

## Marjorie Nelson

### September 17, 1962

Marge died suddenly, on the eve of her wedding day. The Class made a gift to Mount Holyoke's Fund for the Future, in her name. Bette Keck Peterson honored her memory with this tribute in 2001:

"Marjorie Nelson, my very good Mount Holyoke friend, died suddenly of a brain aneurysm September 17, 1962, the night before she was to be married to her fiancé, John Perkins. I was to be a bridesmaid in her wedding the next day, and to have her collapse at her rehearsal dinner and then be placed in the New York City ambulance due to a severe headache and later die on the operating table was a wrench of loss and sorrow that is still with me today.

Marge was a fun, thoughtful, deep person. I will forever share memories of talks in the Mount Holyoke College library stacks, water ballet swimming practices and shows, late night talks about Marge falling in love with John, visits to her family in their Brooklyn Heights home, my first trips to the NY Met Opera, discount shopping at Loehmanns, riding the NYC subway, and a wonderful post-Junior summer at the Oslo University International Summer School. We studied hard and rode around behind our two Italian dates on motorcycles – no helmets and all of us a bit tipsy after our first brandy Alexanders. On weekends, we hiked with backpacks, biked, and ferried to the lovely Norwegian countryside.

Marge was lightness and gaiety; a loyal, caring friend, and a serious student of her history major, John Perkins, and dreams for their future. I kept in touch twice a year with her parents until they died in 1997 and 1998. The following poem I wrote shortly after her passing to try to express my shock and totally distraught feelings following her death.

#### Thoughts on Death

Death to a child is sudden, unreal, strange,  
Leaves shrivel, grandparents do not return,  
Kittens lie rigid in their coats of fur,  
Young robins stiffen on a summer lawn.  
So when in youth and beauty someone like

Marge dies,  
Death is a shock as violent as a storm,  
That mars a golden evening, bruising trees,  
Trampling the honeyed rose awaiting dawn.

The tragedy of such a sudden death at such a high point of supreme happiness was so unexplainable to me. I miss Marge today and can imagine our 'chit chats' about our lives' ups and downs and growing old."