

## **In Memoriam: Martin Kassell (1918-2020) by Barry Blackwell**

INHN is sad to report the death of Martin Kassell, after a brief illness and in the care of his daughter Stephanie at their home in Scottsdale.

An account of Martin's outstanding and unusual career as "A One of a Kind of Psychiatrist" is posted on our website (Blackwell 2018) that is supplemented by personal accounts from two of his former residents, now distinguished psychiatrists in their own right. (Amsterdam 2019) and (Dubin 2019). Two photographs of Martin were also posted on INHN (Amsterdam 2018, 2019).

After writing his biography I visited Martin twice at his home, in 2019 and most recently in February 2020. On this last occasion, just five months before his death, his memory was beginning to fade probably due to mini-strokes but we had a cheery productive conversation for almost an hour during which I was astonished to learn he was still doing his hallmark brand of psychotherapy with a talented artist who had just painted his portrait.

After an early unsatisfying career as an independent general internist Martin was recruited by NIMH in midlife to train as a psychiatrist at the University of Pennsylvania when American psychiatry was pivoting from psychoanalysis to psychopharmacology. His commonsense grasp and talented application of psychodynamic principles without redundant ideology was coupled with training in hypnosis, psychodrama, family, couples and group therapy all combined with a confident grasp of medicine and its physical treatments that made him a compelling role model at the right time. His talent was widely appreciated and acclaimed by trainees, colleagues and patients.

In 2012 the Arizona Psychiatric Society named Martin Best Teacher of the Year and in 2013 they awarded him their Lifetime Service Award. In 2014 the American Psychiatric Association awarded Martin their Distinguished Lifetime Fellowship Award.

### **References:**

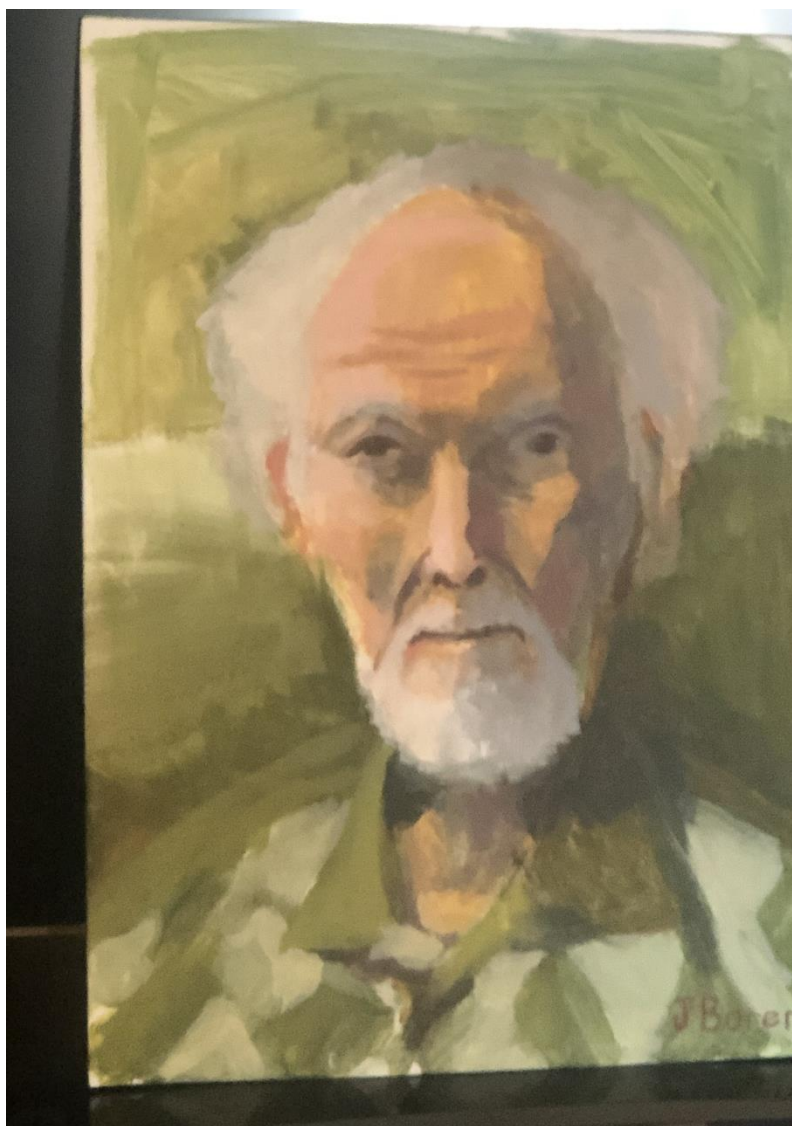
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Martin Kassell portrait by J. Boren, Phoenix, AZ, ca. 2019.

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