

Brylcreem and Butter - KM Williams Eulogy

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Eulogy for Karen Marie Williams given Friday 4th March, 2016 at the St Silas Anglican Church Redwood Christchurch New Zealand.

Karen Marie Williams

Marie.

My good friend Marie and I knew each other through our love of Science Fiction. Her bookshelves at home had a small collection of the masters of **SF**: Heinlein, Asimov, Arthur C. Clark, Anne McCaffrey, various Star Trek and Doctor Who and even "The Abbey Girl again" by Elsie J. Oxenham.

And, "Kings of Space" by Captain WE Johns of Biggles fame. The last one, unlike the others in the lounge room and another "Everything I need to know I learned from a Little Golden Book" by Diane Muldrew were both on the shelves of Marie's bedroom with a surprising range of books: Two shelves of computer programming. Books on Britain, Ireland and New Zealand, Camellia's and Roses. Some more Star Trek, Torchwood, Philip K. Dick, a Tolkien Biography and even "The World According to Jeremy Clarkson"... (just when you thought you knew someone).



*Marie Williams and Andrew Ivamy at Reconnaissance
#NZNatCon2015
Sudima Lake Rotorua (Easter) 2015*

And then there were Marie's other books; a whole bookshop's worth in fact! Marie bought the "OLD COBBLERS BOOKSHOP" and moved it around the corner to the main street: **24 St George Road Papatoetoe, Auckland**. Marie renamed the shop **Bookwormz** and immediately endeared herself on the local community becoming a member of the local Chamber of Commerce coordinating the local ambassadors who would stroll the streets and report to Marie via two way radio's and it was Marie who would decide if the Police or other emergency services would be called. While undergoing chemotherapy Marie even spent six hours each night watching the monitors of the CCTV for the Street Safety Camera's such was her dedication to her local community.

I first encountered Marie in passing when she had a book stall at **Conclave** in Auckland – I walked into the room where Marie and the one other bookseller had set up and walked back out again. Neither of us recalls the other from that encounter.

A couple of years later, in 2010 Marie and I had been billeted with a third person in a squalid dorm room in Melbourne while we attended the World Science Fiction Convention **AussieCon IV**. Marie took the top bunk and I was below.

I had been on Facebook for over three years in 2010 and, after the WorldCon, connected with Marie

– We chatted and I told Marie of my plans to run a Science Fiction Convention in Rotorua in 2015. Marie came onboard as co-chair. She was helping run both the 2011 and 2012 NZ NatCons and when I got up to announce our intentions to run a convention with just two people – one in Brisbane Australia the other in Auckland a few years hence in Rotorua – A town neither of us lived in, you could have heard a pin drop.

But run it we did – the most successful New Zealand National Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror (with a heavy emphasis on Steam Punk & CosPlay) Convention of the past decade *Reconnaissance*.

Marie was diagnosed with cancer, treated with chemotherapy (twice) - had surgery and all the while continued to run her shop, run the local chamber of commerce and its ambassadors, do CCTV monitoring, pre-plan for our convention – talk daily with me via Skype, phone, SMS text and Facebook chat about what was going on in my life and at work and never once complained about her lot in life.

When I told Marie about my head aches that would last for days, Marie would listen attentively and offer suggestions about problems at work or in the planning of our convention, all the while brushing off my asking about Marie's health. In fact when Marie was recovering in Middlemore Hospital from her major surgery, she'd phone me with follow ups on emails that needed our attention – I'd tell Marie to rest up and relax – she'd always reply with

"Yeh I know I should be resting, but I'm boared!"

Marie could apply herself to any task she set herself to – As with the computer books that hinted at her capabilities. I wrote the words for the convention book. Marie weaved her wizardry to create an impressive book. So it was all her life. In recent days I've come across certificates from her childhood.

Southbridge Horticultural Society: Four First Prizes, Three second prizes and a sole third prize certificate.

Three certificates of Merit's from Southbridge District High School in the 1970's – Including first in Class for Forms I and III

Two Highly Commended as well as Three Second Prize certificates from Ellesmere Agricultural and Pastoral Association and two runner up certificates from the Wainuiomata Table Tennis Club for Ladies Single and Ladies Doubles of that year.

In the Science Fiction community, people will bid each other to "***Live Long and Prosper***" Marie certainly prospered and lived a life well lived.

In Philip K. Dick's novel as in the movie "Blade Runner", Roy Batty is told by his creator Doctor Tyrel that ***the candle that burns at both ends shines twice as bright*** and Marie certainly shone very brightly.

Rest now Marie; you've earned it.

Thank you for our years of friendship Marie.

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