



HAL WARHEIM

In Memory of an Extraordinary Man 1931 – 2017

When Hal Warheim pondered his own mortality while crafting instructions in the event of his death, he wrote on a small monogrammed note:

“My little story stops. The Big Story goes on without me.”

But those who had the honor of knowing him personally know his life was anything but “little.” Hal was a force of nature, a big presence who lived a life of passion, adventure and devotion to social causes, intellectual pursuits, travel, the arts, community and neighborhood. His contributions to his community will be remembered for decades to come. He leaves behind a legacy of friends, generations of children he mentored, and a cadre of mournful neighbors who adored him.

Hal will be remembered by many for a multitude of reasons, but perhaps none more than his creation of Hal Warheim Park, a beautiful gem in Louisville’s Belknap Neighborhood. Overcoming many obstacles, he oversaw and funded the transformation of a steep, overgrown lot into a community treasure frequented by residents, walkers, people pushing baby strollers, and visitors from everywhere. The park is managed by the Warheim Park Association, a group of dedicated volunteers who oversee the care and improvements to the property.

Hal worked diligently for causes he felt strongly about, serving on the Board of Directors of the ACLU of KY and running for public office for 3rd ward alderman twice. He led demonstrations for the Committee for Open Housing and organized and coordinated Religious Leaders for Fairness, both activities leading to his arrest for participation. A prolific and gifted writer, Hal was a member of The Cherokee Roundtable writers’ group and author of a published collection of poetry, *A Bouquet of Thistles*.

Travel was a deep passion of Hal’s, as was evident in his knowledge and the collected artifacts that he accrued over his lifetime. He traveled in more than 40 countries, and climbed Mt. Rainier, Mt. Whitney and Mt. Kilimanjaro. He ran with the bulls eleven times in Pamplona, Spain and caravanned across China on the Silk Road.

Hal was born March 14, 1931 in Hanover, PA, the eldest son of Mervin M. and Irene Saltzgeber Warehime. He was predeceased by his parents and his brother Marlyn E. Warehime. He is survived by his brother, Frederick C. Warehime (Patricia) of Myrtle Beach, SC, nieces Robbin Babb (Matt) of Mechanicsburg, PA, and Wanda Jones of Spring Grove, PA, nephews Robert Warehime of Mesa, AZ and Kevin Warehime of Hanover, PA.

Hal graduated from Eichelberger High School in Hanover, PA in 1948 and continued his formal education at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, IL, receiving a B.A. in 1953. He earned a Bachelor of Divinity from Eden Theological Seminary in Webster Groves, MO in 1957. Impressive graduate studies followed at Washington University, St. Louis, MO; Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY; Columbia University, New York, NY; and Universität Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany. In 1978, Hal received a J. D. professional degree in law from the University of Louisville School of Law.

Hal’s incredible professional career was varied in both the field of work as well as locale. He served as a fraternal worker for the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, a preacher/pastor of churches in St. Louis MO, a researcher for the United Church of Christ, and field education supervisor and tutor at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. After moving to Louisville, he served as Professor of Christianity and Society at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, and was an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. He later became an attorney at law and was a member of the Kentucky Bar Association. He was a published author of numerous articles and sermons.

Hal donated his body to the University of Louisville’s School of Medicine with cremation to follow.

Memorial expressions may be directed to the Kentucky chapter of the ACLU or Warheim Park Association, P.O. Box 5561, Louisville, KY 40255-0561. A memorial to celebrate Hal’s life will be held at the park in October, Hal’s favorite time of the year. Those interested can check the park’s website for details: warheimpark.org.

Those who had the good fortune to meet him soon came to realize what a magnificent blessing his friendship could be. Also found among Hal’s instructions in the event of his death, was a quote he had jotted down from George Eastman:

“If a man has wealth, he has to make a choice. He can keep it together in a bunch and then leave it for others to administer after he is dead. Or he can get into action and have fun while he is still alive.”

Underneath he wrote: “Have some fun, Hal”

And if anyone ever did live life with generosity of spirit, passion and fun, it was the incomparable Hal Warheim. We will forever miss him.

To Hal, Prosit!