

MOS ON THE NORTH SIDE

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SUSAN WOOD 1948-1980

Susan Joan Wood was pronounced dead of cardiac arrest at approximately 11:20 AM, November 12, 1980, in Vancouver. She was 32 years old.

(I can't believe she's really dead. I lived with her, off and on, from May, 1974 until January, 1980; she's been the most important person in my life for the last seven years.)

She co-edited, with Mike Glicksohn, the Hugo-winning fanzine ENERGUEN; she also published ASPIDISTRA and the "Amor de Cosmos People's Memorial Quietrevolutionary Susanzine". (I remember the kiss after each page of AMOR we finished running off... Fastest slipsheeteer in the West, she was, and she could collate like the wind.)

She won the Hugo for Best Fan Writer in 1974, and again in 1977. The Language of the Night, a collection of Ursula LeGuin essays which Susan edited, was a Hugo nominee for Best Non-Fiction Book of 1979. (In fact, she would have been nominated in four different Hugo categories, but we never got together enough votes to put her SF class on the ballot for "Best Dramatic Presentation".)

In September, 1973, she moved to Saskatchewan (and we started corresponding. On December 29, 1973, she came to New York for a visit and I fell in love with her); she spent two years teaching at the University of Regina. (I've still got the Chinese cookbook she gave me when I arrived, inscribed "To Eli -- because you think Saskatchewan is a type of Chinese cooking".)

She received her doctorate in Canadian Literature from the University of Toronto in 1975 (I remember the night she tried to throw her thesis off our third floor balcony), the same year she moved to Vancouver to become an assistant professor of English at U.B.C. (She taped "Another Storm", by Humphrey and the Dump-trucks, before she left. In snowless Vancouver it was hard to remember the weekend it hit 50 below and we had an 8 inch icicle growing into our living room. But then there was the night we stood in the snow at the Millers' farm, watching the aurora ...)

Her hobbies included rock and folk music (there were so many concerts we went to -- Cris Williamson, Warren Zevon, the Dump-trucks, Yes ...), gardening (she used to talk to her plants: "Grow, baby, grow" she'd tell them, and they would), and photography. She also carried on extensive correspondence with many people (not to mention putting up thousands of visiting fens at

the Wood Hotel).

Her academic interests included Canadian Literature, science fiction, and children's literature, in all of which she taught courses and published papers. U.B.C. granted her tenure in the spring of 1980.

The next-door neighbor heard a thud and, finding her unconscious, called the police. She had apparently been on her way out of the house, pausing to write a note which she was in the middle of when she collapsed. She was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital.

(There were a lot of bad times and a lot of good times. I won't ever see her again. I miss her.)

-- Eli Cohen, Dec. 2, 1980