

Obituary

N. Lynn Morris, 1950-1991



Photograph courtesy National Archives of Canada

On 18 January, during a brief winter storm, Lynn Morris of the National Archives of Canada died in an automobile accident. A native of Ottawa, Lynn held a B.A. from the University of Ottawa and had undertaken further study at McGill University.

She came to the National Archives following a teaching career and, from 1980 to 1991, spread her good humour, compassion and generosity among staff and researchers alike. Lynn spent the majority of those years working within the Manuscript Division, particularly in the Political and Public Affairs Section. From 1988 to 1989, she was on secondment to the Ministerial Records Project and, later in 1989, began to work in the Economic and Scientific Archives Programme. With great enthusiasm, Lynn served as Administrative Assistant to the Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliot Trudeau, in his Ottawa office at the National Archives.

Lynn complemented her archival work with active involvement on numerous committees at the National Archives and in the archival community. In 1985, following her work at the National Archives as the archival appraisal coordinator, she was appointed Administrator of the National Archival Appraisal Board and, since 1990, had been the Board's Assistant Regional Director for the National Capital Region. Lynn

chaired the Manuscript Division Round Table Committee, served as a member of the Departmental Employment Equity Committee and was an integral part of the Divisional Public Service Committee. Her involvement in each of these groups reflected her commitment to people, a commitment that was repeated through community work at the Ottawa Distress Centre and with each of the many friendships that she formed.

Those who knew Lynn have described her in consistent terms. A researcher and friend has stated that "Lynn was a master at giving — in fact, that was her very essence." Said another person, "She was one of those rare people with whom you could share your deepest thoughts and concerns." These qualities, along with a healthy dose of discretion, made Lynn "a friend to all in the Division, with a helpful thought, a listening ear and a twinkle in her eye for everyone. She changed the social fabric of our work environment." Friends speak of Lynn's "contagious sense of humour," remember her "peals of laughter," and note that "her affable and optimistic disposition endeared her to all who came to know her as a friend, colleague and associate." One of Lynn's many friends has caught the true flavour of her nature: "She was always willing to share the grief, the petty annoyances, the small triumphs and the ecstasies of my life. She offered support and advice throughout the difficult periods and effervescent companionship in both the routine and the joyous times."

Some might think that there is no consolation for the loss of such a dear colleague and friend. Yet, many of us will recognize the truth of this archivist's simple statement. "Lynn was my friend. The warmth and the laughter we shared will always be with me."

Loretta Barber, Lewis Jackson, Donna Porter, Geoff Ott, Robert Gordon, Ann Bilodeau, Kathy Hall.