

## FAQ 2

### 2.1

**Many readers have asked for more information regarding my mother, Dorothy Huston Hodel, or “Dorero”. “What was she like?” “Was she cruel and abusive?” “What were the “Gypsy years” like with her?”**

Unfortunately, much of the biographical description of my mother was edited out of my original manuscript due to space restraints. This gave a very soft focus of her as a woman and a mother.

Quite simply, she was the most remarkable woman I have ever known. Possessed of a powerful intellect with the soul of a poet, she loved Nature and all things of Beauty. When I think of my mother, I think of the song, *Vincent*, and the line, “This world was never meant for one as beautiful as you.” To me, mother was like, Rima, the other-worldly jungle-girl in Hudson’s romantic-novel, *Green Mansions*. A bird-woman, not really born or prepared for the harsh realities of, “civilization.”

Mother was born, Dorothy Jean Harvey, in New York (Central Park West), on April 15, 1906. Her parents moved west around 1913 and bought an orange grove, not far from Los Angeles, in Riverside, California. My grandparents then moved to Los Angeles where my mother attended high-school. Still a teenager, she met and fell in love with John Huston. In 1925 the two teenagers ran off to New York, married and lived in Greenwich Village. They then returned to Los Angeles, and both began writing screenplays for the Hollywood studios. Their marriage lasted seven years, from 1926 to 1933. An article in the *Los Angeles Times* dated August 19, 1933, announced their separation and Huston’s desire to seek a divorce from Dorothy on the following grounds:

“being extravagant, and of keeping him in debt continually. He also accuses her of making no effort to become a good housekeeper.”

In author Martha Harris’ biography, *Angelica Huston: The Lady and Her Legacy*, (St. Martin’s Press, N.Y. 1989) the following quote was attributed to John regarding his first wife, Dorothy. In my mother’s later years she made it clear that John was “her one true love”. If the below quote is accurate, apparently Huston’s feelings coincided with her own.

*Angelica Huston: The Lady and Her Legacy*, page 49:

Peter Viertel, a writer who worked with Huston on various projects over the years including *The African Queen*, wrote a novel titled *White Hunter, Black Heart* that is reputed to be a very thinly veiled portrait of John Huston. Not at all flattering, the novel shows a lot of warts that the Huston aura usually managed to conceal. But there is a paragraph in it that might serve as a kind of epitaph for John and Dorothy’s marriage:

“I knew I had lost the best dame I was ever likely to meet, and I’d lost her because I’d acted like a horse’s ass. And it turned out that way. I’d done something wrong and I had to pay for it, and so every time I fell in love again after that, I knew the disenchantment would ultimately turn up. And it did. Never failed. Because you get one chance at everything in life, and that’s all.”



Walter Huston greeting Dorothy & John at train station on their honeymoon to L.A.  
circa 1926

All his life he was fascinated by boxers. He also loved bull fighters even before he read Hemingway. He had a brief enthusiasm for six day bicycle racers, and even looked into dance marathons and flagpole sitters. But boxers were the best, he felt, that the race of man had produced.

The first time he tried to tell me about all this, <sup>he</sup> it was 19 years old. I was 19, too, and we were at ~~this~~ party where this shocking thing had just happened. I mean, it was shocking to me, but it left John in an exalted and unusually talkative mood. There was blood all over the floor and on some of the furniture; and my face was green and I was trying not to be sick.

"You're missing the whole point," John said. He pulled me to my feet and steered me to the front porch. With the sweet sick smell blown away and everything outdoors swinging slowly back in focus again, I said weakly, "I am?"

Mother's private "reminiscence" about John found in her papers after her death

Mother married my father, George Hill Hodel, in Sonora, Mexico in 1940. She bore him four sons, Michael, John (my twin, died two weeks after birth due to "failure to thrive") Steven and Kelvin. We lived in the Franklin House from 1945-1950. After dad left the country, mother though ill equipped and unprepared to be the sole breadwinner in the family, obtained secretarial type jobs in real estate and rental offices and would spend the next fifteen years, raising her three sons. Though alcoholic in the extreme, she managed to clothe and feed her sons, and instruct us in what was truly important in life. She taught us to be tolerant and compassionate of others, to fight against bigotry and prejudice, encouraged us to read books and to love the beauty of Nature and strive for what is Good. What more could any son ask from a mother?

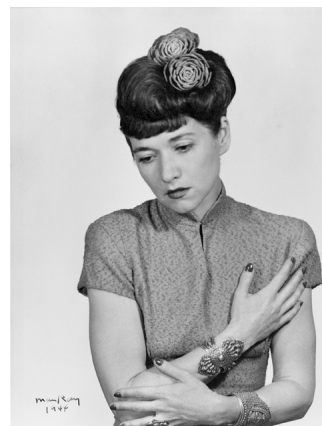
Dorothy Hodel with two sons, Steven (standing) and Kelvin newborn, Oct. 1942



Valentine Street Home, Hollywood, CA 1942



1946 photo taken by George Hodel



Man Ray photographs of Dorothy Hodel 1944

Here is a letter my mother sent me on my 33<sup>rd</sup> birthday, in 1974. Despite her life-long struggles with "Demon Rum" there was never ever any doubt, at any time, that she loved her three sons. See how beautifully she communicates it here, with poetic elegance.

Birthday 1974

Dearest Steven:

How does one write to a son one loves, admires, venerates so completely that the only thing that sums it up would be to say: I dreamed a perfect son and you turned out to be that son in every way- and even more? Words are tired things and through reiteration seem to lose force and meaning- Fortunately, the emotion behind the words does not. Perhaps I should devote my remaining years to creating a new language which would convey strong emotions freshly and effectively. Or perhaps like birds and animals we should go back to chirps and growls and grunts. Or perhaps- lovely thought! we could develop a coloration process, like some mating animals, so that looking at you and saying 'love' I should glow in a rainbow of colors. So, fortunately, since my pigmentation isn't up to it, see me now, in your mind's eye with a glowing purple beak, bright green hair and red blue and orange arranged in a gorgeous chromatic pattern saying 'Love' in a way as fresh and new as a rainbow.

Spectroscopically,

Mother

Birth Day 1974

Dearest Steven

How does one write to a son one loves, admires, venerates so completely that the only thing that sums it up would be to say: I dreamed a perfect son and you turned out to be that son in every way- and even more? Words are tired things and through reiteration seem to lose force and meaning- Fortunately the emotion behind the words does not. Perhaps I should devote my remaining years to creating a new language which would convey strong emotions freshly and effectively- Or perhaps like birds and animals we should go back to chirps and growls and grunts- Or perhaps- lovely thought! we could develop a coloration process, like some mating animals, so that looking at you and saying 'love' I should glow in a rainbow of colors- So, fortunately, since my pigmentation isn't up to it, see me now, in your mind's eye with a glowing purple beak, bright green hair and red blue and orange arranged in a gorgeous chromatic pattern saying 'Love' in a way as fresh and new as a rainbow. Spectroscopically

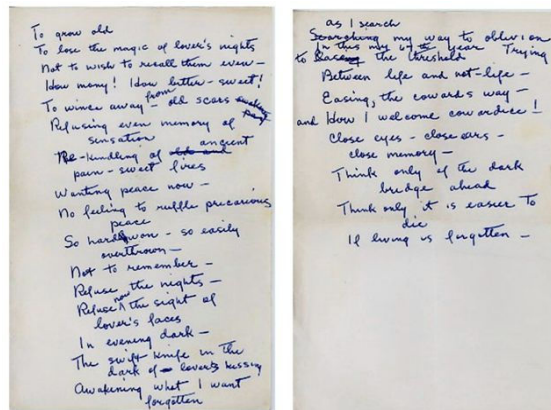
Mother

Dorothy Jean Hodel died in late March, 1982, just a few weeks before her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. I have no doubt that she KNEW that our father was a serial killer and was responsible for the murder of Elizabeth "Black Dahlia" Short. Ever protective of her three sons, she took the knowledge of this secret horror, with her to her grave. I suspect her heavy drinking was her own way to try and drown the knowledge of the many horrors that she hid and held inside. Can one really blame her? I say NO! (Note the sadness that is reflected in almost every photograph ever taken of her.)

Here is a private poem written by my mother sometime in her 67<sup>th</sup> year, some seven-years before she would find her wished for-- "oblivion". It was found by me, after her death, hidden away in her papers. I pray she now-- Rests In Peace.

To grow old  
 To lose the magic of lover's nights  
 Not to wish to recall them even-  
 How many! How bitter sweet!  
 To wince away from old scars  
 Refusing even memory of sensation  
 Re-kindling of ancient pain-sweet fires  
 Wanting peace now -  
 No feeling to ruffle precarious peace  
 So hard won- so easily overthrown  
 Not to remember-  
 Refuse the nights-  
 Refuse now the sight of lover's faces  
 In evening dark-  
 The swift knife in the dark of lover's kissing  
 Awakening what I want forgotten  
 As I search my way to oblivion  
 In this my 67<sup>th</sup> year  
 Trying to ease the threshold  
 Between life and not-life  
 Easing, the coward's way-  
 And How I welcome cowardice!  
 Close eyes-close ears-close memory-  
 Think only of the dark bridge ahead  
 Think only it is easier to die  
 If living is forgotten-

Dorothy Jean Hodel- 1975



March, 1982- Los Angeles

At her request, our mother's body was cremated and her ashes recycled back to Nature. (Buried under a flowering Japanese Magnolia tree) A small group of close friends and loved ones attended the "service" and her three sons: Michael, Steven and Kelvin each delivered a few words in eulogy to their mother. In remembering this most remarkable woman, I had this to say:

DEAREST MOTHER:

EULOGIES FOR THE MOST PART ARE WELL INTENDED DISTORTIONS WHICH GLORIFY A PART WHILE IGNORING THE WHOLENESS OF OUR EXISTENCE.

EACH OF US HERE PRESENT POSSESS OUR INDIVIDUAL AND PRIVATE THOUGHTS WHICH COMPRISE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT YOU WERE IN LIFE. THIS IS PRIVATE AND PERSONAL AND SHOULD REMAIN SO.

WHAT CAN BE RECOGNIZED AND SHARED ARE THE INFLUENCES WHICH YOU GAVE TO YOUR SONS AND FRIENDS.

INDEPENDENCE, ORIGINALITY, AND ROMANTIC INTELLECTUALISM PERVADED YOUR LIFE AND WERE YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.

WHITMAN, JOYCE, RACHMANINOFF—ALWAYS THE THINKER-OUTSIDE, THE LOVER-INSIDE. (EXCEPT WHEN YOU REVERSED THE TWO.)

YOUR LOVE OF NATURE WAS MOST PRONOUNCED. YOU LIVED LIFE PASSIONATELY AND POETICALLY. YOU SAW AND LOOKED FOR THE NATURAL BEAUTY IN MAN AND HIS UNIVERSE. LIFE WAS A DANCE, A POEM, A SONNET OF THE SEXES—A MATING RITE BETWEEN PAIN AND PLEASURE, GOOD AND EVIL.

YOU WERE NEVER RELIGIOUS IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE, BUT EVER CONSCIOUS OF THE PERFECT ORDER HIDDEN IN ROCK, RIVER, STAR AND FLOWER. THESE WERE YOUR ANGELS AND YOUR HEAVEN.

YOUR STATED WISH, AT YOUR PASSING WAS THAT WE WHO LOVE YOU, REUNITE YOUR ELEMENTS WITH THOSE OF NATURE.

THAT YOU MAY CONTINUE TO ADD BEAUTY AND BE OF INFLUENCE TO OTHERS, LET THIS TREE, A JAPANESE MAGNOLIA WHICH BEARS FLOWERS ANNUALLY, BE A SYMBOL OF YOUR IMMORTALITY.

YOUR LIFE SHALL CONTINUE THROUGH THE FORM AND FLOWERING OF THIS TREE. MAY THE LIFE YOU GAVE US BE RETURNED TO YOU THROUGH THE SAP, TRUNK, BRANCHES, LEAVES, AND BLOSSOMS OF THIS TREE.

## 2.2

**Q: What are your thoughts on where the Dahlia murder occurred? You suggest the “Franklin House”. Wouldn’t the family residence have been the last place your father would have taken her?**

New factual information and forensic evidence, will be presented in the next printing of BDA (July 2006) in a new chapter, which increases the likelihood that the crime did occur at the Franklin House. Most probably in the Master bathroom. (Below photographs show it as it appeared in 1947.) We now know from interviews documented in the District Attorney’s DAHLIA/HODEL FILES that my mother and we three sons were temporarily living with her brother (my uncle) at a separate residence in Los Angeles in January, 1947. No “roomers” had yet moved into the Franklin House (1948), so father would have had the house-- all to himself.

**Franklin House Master bathroom as it appeared in 1947**



## 2.3

**Q: I know you claim your father is listed as a suspect in the secret D.A. Files, but can you show us an actual document from the file that would confirm what you claim?**

Yes, and more. I can show you a D.A. investigative document that actually puts him at the top of the list-- as the prime-suspect some three months BEFORE the D.A. began the bugging of our home and physical surveillance of both my parents. The below document is from page 3 of a report written by Lt. Jemison in December, 1949. Let’s follow HIS MATH as accounted by him on this page:

50 individuals need to be “interviewed.”  
 25 individuals need to be “re-interviewed.”  
 Total Dahlia suspects to date= 316



Total Dahlia suspects arrested to date=50  
 Total Dahlia suspects "definitely eliminated" to date=209  
 Total Dahlia suspects that "confessed" to crime=19  
 Total Dahlia suspects remaining to date=107

Lt. Jemison then reduces the above 107 down to 5 prime-suspects, and writes, "After examination of the files and evidence it appears that the investigative effort should be continued and concentrated on the following suspects:

Leslie Dillon—Mark Hanson —Carl Balsiger—Glen Wolfe – Henry Hubert Hoffman—Dr. George Hodel—"

Why do I position George Hodel as the prime-suspect of these five? Because as of December, 1949, of these five prime suspects the only one possessed with the prerequisite knowledge and skill to perform the surgical bisection (hemisectomy) on the victim, Elizabeth Short, was-

### George Hill Hodel M.D.

LAPD and the D.A. investigators clearly suspect a trained physician committed the murder. All of this information was well in advance of the 1950 surveillance and bugging, which resulted in George Hodel's tape-recorded admissions to his commission of the Black Dahlia murder, the overdosing of his secretary, Ruth Spaulding, and payoffs to law enforcement and his late night \$1,000 payoff to abortionist Charles Smith at the Franklin House. (NB: Some articles and recent book publications have printed Dahlia related D.A. documents that have been edited and altered to fit the writers separate theories. One in particular has gone so far as to actually remove "Dr. George Hodel" from the prime-suspect list below. All police documents posted on my website will be shown as they appeared in the original files)

Lt. Jemison Investigative report page 3  
 (unaltered)

-3-

had been indexed for filing. It is now estimated that these reports will be indexed and filed by Thursday morning, November 3, 1949. These records and reports deal primarily with the investigation of suspect Dillon. It was further found that there were approximately two thousand two hundred documents being records, reports and statements and correspondence of the Homicide Division which had been filed in order and indexed. However, due to the fact that the Homicide Division and Sgt. P. A. Brown could not secure the assistance of any stenographers and filing clerks, no indexing or filing had been done on these documents since December, 1948. These documents number approximately five hundred and twenty eight and have yet to be indexed and filed. It is estimated by Sally Scott, a file clerk, that it would take approximately six more weeks to complete the work on these five hundred and twenty eight documents.

On October 26, 1949 Chief of Police William A. Worton assigned two stenographers to assist this file clerk in indexing. It seems that hundreds of police officers have worked on this case and as a result some of these officers did not bring to a conclusion some of the loose ends of their investigations. There has been a tremendous amount of investigation work done on this case as reflected by the officers reports, statements and correspondence. Captain Harry Elliott in charge of the Homicide Division stated that there has been more work done on this case than any other murder case in the history of the LAPD. Sgt. P. A. Brown and Sgt. Harry Hanson have done most of the work on this investigation having been assigned ever since the case of the murder and in spite of their being handicapped by the lack of clerical assistance and lack of expense money with which to travel they have kept their records in fair order and have made a comprehensive investigation and as indicated by their reports they brought most of their check-outs on suspects and investigations to a conclusion as nearly as possible. However, due to the lack of coordination of effort and the lack of proper correlation of records, reports, statements and correspondence on the part of the Administrative Division of the LAPD it appears that there is much work yet to be done on this case and at least fifty persons remain that should be interviewed and there are at least twenty-five more persons that should be questioned. There have been three hundred and sixteen suspects fifty of whom have been arrested, (Not always charged with murder.) and later released. On the date of this report there are one hundred and seven remaining possible suspects after a definite elimination of two hundred and nine suspects. There have been nineteen suspects who have confessed to the murder of Elizabeth Short.

After examination of the files and evidence it appears that the investigative effort should be continued and concentrated on the following suspects:

Leslie Dillon -- Mark Hanson -- Carl Balsiger -- Glen Wolfe -- Henry Hubert Hoffman -- Dr. George Hodel --



## 2.4

**Q: In your book, you mention your two brothers, Michael and Kelvin. What happened to them? What do they think about your findings? Do they agree that their father was a serial killer?**

My older brother Michael died of lung cancer in 1986, at the relatively young age of- 46. (His early death was the catalyst for my decision to retire from LAPD and “move on”.) Mike had a brilliant mind and was a voracious reader, often reading two books a day throughout his entire life. He wore many hats. He was a writer, radio news reporter, and Sherlock Holmes scholar. One of brother Mike’s proudest moments was receiving investiture into the *Baker Street Irregulars Society*. (BSI was founded by Christopher Morley in 1934, and fellow members included: U.S. presidents FDR and Harry Truman, science fiction author, Issac Asimov, and mystery writer, Rex Stout, creator of P.I. Nero Wolfe.) In 1980 Mike, along with co-author, Sean Wright, published the novel, *Enter The Lion: A Posthumous Memoir of Mycroft Holmes*.

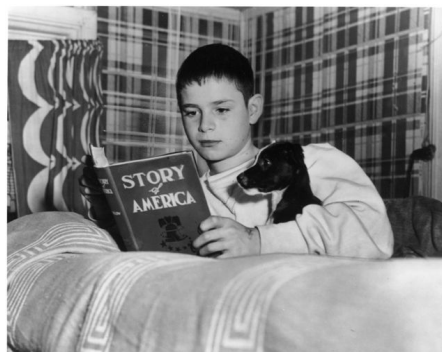
Mike’s entire life was dedicated to people and causes. His conduit *For The People*, was through local Los Angeles, listener sponsored FM radio station--KPFK. He loved science-fiction and his show aired on KPFK as—*Mike Hodel’s Hour 25*, where, over several decades, he interviewed hundreds of guest authors, from the greatest legends to brand new unknowns.. (His show still continues to this day on the Internet, and can be found at- <http://www.hour25online.com>)

Mike was awarded radio’s prestigious, *Golden Mike Award*, (no relation) for his 1970s radio coverage of WATERGATE. During his 20 years at KPFK he was on staff as News Director, Public Affairs Director, and fund-raising administrator. Roy Tuckman, current host of KPFK’s *Something’s Happening*, had this to say about his lifelong friend, and early mentor:

Mike was the main ‘voice of KPFK’, a major fundraiser and a voice of sanity and humanity during the many staff battles. As a teacher and mentor, he helped many people over the years begin their work on radio. In his final years, his main concern was the increasing illiteracy in America. He produced a series of 13 programs on “Illiterate America” which remain in the Pacifica Archives.

Mike had a large and loyal listenership, and following his untimely death in 1986 (melanoma) many regular listeners deeply mourned his passing .I believe the current Internet show, named in his honor, continues to respect his memory with a “Goodnight Mike” even now, some two decades after his passing.

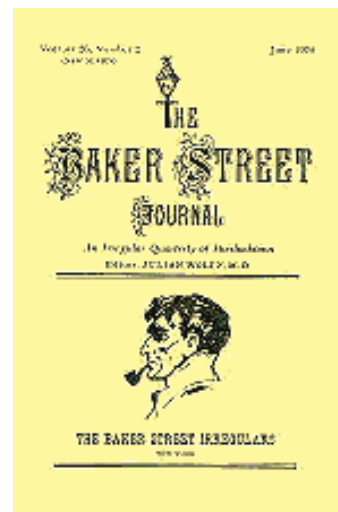
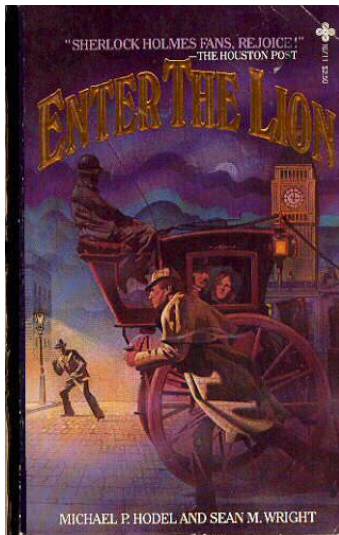
Michael Paul Hodel was a true force for good and defender of the little guy in the Los Angeles community and was much beloved. His two surviving brothers and his many friends miss him dearly. Mike, like his brothers, never knew or suspected that his father was anything other than a rather eccentric genius, a physician, a lady’s man, and a rather poor poker player. (A Hodel poker game was often the highlight of our father’s frequent business trips through L.A. on his way to or from New York, in the 1970s and 80s.)



Mike Hodel reading to our new puppy, "Boots", circa 1951-- approximate age-11  
 Mike circa 1979 --age 40



*Enter The Lion*



**Baker Street Irregulars Journal**



<http://www.hour25online.com>

**“Goodnight Mike!”**

## LA WEEKLY, MAY 6, 1986 "REMEMBERING MIKE HODEL" by Harlan Ellison

## News



## REMEMBERING MIKE HODEL

by Harlan Ellison

First, and always, there was that voice. For more than 15 years, if one lived in Los Angeles and tuned in to 90.7 on the FM dial, one heard that voice. Warm and kind and instantly the sound of a friend speaking to no one but you. Every Friday night from 10 till midnight on KPFFK, Pacifica's station in the City of the

Angels, there was Mike Hodel hosting the (literally) world-famous *Hour 25* program.

It remains the longest-running science fiction show on radio. And though imitators came and went, it remains the only show of its kind in America — a forum and meeting place for writers and fans, publishers and readers of the genre.

For 15 years there was no

science fiction writer of significance who was not interviewed by Mike, no topic of interest he did not address, no cause of merit he did not champion. For a decade and a half, *Hour 25* was the foremost forum providing publicity for science fiction writers coming into L.A. to promote their books. Mike Hodel took it as a personal responsibility to keep people reading. His anti-illiteracy campaign, under the title "READ/SF," fought the forces of obscurantism and illogic by providing audio cassettes of science fiction writers reading their stories. And on the air, week after week, he brought serious thinkers and noble madmen to the microphone in that tiny, squalid control booth at KPFFK to champion the space program, to recommend new writers whose work had reached him, to feed what he called "the group mind." He was the voice of reason and decency and friendship for those who needed a community of like souls.

He had no enemies. To make enemies one must be suspected of having unkind thoughts or petty purposes. Mike was free of such

thoughts and purposes, and was therefore the recipient of a free-floating affection that all of us envy but seldom achieve.

In January of this year, he seemed to have come down with a case of the flu he could not shake. His wife, Nancy, a registered nurse, took him to the hospital for X-rays. They discovered thoracic cancer, and subsequently learned it had metastasized in the brain. Malignant melanoma, the worst possible scenario, became the reality. Mike knew, and with the grace and kindness that were his trademarks, set about ordering his last days.

The program was his chief concern, and he took steps to ensure its continued life, even if his personal existence was to be ended. He has left *Hour 25* in the hands of Terry Hodel; his long-time friend, Demon Engineer Burt Handelsman; and this writer. The show, which will be known as *Mike Hodel's Hour 25*, will continue, as will the work that Mike carried on for 15 years.

He died at 9:27 p.m. on Tuesday, May 6 in room 4802 of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. The disease came and took him so quickly that it permitted him to

spend his last few months with dignity. He even hosted the show two weeks before his death, though the magnificent voice was furry and thin. But he did it. And he tried to spare his listeners the pain of knowing he was about to leave, mentioning casually that he had a small medical problem about which many of them had heard. But they were not to worry; it wasn't anything very important or troublesome.

He was our friend, and so we mourn his passing. But he was also the voice of our community for 15 years, and the evening air will not sound as safe and friendly and worth the breathing without him.

Mike Hodel is gone and there is little comfort in saying, "Well, his was as good a death as we're permitted." No death is good, because it robs us of the only treasures that matter, the companionship and closeness of friends who matter. Perhaps others will find consolation in remembering that we had Mike with us for 46 years, 15 of which enriched us — and the literature he loved so much.

Good night, Michael.

©The Kilimanjaro Corporation

My younger brother, Kelvin George Hodel was born in October, 1942, just eleven-months after the birth of my twin John and I. He would be Dorothy and George's, fourth, and final son. Kelly from an early age "loved the girls" and believe me—the girls LOVED him. A 1949 Franklin House Kelvin anecdote is appropriate:

In 1948 -1949 our father rented out many of the rooms at the Franklin House to creative types, generally, artists and actors. During that time, one of the "roomers" was a beautiful actress named, Carol Forman. (Below) At the time she was living with us she was dating film star, Tim Holt, who naturally, came and went on a regular basis.

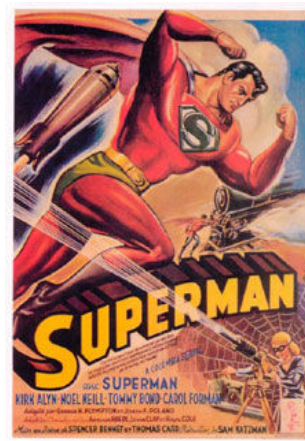
Brother Kelly, then age-6 or 7 had a terrible crush on Carol, and whenever Tim showed up to take her on a date, Kelly would object, informing Holt in no uncertain terms, "she's my girlfriend." Finally, Holt, could take it no longer and took Kelly into the center courtyard, *mano-a-mano* and came up with the following suggestion:

Look Kelly. You're too young to be with Carol now. I will date her only until you get old enough, and then you and Carol can get married, and I will get on my horse and ride off. Fair enough?

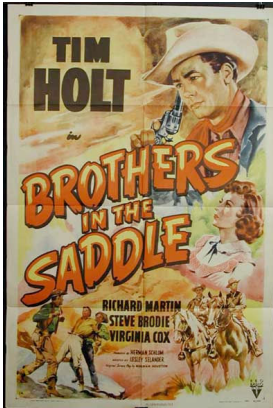
Kelly agreed, Holt & Hodel shook hands, and the battle for Carol's heart was ended.

Carol Forman, "The Black Widow"

1947

Carol Forman as "Spider Lady"  
Superman serial  
1948

Tim Holt &amp; Carol 1949



Tim Holt 1948



Kelvin "Kelly" Hodel (left) and brother Steve at Franklin House circa 1949



Kelly joined the Navy at 17, and after two years of duty as a hospital corpsman aboard the hospital-ship U.S.S. HAVEN was then assigned to a Marine Corps Rifle Company, as a field medic. His unit was dispatched to the Caribbean during the "Cuban Missile Crisis" in 1962 and after four years military service, returned to Los Angeles.

Kelly, also a "people person" has spent most of his life in medical related fields. In the 1960s he was the medical administrator for the *Los Angeles Free Clinic*, for its first two years of existence. He then became the L.A. County Community Liaison Representative to the private Free Clinics. Kelly spent the next eight years helping private community groups start over 60 free clinics throughout California and Texas.

He continued his education, obtained his RN, and currently works for the Los Angeles Veterans Administration, evaluating and counseling military men and women, assisting war veterans in making their reentry back into civilian life.

Kelly after reviewing and reading my book and investigation, is totally supportive of my findings. He, like myself, and brother Mike, never suspected our father was involved in anything other than the 1949 Hodel family, "incest scandal."

Kelly is married and he and his wife Sue live in Los Angeles.



**Kelly & Sue Hodel 2005**



The below photograph (one of my favorites) was taken by noted Southern California photographer, Edmund Teske (1911-1996) at the Franklin House inner courtyard circa 1948. Teske, at the time lived just a mile away from our home, was a friend and fellow surrealist, to both George Hodel and Man Ray, and had studied with Frank Lloyd Wright at his Taliesin Fellowship, in the 1930s. Teske moved to Hollywood in 1943. In 2004, Los Angeles' Getty Museum put many of Teske's works on display for public viewing.

**“The Three Musketeers”-- Franklin House circa 1948**



**Steve**

**Mike**

**Kelvin**

## 2.5

**Q: In your book you tell us that as a young officer two of your heroes on LAPD were Chief William Parker and Chief of Detectives Thad Brown. Were there any others?**

I knew and worked with many highly dedicated and decorated cops over the decades. Dozens of names come to mind. Men and women who served in silence. Unsung heroes. Most are long retired, and many have passed on. There is one, in my eyes, who stands a little taller and straighter than the rest—Detective III Russell Lee Kuster. At Hollywood Homicide, during the 1970s and 1980s, Russ was my friend and partner, and later promoted to Detective III and became my supervisor.

LAPD HOLLYWOOD DETECTIVES circa 1972

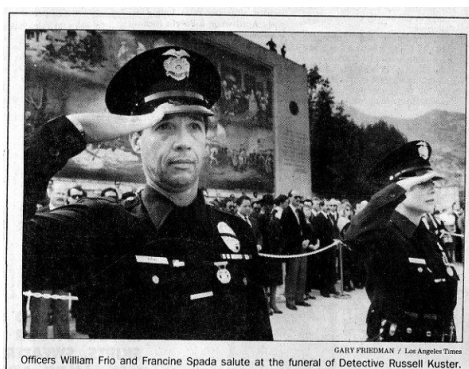


Old Hollywood Police Station and Hollywood Receiving Hospital as it appeared circa 1969. (Now rebuilt) Ironically, this station, my duty assignment for 17 years, was the same police station where in 1950, a total of 18 LAPD and DA investigators were “staked out” -- 24-7, listening to, and recording, Dr. George Hodel’s private room conversations. Telephone lines were leased and ran from our Franklin House to the basement of this police station, a distance of-- 2 ½ miles. The six-week surveillance (Feb 18-March 27, 1950) ended abruptly, only because George Hodel fled the country, leaving the detectives with their bugs and microphones still concealed inside the residence walls. The DA/Hodel File consists of 146 typed pages of summarized conversations from over one-thousand man-hours of police surveillance.



Four years after my 1986 retirement, Russ was off-duty and about to have dinner at a Hollywood Hills restaurant, when Bela Marko, a parolee with a history of violence, armed with a laser-sighted 9mm automatic, became enraged after an argument with the restaurant owner. After being informed that Russ was a off-duty LAPD police detective, Marko without warning, turned and fired six shots, striking Russ in the upper chest and heart. Though mortally wounded, Russ managed to pull out his service revolver, and return fire, also striking the suspect in the chest. Within minutes, both men lay dead on the floor.. On October 10, 1990, I received the early morning phone call that no cop ever wants to get. It was from Hollywood Detectives, informing me of my ex-partner's murder.

Here is the story as told in the *Los Angeles Times*:



Officers William Frio and Francine Spada salute at the funeral of Detective Russell Kuster.

## Final Goodbye for a 'Cop's Cop'

**Police:** More than 1,500 attend services for Detective Russell Kuster. He is remembered as a man with 'a real sense of strength.'

By BETTINA BOXALL  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

More than 1,500 strong, Los Angeles police gathered on a cemetery hill Monday to pay final tribute to Russell Kuster, a much-loved veteran Hollywood detective killed just months before his retirement in an off-duty shoot-out with a career criminal who was waving a gun inside one of Kuster's favorite hangouts.

In plainclothes and blue patrol uniforms, in helicopters and on horseback and motorcycle, Kuster's fellow officers came to honor him for two hours of ritual and teary-eyed



KIN LEBAS / Los Angeles Times

Kuster's widow, Susan, wipes away tears during services held at Forest Lawn.

Whether they knew him or had only heard of him, they extolled him as a simple farm boy from Indiana who, in the midst of the sleaze and glitz of Hollywood, remained ever a "man's man, a cop's cop and a

Marine's Marine." "His strong, silent nature gave a real sense of strength, a real sense of character," police Chaplain Jerry Powell said as he delivered the eulogy to the large, somber crowd, which included Mayor Tom Bradley, Police Chief Daryl F. Gates, County Sheriff Sherman Block and City Councilman John Perry.

"I guess you could say he was a stand-up sort of guy, someone who could take a hit and keep on coming. Someone who could take criticism and not let that criticism go to someone else around him," Powell said under a cover of gray haze that gradually yielded to the sun.

After nearly 25 years on the force, Kuster, 50, was one of the city's most experienced homicide detectives, a veteran of celebrated and sensational cases and head of his division's homicide squad.

Like so many of Los Angeles' murders, Kuster's was a senseless.

Please see KUSTER, B1

## Los Angeles Times

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1990  
COURTESY OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTISTS GUILD

DESIGN

### A Somber Service



Retiree police officer Bill Welch pays his respects at the Hollywood Hills funeral of Kuster, a veteran LAPD detective killed last week in an off-duty shoot-out with parolee. B1

## Gorbachev W Nobel Peace I

**Award:** Soviet leader cited for helping ease and forging change in Europe. Bush lauds

By MICHAEL PARKS, TIMES STAFF WRITER

MOSCOW—Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev Nobel Peace Prize on Monday for his role in ending the century-long Cold War and promoting international peace.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee, announcing the 1990 Peace Prize in Oslo, praised Gorbachev for "his leading role in the peace process which today characterizes important parts of the international community."

Gorbachev's contributions to world peace in the five years that he has led the Soviet Union have been "many and diverse," the committee said. It cited the dramatic, unprecedented intervention in the Balkans, the dismantling of Eastern Europe, the resolution of a number of regional conflicts and major moves toward disarmament.

Although Gorbachev has already received many peace prizes and been credited widely with the growing international détente, the Nobel award recognizes the historic nature of the changes now under way and the unique role that Gorbachev has played in this reshaping of world politics.

### Soviet Gets 'H Award'

By ELIZABETH GARDNER  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

MOSCOW—President Gorbachev newly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending the century-long Cold War and promoting international peace.

## KUSTER: Detective Eulogized

Continued from B1  
loss tale of anger and undesired gunfire.

He was sitting last Tuesday night in the darkened lounge of the Hilltop Hungarian Restaurant, owned by one of his friends, when he tried to calm a pistol-waving customer who had been asked by management to leave.

The gunman, Bela L. Marko, 37, an illegal alien from Hungary and a parolee with a long criminal record, turned his pistol on Kuster and shot him four times. The mortally wounded detective returned fire, and Marko died at a restaurant door, an hour before Kuster succumbed at a local hospital.

"We smile in remembering that Russ, in his final moments, made sure Los Angeles wouldn't be burdened with another unsolved homicide," wrote one officer whose letter was read at the services at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in the Hollywood Hills. The detective's remains were later cremated.

A former Marine, Kuster received full military and police honors. A horse bearing his dark blue, flag-traped casket was escorted from the industrial-looking Hollywood Division police station to the cemetery by a four-block-long motorcade of motorcycle officers and patrol cars, their red lights flashing in silent homage.

As a bagpipe filled the sharp air with the refrain of "Going Home," white-gloved pallbearers from the Hollywood station carried the casket before an estimated 1,500 to 1,700 mourners.

A rideless horse, a boot reversed in the stirrup, stood at one side of the assembled while a Marine Corps honor guard flanked the other. Enlarged color snapshots of Kuster, young and middle-aged, stared at the crowd. Four police helicopters flew overhead in formation.

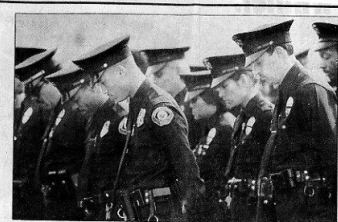
Gates knelt beside Susan, Kuster's widow, to give her the flag that had covered her husband's coffin.

It was attention that Kuster would have been uncomfortable with in life.

Kuster "was a simple man," Powell observed. "He wasn't someone to like having a lot of attention, who liked being in the center of the media."

That was why people liked Kuster so much, the chaplain said. He was quiet, generous and unassuming, the kind of guy who liked to watch TV with his wife and who went back home every summer to work on his parents' farm.

Kuster was the kind of guy who got mad if people bad-mouthed President Bush, friends said. The kind of guy who had pictures of Ronald Reagan, Clint Eastwood



Officers from various police agencies bow their heads at funeral.

and John Wayne behind his desk and who liked to listen to the Marine Corps hymn. The kind of guy who joked around.

"He called everybody in the homicide unit 'Roy,' regardless of their name. When he woke his investigators up in the middle of the night to call them to a case, Kuster would say, 'Hi Roy, this is your old dad,' said Lt. Bob Rucholtz, the commanding officer of Hollywood detectives. "You know then your night's sleep was over."

And so, with their trim haircuts and starched blues, the boys and other officers trudged up the hill, over the groomed cemetery lawns,

some of them wearing small black buttons that said, simply, "Russ Kuster—cop."

"He was a good person, very cool, calm and collected. A people person, very knowledgeable," recalled John Ernst, a former detective who had retired from the Hollywood Division more than a decade ago.

Kuster had planned to retire next year, a fact that was not lost on those gathered.

"Send in the Clowns," was one of two songs sung at the services. "Isn't it rich... losing my timing this late in my career?"



Detective Russell Kuster

**RUSS KUSTER COP**

Memorial buttons worn by mourners at Russ Kuster's funeral.

Five days later, I was in Los Angeles, attending Russ' funeral. The below eulogy, which I had faxed to Hollywood Detectives on the morning after his murder, was read at Russ' memorial. (See link below for other officers and friends comments to a fallen hero.) Russell Lee Kuster, "a cop's cop", was one of LAPD's greatest detectives. A proud professional, he inspired all who were privileged to know him. May he R.I.P.

Los Angeles Police Department  
Hollywood Detectives  
October 10, 1990

Dear Friends:

It was with great shock and sadness that I received the news of Russ's death this morning. As most of you know Russell Lee was a very large part of my life (both professional and personal) during my 14 years at Hollywood Homicide. As my partner and then my supervisor he, more than any other individual, influenced my career. And what a privileged influence that was for me! Russ possessed a rare and wonderful blend of skill, professionalism and dedication. He was always there when the need arose. For friend and victim alike he was there to help. His strong firm Midwest beliefs fortified his faith in Justice and impassioned his drive and insistence that all Hollywood murders be solved

How many times do we all remember his year end admonition that, "85 % clearance rate is not good enough." How many times do we all remember during "slow" months, Russ's insistence on pulling out the unsolved books and finding the answers he knew were there and had been overlooked by us due to busier times?

Russell Lee Kuster was one of a kind. Like his heroes, John Wayne and General George Patton. Russ was an individual who never wavered in his personal beliefs. You always knew where he stood. This was true if you were a probationer at your first crime scene, or if you were a deputy chief at your 500th.

My heart goes out to all of you at Hollywood Detectives in these hours of grief. Cherish, as I do the fun and tragic times you had with this man. Cherish and remember the spirit of dedication he proudly exemplified. And finally, smile in remembrance that Russ in his final moments made sure that Los Angeles would not be burdened with another "whodunit" as he sent the "Son-Of-A-Bitch" to HELL!

Love in Brotherhood  
Steve Hodel LAPD Retired

Take care "Roy"

Link to the **Officer Down Memorial**  
**page** <http://www.odmp.org/reflections.php?oid=127>