

## ALEX TANOUS, 1926-1990

It is with great sadness that I report on the death of my colleague and friend, Alex Tanous.

Alex was the first psychic I ever worked with as a researcher and he set a standard that few others ever came close to matching in my 15 years at the ASPR. He was truly committed to helping advance science's understanding of psychic phenomena and was challenged by the introduction of experimental controls and technology, rather than resentful of or intimidated by them. He was also wonderful with all kinds of people: I never failed to be amazed at how quickly Alex could calm the sometimes near-hysterical experients of, e.g., apparition phenomena. And, despite a schedule that would have exhausted five energetic people, Alex was always willing to take the time to listen to the problems of others and to try to help both friends and strangers, which produced a large following that was loving and devoted. In addition, he was also a lot of fun: His visits to the ASPR were accompanied by spontaneous waltzes around the office, intriguing stories of his adventures, and lighthearted displays of his psychic talents. We will all greatly miss Alex and will forever remember him with respect and love.

The ASPR will be sponsoring a memorial service in New York City. If you are interested in attending, please contact either myself or Patrice Keane at the ASPR. Meanwhile, below is some information about Alex that was taken from his autobiography, *Beyond Coincidence*, and supplied by people who were close to him. This is followed by some words of remembrance by Karlis Osis.

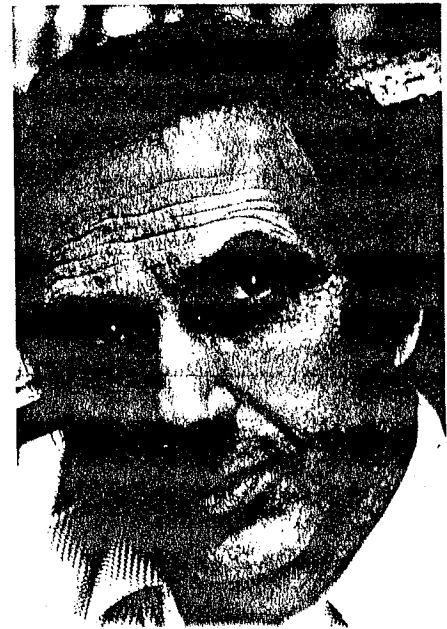
Alex Tanous, died at the Maine Medical Center in Portland on July 7, 1990. The cause of death was heart failure although he had been hospitalized for pancreatic cancer. He was 63-years old and lived in South Portland, Maine.

Alex was the oldest of eight boys and was born in Van Buren, Maine on November 26, 1926 to Ann Alice Shalala and Thomas Tanous (Kettanch), a close friend of noted author, Kahlil Gibran, who was also Lebanese. Alex served in the U.S. Army during WWII, and was in the Army's Public Information Department during Korea.

After spending several years in study for the priesthood at Our Lady of Holy Cross Seminary at Stonehill College, Alex pursued a Masters degree in philosophy at Boston College, which he received in 1960. He continued his studies and received a second Masters degree in theology from Fordham University in 1964; a Doctorate of Divinity from the Divinity College of Indiana in 1965; and a Masters degree in counseling and guidance from the University of Maine in 1973.

Between 1965-1967, Alex taught theology at Manhattan College and at St. John's University, both in New York City. In recent years, he taught classes on psychic phenomena and related topics at the University of Southern Maine.

His psychic talents began at a very early age, although his professional career as a psychic did not start until his forties. Alex was always struggling to apply his abilities in the face of dissent by the religious and orthodox scientific communities. Despite that, he continued, in his own unique manner to de-



Alex Tanous

vote his life to bringing credibility and acceptance to the field of psychic research.

His talents attracted the attention of the law enforcement community when, in 1972, he helped the Police Chief of Freeport, Maine find the murderer and corpse of a missing boy by sketching the perpetrator and describing the location of the body. His abilities were also taken seriously by a variety of governments that engaged him in special projects.

Alex was also one of the few (and among the most widely known) psychics to greatly contribute to the study of the paranormal through his participation in controlled, scientific laboratory experiments. From 1968 until the time of his death, he was associated with the ASPR. During that time, he served as the ASPR's leading "gifted" subject in many experiments. Alex also applied his talents to the diagnosis and treatment of disorders at a psychiatric clinic in Pennsylvania and to studies of psychic healing conducted at McGill University in Canada.

Over the years, Alex made many documented psychic predictions about well-known figures and international events. These include the election of John F. Kennedy to the Presidency, a prediction made 18 months before its occurrence and about one-year prior to speculation about his running; and the assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan, which was predicted by Alex during an OBE experiment at the ASPR.

His reputation as a gifted psychic led to many invitations to lecture at major universities and organizations throughout the world, including the Parapsychology Club at the United Nations. He was the focus of magazine and newspaper articles, and a guest on many radio and television shows (most recently, the "Geraldo Show" on CBS), and participated in numerous documentaries on psychic phenomena. He was also author of several books, including *Beyond Coincidence: One*

*Man's Experience with Psychic Phenomena* (written with Harvey Ardman. Doubleday, 1976); *Is Your Child Psychic? A Guide for Creative Parents and Teachers* (co-authored with Katherine Fair Donnelly. Macmillan, 1979), which was later released as *Understanding and Developing Your Child's Natural Psychic Abilities* (Simon and Schuster, 1988); *Relexions sur la Vie Interieure* (Editions de Mortagne, 1984); and a forthcoming book on dreams.

His international career was most recently centered in Japan where, for the last several years, Alex developed such a tremendous following that his books were translated into Japanese. He was also the focal point of a major documentary and was invited to present numerous seminars to audiences numbering in the thousands.

In addition to being a gifted psychic, Alex was a man of many other talents. He was a self-taught painter of distinction, as well as a song-writer and composer. In 1961, he wrote "America in Jazz," a symphony which won a Grand Prix Award in France. And in 1963, his work, "The Mass in Jazz," won a Musical Religious Award.

Dr. Tanous is survived by his brothers: Charles Tanous of Turner, Maine; Wakine Tanous of East Millinocket, Maine; Joe and Thomas Tanous from the Boston, Massachusetts vicinity.

Shortly before his death, the Alex Tanous Foundation for Scientific Research (P.O. Box 3818, Portland, Maine 04104) was established. The goal of this center not only includes the commemoration of Alex and his work, but also the continuance his lifelong aim of furthering our understanding of the paranormal. The Foundation's Board of Directors would like to develop an archives of audio/video tapes, photographs, letters and other materials pertaining to Alex, and so request that anyone in possession of such items contact them at the address above. They would also like to hear from anyone who believes that he/she has had paranormal experiences or communications involving Alex since his death (I would also appreciate receiving copies of such descriptions).

—Donna L. McCormick

Alex was teaching at the Brooklyn branch of St. John's University when we met 25 years ago. He appeared to be a psychic "live wire" with unbounded enthusiasm about his psi and inducing psi in his students. I checked some of his stories and tested him. In contrast to many other psychics, Alex did not mind my scrutiny; he cooperated warmly whenever we needed him in research.

Later on, Alex became our main participant in out-of-body experiments, worked extensively on our project of apparition experiences in haunted houses, as well as in our explorations of applied psi when we cooperated with law enforcement officials and other agencies. Such pioneering projects inevitably involve some stumbling and setbacks that would have angered some psychics, but not Alex. The gloomy, sometimes tedious side of laboratory work never bogged him down. Alex always exuded boisterous enthusiasm and a firm belief in his own powers; that was somewhat contagious and helpful to our

spirits, especially at times when the owls hooted from every tree: "This cannot be done."

Above all, Alex was a real psychic to the marrow of his bones. Most of us are psychics only in rare moments during our lifetimes, when the iron gates before the mysterious processes of psi open a little and spontaneous experiences occur. For Alex, the gates opened much more frequently. Eileen Garrett's trance personality usually emerged with the words: "I am the keeper of the doors, my friends." Alex never personalized these mysterious processes that way but, in a sense, he had a very special relationship with that kind of doorman. I have watched astonishing psychic insights emerging from him as through a briefly opened doorway, be it in out-of-body experiments, during a haunting investigation, or in a police van tracking a killer.

Like other top psychics I knew, it was hard to tell when the gates were closed and when they were open. The will to succeed was not enough; it was much more important if his heart was touched. His "doorman" seemed to accept the following kinds of tolls: true compassion, real fascination, as well as playfully riding the wave of public admiration for his performance.

Why was Alex so much more fortunate at the gates of psi than the rest of us in the lab? I can only guess that his purity or absence of moralism, of judging, of putting people down, of disdaining the "bad" in others, had a major power over the gates. Alex genuinely sensed in so many people something fascinating, something good, a potential in even the most miserable individuals.

Alex was very able to develop warm relationships and, at the same time, graceful detachment. He helped ease the sorrows and tragedies of countless people, but he himself never got drenched or drowned in their sea of suffering. His psychic eye seemed to put everything in a broader perspective where there was hope, light and potential solutions. His generosity of the heart seemed to open doors to all kinds of people; from the well-placed and powerful to those who weren't at all successful.

Alex was often a target of fascination for the media in our country, as well as in Canada and Japan. He was a part of many documentaries about ASPR research and appeared on many talk shows. We never expected scientific precision from Alex, but the gist of the psychic world came through loudly and colorfully.

Each profession has lights and shadows. The irresistible temptation before all parapsychologists is the expectation that all of our understanding of psi can be revealed exclusively through the research methods currently in vogue. The irresistible temptation that confronts all psychics, on the other hand, is the feeling that all the treasures that are beyond the iron gates of psi are theirs. Through his life and his work with us at the ASPR, Alex indicated that a more respectful interaction between both sides is the most fruitful. Alex often spoke of what he learned from us. And, looking back over our quarter-of-a-century together, I see how very much I learned from Alex about the mysteries of psi processes that the experimental work did not reveal. Alex was a great psychic and a remarkable man who was truly devoted to the ASPR.

—Karlis Osis, Ph.D.

## Doctor Alex Tanous: A Man of Many Abilities

On September 7, close to 200 people listened to a man who promised to take them on a psychic journey. Most of these people had not heard of Alex Tanous before the short interview on the radio that morning or before reading about him in last month's newsletter from Sources. They did not know of his dream to introduce respectability to a subject which has suffered from some ridicule in the past and is even now the center of considerable dispute. They weren't aware of the anger which flashed in his eyes when he discussed the senseless shambles that some psychics were making of what he considers a very serious field of study.

"How could anyone suggest that this book (he stabs at a colorful Sagittarius Astrology book) or that (he grabs another by a different author) is meaningful to the millions of Sagittarians who will read them when there are different messages in each?"

Nor were his listeners aware before hand of the depth of feeling that became obvious when he described the authors of other books, authors whom he knew and admired and had occasion to work with in research for answers. It was like being introduced to old friends.

We were walking through some shops and bookstores on the morning before his talk at the Mayfair Hotel. He moved skillfully from one shop to the next and just as skillfully from a discussion on history and religion to questions of the mind and the paradox of thought. The energy in his walk was matched by the obvious tirelessness of his spirit. Conversation flowed easily from this man whose eyes suggested excitement, wonder, childlike delight and occasionally somber wisdom.

Sometimes he looked inward and I felt I was listening to the very depths of the man when he said, "... we are on the frontier of a new age, the last frontier ... the frontier of the mind ... where the individual will take over the body ... and eventually learn to control disease and old age and approach the desired ultimate of immortality *within* the body." That is a daring concept when most psychics and investigators are discussing our leaving the body behind for some other-worldly existence if not after death then at some time in the future as a natural evolution. That thought didn't surface in any of his discussions again.

I questioned him and occasionally challenged him but his mind moved easily and the answers were ready. "... what is love? It is both pain and joy ... in the depths of myself I feel this. For example, the pain of giving birth to a child and the joy of having it."

Once again his thoughts turned inward. "Love is doing what you ought to do ... like an acorn becoming an oak or an apple seed becoming an apple tree ... it is the only freedom we have." His eyes bored into mine, "Love is work made visible." There was a smile there and I knew I wouldn't forget those words.

Our walk had brought us back to the hotel and I felt a kind of mental breathlessness. How was I going to remember all the subjects we had discussed? It seemed important that I should. I had been talking with a man who had done some incredible things with his life. He is a Doctor of Divinity, has mastered six or seven languages, has worked on a Ph.D., has his Masters in four other subjects, is the author of the book "Beyond Coincidence", is a teacher of parapsychology at the University of Maine as well as the first to teach the same subject at the United Nations Psychic Society. He is a member as well as a subject for research with the American Society for Psychical Research. In 1972, he taught E.S.P. at the Thornton Academy in Saco, Maine.

As a capable psychic, he has astounded Doctors by being able to literally die on the table with instruments connected to him to determine what happens at the instant of death. He says he has "died" for science over 200 times and the result of his experiences have given him proof of survival of the personality after death. In laboratory studies, he has performed "out-of-body" demonstrations where he was able to leave the room his body was in and correctly observe targets that were randomly chosen for him by a machine that projected the target on a rapidly rotating color-wheel designed so that it would be impossible for him to know the color in advance or determine the target by ESP. His scores considerably exceeded chance and during the same week of his visit to Edmonton, he appeared on the television program "In Search Of" which showed the process he described to me.

He has corroborated evidence to back up his claim that his psychic predictions have been 85% accurate and his Clairvoyant ability is greater than 99% accurate. Only four psychics out of hundreds tested, who claimed that they could perform "out-of-body" demonstrations, were found to actually be able to accomplish this feat and Alex Tanous is one of them. The tests included clinical investigations of what happens to the body during the event and the results are part of the volumes of material gathered by the A.S.P.R.

"It is a fact that Psychics can be wrong, and all are at some time or another. If someone tells you he is

always right ... he is lying. A reader has a responsibility to his subjects. Readings should be made not because the reader wants them to be true ... but rather to help the subject to avoid problems or overcome a crisis."

At this time, Mrs. Peggy Holmes from CBC had joined us and the joint interview moved into new vistas.

"A psychic person must possess: true love, wisdom, and the power of prophecy. A person working in psychic phenomena cannot be owned, does not belong to one, but belongs to all people."

"Star Wars (a motion picture showing locally that seems to have captured the imaginations of audiences both young and old) is giving youth a new understanding of love ... an understanding of the world to come ... the evolution from the body ... to the machine ... to the mind or the power". He looked eagerly at Mrs. Holmes and myself, "Do you know what that power really is?" ...

"It's love!"

I sat and just listened as more thoughts, experiences, and ideas seemed to pour out of him. I knew Wednesday night in front of a live audience was going to be a "doozy". And it was. He confronted his listeners immediately with the challenge to accept the responsibility for their actions and to avoid sensationalism if they were psychic and called upon to use their abilities. He asked for a common sense approach to dealing with children who demonstrated psychic ability. He recalled his own problems of dealing with inner conflict between his religious learnings and his abilities.

"Do not discourage or cause repression in a child who claims to have playmates that you think are imaginary. They are real to the child and repression of the child could lead to problems or retardation. It is possible that many so called retarded children have repressed a very natural part of themselves ... the use of that part of the brain (left side) that is responsible for creative development and psychic awareness ... Use a positive approach to their education — many learning problems and poor achievements have been the result of "negative teachers"."

At that the audience applauded ... they knew he was right. I feel that if I wrote a book, I could not begin properly to describe the man I had come to know as Alex. After his talk he promised to come back and teach his course in ESP if we wished him back. The response has been that many would sign up now if that were possible. He left a nice memory of a man who gave his time freely to Edmontonians. "Thank you, Alex".

by Dave Marshall



Hope

# 'Awaken your powers,' says Maine psychic

By SHARON HANSEN

Special to 55-Plus

**P**syched ability, according to Maine psychic Alex Tanous, is a gift we are all born with. Inviting people to "Awaken your Powers," Tanous spoke to an enraptured audience of 200 people recently at the University of Southern Maine in Portland.

"You can use the power of your will to accomplish anything, according to Tanous. Psychic ability is not learned, but you can train yourself to discover those powers within you.

"Ask yourself what you want," Tanous told his audience, "and then use the power of your will to get there." To awaken those powers, he said, you need to do several things.

First, you need to accept yourself for what you are. "Until you decide you're number one," he noted, "you're not going to get anything."

The next step is to "give yourself permission" to tune in to your inner will, Tanous believes, because many of us have been frightened by it, or told that it's "the work of the devil."

It is also important to rid yourself of anger, the "number one demon against



Psychic Alex Tanous

psychic ability." Anger, he states, is so deeply imbedded in our subconscious that it can rule our lives. People, places and

things don't make you angry — you make yourself angry. "If you don't get rid of your anger," Tanous told his audience, "you are the prisoner of your own mind."

Tanous used examples of "psychic phenomena" to show people that they too could use their vision, insight, and intuition to discover and use their "co-consciousness," the ability to fuse everything in yourself and focus it on another person or an object. Displaying a magazine, opened and laid flat, he instructed the audience to channel their energy under the open magazine and to try to visualize what may be on the pages it was opened to. This exercise, known as "remote viewing" was met with some success among those who tried it, but for those who were not so successful, Tanous assured the audience that with practice, the percentage of successful tries would surely increase.

"Push your will until it gets you what you want," he encouraged listeners.

"Pay attention to 'vibes'" and spontaneous psychic events (like seeing a person you have been thinking about), because it reinforces the belief in yourself to your inner will. And most important, "Vision never comes twice. If you can't capture it the first time around, it is lost forever."





Alex Tanous

## Learning self-improvement through psychic insight

by John Burr

Well known psychic Alex Tanous, who claims he can be in two places at the same time, brought at least half of himself to Noble High School in Berwick last weekend to teach his "Introduction to Parapsychology" course.

The course is designed to help the layman understand his own psychic experiences and to use this knowledge to better his life.

"There is a drastic fear most people have about their psychic intuitions; the most common question people ask me is 'How can I stop having my psychic experiences?'," Tanous said. "They just don't know how to handle it—they think they are possessed by the devil or something."

"Having a psychic experience does not make you psychic," he explains, "everyone is psychic to some degree."

Tanous warns of the many people who have "put their little shingle out" in the past ten years, claiming they are psychic and charging people money for fraudulent advice.

"One woman came to me practically in hysterics because someone had told her that she and her husband would die in an automobile accident in five years. Can you imagine telling someone something like that? Some of these people are dangerous."

"A true psychic sees the best alternatives in a person's life; he is a consultant more than a god," explains Tanous. He adds that all predictions can be changed by a person's free will. An accurate psychic prediction can help a person prevent a negative occurrence or enhance a positive one.

What makes Tanous different from most psychics is the scientific documentation of his powers which have been collected by Dr. Karlis Osis of

the American Society for Psychological Research in New York City.

Astral projection (out of body experience) is Tanous's speciality. Dr. Osis, who has been testing Tanous's power to project himself into places outside of his body, says, "we are collecting more and more evidence that shows that some part of his consciousness is projected from his body during these experiences."

Dr. Osis has conducted extensive laboratory experiments on Tanous, the results of which back up his claim of being able to project his consciousness to locations outside of his body.

First, Dr. Osis monitored the psychic's brain processes with an EKG machine, which measures brain waves by the electrical currents they produce.

"We have measured a

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decrease in electrical activity in the back of Alex's head at the time of his out of body experience," Osis said. "This indicates that something is happening to his consciousness."

Dr. Osis then tested the movement of Tanous's eyelids to make sure he was not having a dream when he projected himself. Tanous showed none of the eyelid movements which people display when they are dreaming.

Next, the psychic was tested to see if he could see things from the place to which he says he was projected—things which only could have been seen by a person in a particular location. Dr. Osis rigged up an optical illusion which could only be seen correctly if it were viewed from a specific site. Tanous correctly interpreted the optical illusion while his body was in a room three doors away from the viewing location.

In another test, Tanous was placed in a room with several walls between him and Dr. Osis. On command, Tanous was asked to project himself into a precise location of the room Dr. Osis was in. The EKG machine then detected Tanous's brain waves of Dr. Osis in the room in which Dr. Osis sat.

"We are trying to understand what's going on when Alex has these projections, to see if there is something in our beings which can go from our bodies to another place," said Osis. He noted that patients who have come near death on operating tables and near

drowning victims have reported having out of body experiences (the feeling of leaving one's body).

When Tanous is not teaching or being tested at Dr. Osis's laboratories, he spends time assisting police, by using his psychic powers to solve crimes or to help locate lost merchandise. So far this year he has worked on 50 searches and criminal cases. In addition to using his talents to aid the police, his psychic powers have been coveted by stock brokers, businessmen and professional gamblers.

"I've had people offer me expense-paid trips to Las Vegas and Atlantic City and to horsetracks, but I'm not interested in that—it's old hat," he says with a shrug. He tells a story of a friend who took him to a casino in Switzerland. The man asked Tanous to predict what number would come up on the roulette wheel. Tanous agreed, with one condition. He would only make one prediction. After the man won, he naturally asked Tanous to make another prediction, which Tanous refused to do. I don't find that kind of thing very challenging, he explained.

Sometimes people try to exploit Tanous because of his high standing in the field of parapsychology. The producer of the movie, "The Amityville Horror," asked Tanous to examine the house to see if he could detect any unusual phenomena. Soon after arriving he realized the movie people were trying to use his name for publicity purposes.

"I was quoted in the papers as saying the house had a demonic presence, and one guy said he saw me levitate two feet off the ground, both of which are totally untrue."

Earlier this year Tanous

went on a scientific expedition to the Bermuda Triangle. He claims the Bermuda Triangle exists, and tells of strange occurrences the crew encountered, such as being buffeted by 80-mile-an-hour winds which came out of nowhere, and sightings of phantom ships and UFOs.

The expedition will be documented in a two-hour television special entitled "A Journey in the Bermuda Triangle" which will be shown later in the year.

Despite his extensive travelling schedule which takes him around the world, Tanous always returns to Maine. A native of Van Buren, he stays in Maine because "there is more positive energy in here than anywhere else on Earth." This positive energy is a natural phenomenon, which accounts for the large numbers of artists and writers who reside and vacation in the state. "This energy helps creative people, and I have found that I benefit from it. I live in Maine because of it," Tanous claims.

Tanous is also well known for his yearly predictions, which he makes on his Sunday night radio show on WSME every December. As a preview of 1980, he offered the following psychic prophecies. Ted Kennedy will go on to win the Democratic presidential nomination and become our next chief executive. The economy will not go into a severe recession, and the world economy will remain strong.

For those who are skeptical of Tanous's claims, and most people are, he notes that James MacDonald (MacDonald-Douglas Aircraft) and Chester Coslin (who invented the Xerox machine) have donated large amounts of money to the American Society for Psychical Research because they believe in psychic phenomena.

"Inventors get their ideas through psychic intuition," explains Tanous. "They have a vision of their invention and realize its possibilities and then start to work."

"Just look at the stories of H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, full of inventions which people thought at the time were crazy," notes Tanous. "And Dick Tracy, with all his gadgets, which the FBI now