

Tribute: In Memory of Cheryl Martin

by Lisa Rae Philpott

Cheryl Jennifer Martin of London, Ontario, died suddenly at University Hospital on July 15, 2016, age 56. Born in Niagara Falls on October 29, 1959, Cheryl was predeceased by an infant sister, her parents, and her fiancé Ed. She is survived by her dear cat Milly, and her brothers Dale and John. Cheryl held BMus., MA (Musicology), and MLIS (Librarianship) degrees from The University of Western Ontario. Her library career encompassed cataloguing, teaching, management, and metadata, taking her from London Public Library to the University of Western Ontario, Memorial University of Newfoundland, the Metro Toronto Reference Library, the Archives and website of St. Mary Magdalene Church (Toronto, as a volunteer), McMasters University Libraries, the Library of the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto), with a return to Western Libraries in 2009. A brief foray into banking with the Royal Bank (RBC) persuaded her that libraries were indeed her calling. Cheryl had just completed her term as President/Past-President of the Canadian Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (CAML) in June 2016, having held nearly EVERY position in our organization at one time or another—including nearly seven years of service editing *CAML Review*. She was also active in both the Music Library Association (US) as a MLA Shop volunteer, and the International Association of Music Libraries (IAML). At the time of her sudden passing, Cheryl was Canada’s representative on IAML’s International Inventory of Musical Sources project (a [memorial](#) noting some of her work as RISM Canada Coordinator has been posted on the RISM site), and she was the Deputy Chief Negotiator for UWOFA-LA, Western’s Librarians and Archivists union.

Despite numerous and significant health challenges, Cheryl maintained an active life and a positive outlook. She enjoyed travel and loved to explore her Mennonite roots in Ontario’s Vineland area near Niagara Falls. A voracious reader, avid researcher, and keen knitter, she was a much-valued contributor to Ravelry.com’s “Ivory Tower Fiber Freaks” group where she mentored colleagues and friends and took great delight in attending “meet-ups” with other ITFF members in her travels (Dublin, Toronto, New York, and Calgary, to name but a few destinations). She had high expectations of her friends and colleagues, demanding everyone’s best work, and had little

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patience with those whose level of dedication did not match what she deemed necessary for the task at hand.

Cheryl liked rules—I suspect this made her an excellent cataloguer. She had a short fuse where bad drivers were concerned, and would not hesitate to pull over to report a license plate with a call to 911. Despite her passion for rules, though, sometimes they simply didn't apply to HER! Following her successful hip replacement in January 2016, she was to meet with her surgeon BEFORE she was to resume driving...of COURSE, she drove herself to that appointment!

Cheryl was irked by anyone who denied her an opportunity because of her declining mobility: her body might have moved slowly, but her mind was sharp, and she was savvy, perceptive and capable. She was aware of her physical limitations, and compensated for them with hard work and careful planning. She dealt with her many challenges with determination, and fiercely valued her independence. She had so many plans—genealogy connections to untangle, research projects to pursue, friends to meet, places to visit, cats to cuddle, and Scotch to sip. Giving in to her physical frailties was NOT an option for her, and death was definitely NOT on her radar, notwithstanding a family history of heart issues.

Classical music, Anglo-Catholic Anglican liturgy, friends, dark chocolate, single malt Scotch, coffee, Murchie's tea, accessibility of public spaces, genealogy, and cats numbered among her passions. Cheryl sang soprano in the Lyra German Choir in London, Ontario, from January 2015, and is greatly missed both musically and personally by her fellow choristers.

I know that Cheryl is mourned by a host of friends and colleagues; I shall personally miss her as my conference travel-companion and travel-organizer: her travel needs were sufficiently complex that I knew I would never choose all the appropriate options, so it was just smarter to let her make the arrangements for both of us, and call-in my credit card details. She recently said to me, "I don't think I'm high-maintenance!"—at which point I diplomatically bit my tongue...

A celebration of Cheryl's life was held on Thursday, October 6th in the Talbot College Atrium at Western University, gathering together her friends and colleagues from Western Libraries and the Faculty Association, former classmates, and colleagues from CAML and the Toronto Reference Library.

[Donations to your local cat shelter, the Heart & Stroke Foundation, or a charity of your choice would be appropriate ways to remember Cheryl Jennifer Martin.]