



## Timothy Jonathan Osburn

June 29, 1950 - August 6, 2014

Timothy Osburn, 64, a writer and force for the arts, and a long time resident of Central Illinois, died August 6, 2014. Tim was born in Wichita, Kansas in 1950 to Donald and Margaret Buckley Osburn. His siblings recall him as being a voracious reader with great curiosity about the world, with a flair for singing. He graduated Chaplain Kapaun Memorial High School where he explored his talents in theater and music and was cast in many school musicals. As a National Merit Scholar, he majored in English at St. Louis University, and it was here that he began pursuing his lifelong interest in poetry writing. In 1970, he married Becky McGovern, and their son Joel was born. Though the marriage did not last, Tim found that fatherhood suited him. Joel remembers well the visits to Tim's new home in Springfield, Illinois, watching countless Cubs games, playing countless card games, and being among the many smart people in Tim's ever evolving circles.

In Springfield Tim lived with Pat Smith and ran several writing groups and worked as an editor on a number of literary chapbooks and magazines. Over his more than thirty years in Springfield he came to know most of the writers and artists in town, and was a force in the arts scene and a repository of information about Illinois writers. His first group was the Scarritt Street Writers, a vibrant enclave of freewheeling poets with a base, in the later years, on Washington Street within sight of the tree from which the Donner Party departed. During this time he was an editor of the Sangamon Poets chapbook

series, and published *The Village Magazine* in honor of poet Vachel Lindsay. He also for a time attended what was then known as Sangamon State University, where he met many lifelong friends.

In 1979, Tim met his second wife, Becky Bradway. In their years together Becky and Tim organized Sangamon Writers, a workshop group that performed many readings, and ran a literary arts magazine, all from their Springfield bungalow. In 1986 Tim began working for the archaeology department at the Illinois State Museum, a job that he held for many years. In 1988 their daughter Paige Osburn was born. Tim was a devoted dad who liked domestic life, and Paige fondly recalls the hours she spent among the dinosaur bones and her dad's many songs. Tim and Becky eventually divorced in 1994, and Paige saw her dad often afterwards.

Over the course of Tim's many Springfield years, endless parties and dinners were held at which a then-chaining-smoking Tim would hold forth on subjects ranging from 60's music, Vachel Lindsay, Edgar Lee Masters, the Cubs, Democrats, the evils of academia, the in-depth mythologies of all friends and family past and present, the history of Oak Ridge Cemetery, the importance of Lincoln, why he was a lapsed Catholic, the beauty of a good steak with wine sauce, Illinois politics, theater, the arts, and what's really going on. Much liquor and laughter was exchanged by all, accompanied by never-ending musical entertainment.

In 1999 the next phase of Tim's life began when he married Kimberly Britton, and in 2003 their daughter, Piper Britton, was born. Tim devoted much of his time and energy to Kimb and Piper, to whom he was greatly attached. Tim and his family left Springfield and moved to Urbana in 2001, where the three of them lived until their deaths. Tim, Kimb, and Piper spent much time creating a harmonious home, cooking, tending a garden, and designing the house. Piper was a delightful and imaginative little girl with an inquisitive personality, much

like her dad. The three of them died as they lived, together.

Tim's survivors include his children Joel and Paige, his four siblings (Kathy Cowan, Gregory Osburn, David Osburn, and Dianne Bubnar), the Britton family, and a multitude of friends who were brought together by Tim's stories, his sense of humor, and his ability to throw endless celebrations.

A memorial celebration of Tim's life will be held on August 24 at 2 p.m. at Allerton Park. Allerton Park is located at 515 Old Timber Road, Monticello, Illinois. The family asks that donations be made to the Urbana School District #116, designated to the special needs program at Yankee Ridge - in memory of Piper Britton - in lieu of other expressions of sympathy. Please write checks to Urbana School District #116 Piper Britton fund.

Speakers are invited to share a story or poem about Tim, and celebrate the life of a true Illinois artist.

R.W. Patterson Funeral Homes, Ltd.  
401 E. Main St., Braidwood, IL 60408  
815-458-2336

# Previous Events

## Service

AUG **24**. 2:00 PM (CT)

Allerton Park  
515 Old Timber Road  
Monticello, IL 61856

# Tribute Wall

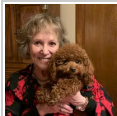
KC

“ As his older sister, I cherish memories of teaching Tim to sing harmony with me as we washed the nightly pile of dishes. These constituted our rehearsals for performances given for our family and friends. One of my Kodak memories is Tim, clad in striped robe and red socks, playing one of the three wise men in our Christmas skits. He never balked at climbing on my back as I played the donkey. When our visits dovetailed in Wichita I recall how dedicated he was a father to his children and always staying in touch as he promised with frequent phone calls. One of Tim's funny stories involved our father in his last year when we were all visiting and Tim was sitting at the dinner table, our dad beside him in a wheelchair, and Tim lavishing praises on his our dad's talent for fixing anything and growing great tomatoes. Daddy looked over at Tim and softly said, "Get a haircut."

Lovingly,  
Kathy Osburn Shephard

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kathy osburn cowan - August 15, 2014 at 01:03 PM



Beautifully written and so touching

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Janice Patten-Haeger - August 15, 2014 at 10:25 PM