, Norman was still smart but he was wise, too, more noted by his friends for his wisdom than his intelligence and wit. He had the wisdom of his experience and it was most often expressed in his kindness to others. And that is how he will be remembered.