

A Note from Chris Price

A Note from Chris Price, a friend of Uncle Tom's. **Subject:** from Christine Price Dear Peggy, Thank you for your note and the efforts you made to contact me about Tom's death. I didn't receive any of them until I returned from Europe and by that time the memorial service was past. I'm not sure that my stories would have enhanced the service but I bet there were some really wonderful ones that I missed hearing. sent me an email with two photos of Tom which I am happy to have. As to your inquiry about a story, many moments came to my mind, but the most vivid of them was how Tom came to be at Esalen and stay for quite awhile. There had been an earthquake in Coalinga which had caused strong movements all the way to the coast and caused major landslides of the rain soaked cliffs. Big hunks of Highway One had fallen into the ocean and the road to the north was closed (for a year, as it turned out). At the beginning the road to the south was also closed with one twisting mountain road sometimes open to connect us to the outside world. The highway patrol had closed everything to any but emergency traffic and Esalen had sent everyone away unless they were long term residents. The place was questioning its survival as a business under the circumstances and the local authorities didn't want any casualties on the ever shifting road, so everything was CLOSED! in all respects. Yet, somehow, Tom managed to get past the police and past the rock slides and over the places where the road was less than a car wide and past the gate guard at Esalen and work his way around to being able to stay and wash dishes and live here when the place wasn't even open for business! Knowing that community as I do, this was quite a feat and he did it without creating any long lasting ripples as I remember. Then he went about being his funny, big hearted, sometimes sarcastic, often generous self. We often sat in group together and played many hands of bridge. We managed to stay in touch after our lives took us to different parts of the country and into very different life pursuits. In this past 2 years we had been back in touch again with some regularity and I am so happy to have had that renewed contact with him. Tom and I often talked about Buddhism. He knew that I study and practice and he had some interest in these practices. One of the traditions in Buddhism is to support the spirit of the deceased by actively remembering them in all the things they loved and that made them happy. It is also suggested that we some of their favorite activities with them in mind. The idea is a bit like giving that soul the energy it might need for it's next steps and that the best fuel for this transition is joy and love. So, just in case there's something to all of that, I am frequently remembering all the times I saw Tommy laughing and joking and playing around and all the things that delighted him and all the people who he loved and who touched him in his soft spots It's easy to remember because in my time with him, he laughed a lot! And I plan to play a few hands of bridge in his honor as soon as I can find a worthy foursome. Blessings to you, Chris Price