



Theodore Dixon Long

June 26, 1933 - December 11, 2022

Theodore Dixon Long, born June 26, 1933, died peacefully at his home in Mill Valley, California, on December 11, 2022. He was 89.

Born in Warren, Ohio, Dixon graduated from Western Reserve Academy in nearby Hudson. He earned a BA from Amherst College, a Masters in Economics from Tufts University and a PhD in Political Science from Columbia University.

As a young man, Dixon shipped out on bulk carriers on the Great Lakes, worked as a deckhand on barges on the Mississippi River, and skippered boats for a long-distance yacht delivery service. After serving with the army in Korea, Dixon and two college friends built a 42-foot yawl *Tenba* in Osaka, Japan, then sailed her across the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans to Barbados. He wrote a serialized account of

the adventure for his hometown newspaper and later reproduced the articles in a book called *Westward Home*. Dixon continued to travel throughout his life, principally to France, England and Japan.

Dixon met his first wife, Ellen Corning, in 1961 while skippering her parents' yacht to St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands. After Ellen's graduation from Smith College in 1962, they married and settled in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. Ellen was a botanist, gardener, equestrienne and middle school teacher. Their first child, Samuel, was born in 1965, and their daughter, Maud-Alison, in 1968.

Soon after he married Ellen, Dixon took a job with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and served in Tokyo and Paris, where Sam was born. He brought his international experience to the classroom as a tenured political science professor at Case Western University in Cleveland from 1962 - 1985. In parallel, he was involved in public affairs at local, state and national levels, and produced reports for Congress on topics ranging from science policy to the future of the Peace Corps. In 1973 he became Dean of Western Reserve College, a position he held for 12 years as he captained his department through a notably turbulent period. In 1985, Dixon took a sabbatical to write a novel. At the end of that year, he retired to continue writing, and spend time with Ellen, who had been diagnosed with breast cancer in 1984. She passed away in 1989.

Reading and writing were central to Dixon's life. He ultimately produced ten novels. His first, *Brothers*, he published in 2001. *A Very Rich Man*, about a wealthy but dysfunctional family, he completed in 2009. *Running Without Lights*, an international romantic thriller, was finished in 2010. Dixon kept a small spiral notebook in his breast pocket, and routinely recorded notes and ideas for his next novel. He added observations and inspirations for the limericks and poems he later wrote and shared with dinner guests. As an engaged member of the Bay Area writing community, Dixon both supported and contributed to *Zyzyva*, a magazine of writers and artists edited by his good friend Howard Junker.

In 1989, Dixon met fellow Francophile, wine enthusiast and cook Ruthanne Dickerson who lived in San Anselmo, California, where he moved soon after. They married in 1992. An outgrowth of their shared food and travel experiences, Ruthanne and Dixon collaborated in 1996 on *Markets of Provence: A Culinary Tour of the South of France* that profiled the open markets in the Luberon region. Enchanted with French market culture, Dixon began writing *Markets of Paris* in 2007, which was published after Ruthanne died of cancer in 2005.

Dixon made time for the causes he believed in, mainly the environment, education and the arts. Environmentally, he was particularly concerned about the impact of technology upon the natural world. In Ohio, he helped found the East Branch Association to protect open space in the Chagrin Valley, was president of the Ohio Conservation Foundation, and served as a trustee for the Holden Arboretum in Kirtland. In California, he joined the board of the San Francisco Botanical Gardens at Strybing Arboretum in Golden Gate Park. Dixon also supported Trust for Public Land, Sierra Club, and Trees for the Future.

Western Reserve Academy was a pivotal influence in Dixon's early years. He served as a Trustee from 1976-2000, and a Trustee Emeritus from 2000-2022. There he and his wife Ellen endowed a foreign languages program, and with his children who also attended, a dormitory. Dixon especially loved music and theater. He was a true patron of the Cleveland Orchestra, Cleveland Ballet, and San Francisco Symphony. Inspired by his brother and playwright Quincy, he supported and became a docent at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and later chaired the board at Marin Theatre Company.

Dixon is survived by brothers Quincy and Jeffrey, son Sam, daughter Ali, grandchildren Boden and Sloane, Quincy and Zachary, as well as step-daughters Anne Dickerson Lind and Julie Dickerson Byrne, and step-grandchildren Oskar and Annabel, Ronan and John Max.

Those wishing to honor Dixon's life may make a contribution in his name to Trust for Public Land.