Margaret Evelyn Beare

A Personal and Professional Tribute

My first memory of Margaret was as a graduate student at the Centre of Criminology, University of Toronto. It was the summer of 1981, and I was filling in over lunchtime at the Centre's reception desk, one of my side hustles to cover my living expenses. This informally dressed, friendly, auburn-haired woman approached the desk, announcing to me that she was a new visiting fellow at the Centre and that she believed she had a desk space arranged for her. On hearing my Antipodean accent, she soon asked where I was from and what was I doing in Toronto. It didn't take long for her to reveal that she had spent some time in Australia, in the early 1970s, tutoring in anthropology at the (then) Western Australian Institute of Technology in Perth. Forty years ago, to have been an Australian graduate student in Toronto was relatively uncommon; as one of that discrete group, for me to encounter a Canadian who had visited Australia, let alone to have lived there for any period, was almost unprecedented. While Canadians and Australians at the time (and since) found it easy to relate to each other given commonalities of history and cultural traditions, I was well-used to Canadian friends saying how much they would like to visit Australia but adding that it was "so far away." So Margaret very early on distinguished herself in my eyes by not only being interested in Australia but by showing a familiarity and fondness for the place and its people.

Over the coming weeks and months, we realized that we were also pursuing similar research interests and had much to talk about on that front. Both of us were looking at policing in Ontario, Margaret's was focusing on media representation work undertaken by the Metropolitan Toronto police, while I was looking at police unionism across the province of Ontario (a strange topic perhaps for someone from Adelaide, South Australia). We consequently had many stimulating, sometimes robust, conversations about what was going on at that time. Questions of police governance and accountability became interests of ongoing interest to Margaret for the rest of her life. The early 1980s was a fascinating time to be interested in policing

in Toronto. In an increasingly diverse community, problems of police dealings with community members were coming to public attention, resulting in protests and demands for new ways of moderating police–community relationships. The local civil liberties association was prominent in demands for improved ways of handling public complaints about police behaviours. A trial public complaints mechanism was put in place in 1981 at the city level, that subsequently was expanded to the provincial level, and that became a model for similar innovations in Manitoba and other provinces in a relatively quick time. However, as Margaret and others associated with the Centre of Criminology at the time (including Philip Stenning) were to find, there were always going to be difficulties reconciling police actions with community expectations, providing a source of ongoing research opportunities as well as prompts for community activism. Margaret became friendly with the late Alan Borovoy, general counsel in those days for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in Toronto, because of their shared interest and engagement in this area. Through visiting her in the Annex, I met Alan once or twice.

Early on, I came to realize that spending time with Margaret was never dull; her passionate positions on various topics combined with her empathy and concern for others, including those she was engaging with in discussion, made her a stimulating professional colleague as well as friend. At that time, Margaret was working to complete her dissertation at Columbia University, New York, and had taken an apartment near the University on Spadina Avenue in the Annex district. This was only a few blocks from my room at Massey College, and even closer to the blues music venues located around the University of Toronto. Her apartment was only a few hundred metres from the renowned El Mocambo club, where famously Margaret Trudeau had been spotted a few years earlier in the company of members of the Rolling Stones. I went there with Margaret once or twice, once to see a touring band from my home city of Adelaide, but never encountered any celebrities of Margaret Trudeau's stature. Our shared love of music provided numerous occasions through the early 1980s to visit various clubs around Toronto. Another favourite of mine, Alberts Hall on Spadina, sponsored a number of visiting Chicago blues acts. I recall seeing such legendary artists as Buddy Guy, Matt (Guitar) Murphy, and Hubert Sumlin there, often in the company of Margaret. During this time, Margaret drove a red MG sports car, usually with the top off if the weather permitted. She cut quite a dash in that car, driving around the city, reflecting her sense of style and adventure. Not having a car myself, I found myself a passenger in that car from time to time. We once drove from Ottawa out to her family cottage where I met her sisters and her father (her mother had passed away by then). We were both, of course, young enough then to spring in and out of such a low car with ease. Later on, she graduated to a Volkswagen Golf – a convertible model, of course!

Our paths separated around 1984. Margaret had moved to Ottawa a year or so earlier to take up a public service job in the Solicitor-General's Secretariat. I

visited her a few times in the early years. She had the misfortune on one occasion in midwinter of trying to teach me to skate on the Rideau Canal. She was naturally more gifted in the skating stakes. After a respectable interval, we called it a day and retired to somewhere drier and warmer (me with agonizingly painful ankles), in my case, never to repeat the experience. I moved to the United Kingdom in 1984, but we stayed in touch. Another thing I shared with Margaret was an appetite for travel, including long-distance travel. This enabled me to visit Toronto from time to time up to the time of her death. As well as seeing her in Ottawa, I visited her later during her time teaching at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. She shared an apartment there at one point with several other academics. After a late night out, I woke up one morning in the apartment, and went in search of something to drink and eat. By the time Margaret arose, I had been through the contents of the refrigerator and cupboards in order to find myself some breakfast. She emerged when I was halfway through downing some kind of fruit juice I'd found in the fridge. "I'm not sure how long that's been there," she said to me. I hesitated and reached for the juice bottle. The expiry date indicated it was indeed past its "use by" period, three years past! I learned a couple of lessons; always check the dates in future before consuming, especially if found in the fridge of a shared house or apartment; and (having survived the experience) never underestimate the longevity of Canadian supermarket fruit juice products. Another reliable way of meeting up with Margaret, despite the fact of living on different continents, was through her longstanding commitment to attending the annual American Society of Criminology conferences wherever they occurred. She attended as often as she was able and was a frequent contributor to the panels on organized crime. When in Vancouver, she could often be found staying at the Sylvia Hotel. She also loved attending the Economic Crime conferences held in Cambridge, England, each year, and caught up with many colleagues and friends on those occasions.

As many of her friends from out of town or country can attest, Margaret was always a wonderful, welcoming host. In addition to invitations to come to dinner, there was for many of us the offer of a bedroom if we were visiting Toronto. When she moved to Major Street, there was always the option of the room at the top of the stairs, with its own bathroom. Many prominent and/or colourful figures stayed there over the years, including Peter Manning, the US policing scholar; Freddy Martens, former Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission; and Nigel Hadgkiss, one of Australia's top anti-corruption fighters. Many of her visitors would travel up to York University to speak to or meet with her students in Sociology and, later, Law. Her friendship networks were, as one can see, both extensive and strong, with many of us staying with her on multiple occasions. She expected little in return, other than one's company. Inevitably there would be delicious dinners and generous quantities of red wine, with often six or more persons present. And always, so many books!

Margaret loved literature of all kinds. These visits were occasions to be relished and are now memories to be treasured.

An important moment in Margaret's life, of course, was her adoption of her daughter, Nhai, around 1999 or the beginning of 2000. In August of 2000, I brought my young family to Toronto to take up a five-month visiting sabbatical position at Osgoode Hall Law School. During this time, I was attached to the Nathanson Centre, which Margaret then headed. I had been drawn to her Centre in part by my growing interest in transnational crime and policing, which were key themes of the Centre. My family set up in a small rental house in the Bloor/Jane area of west Toronto, near the Humber ravine. Margaret had been invited to a crime conference in Italy, which she was keen to attend (no surprises there), there was just the issue of who would look after young Nhai, who was four at the time. Jane, my wife, was there and we already had sons aged eleven, nine, and one with us in the house, as well as my five-year-old daughter visiting us from western Canada. When Margaret mentioned her difficulty, Jane offered to take Nhai as well for the duration of Margaret's absence. Margaret duly flew off to Italy, and we juggled five children. I can recall some of that time vividly, some of it not at all now. Jane tells me that I don't remember now because I was away myself overseas for part of that time, doing research in Colombia. However, I do remember some rivalry emerging between Nhai and Katyana, my daughter, that added to the challenges of five young children under the same roof. After Margaret's multiple acts of kindness over many years, we were happy to help out, and Nhai was a delightful child.

In the years that followed, Margaret managed to visit Australia on a couple of occasions. I recall her visit to Alice Springs in 2011 as a keynote speaker at the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology annual conference. She was presenting on two of her favourite themes, organized crime and money laundering. She had travelled to Australia business class, and aside from cursing her national airline for its substandard service on the flight over, was intensely conscious of how much her hosts had paid for her airfare. She asked me to look over her PowerPoint presentation before her keynote address. I was flabbergasted to find that she had nearly one hundred slides prepared for a forty-five-minute presentation. Showing her stubborn streak, she pushed back on my suggestion that she cut the number of slides down to a more manageable number. She firmly retorted that she'd come all this way business class, and felt she had to give them value back. Needless to say, she delivered her customary warm and engaging lecture despite the tsunami of slides. As an aside, I reviewed one of her lectures from 2014, archived on YouTube, in preparation for writing this tribute. I was reminded that her fondness for PowerPoint lived on, with something like a modest ninety slides for that particular lecture.

I have touched a couple of times already on Margaret's passion. It was particularly evident in her scholarship in the areas of policing, organized crime, and money laundering as well as in her intense loyalty and commitment to friends and family. Many

prominent figures and institutions would find themselves the targets of "friendly fire" in her writings and public lectures in the form of critiques of instances of unjust enrichment, corruption, police misconduct, and other moral shortcomings, delivered in that firm but humorous manner. While never vicious in her criticism, she could be gently scathing of those she disapproved of or who had acted badly. As a longstanding friend, I was aware that though she was not religious, she had Mennonite roots and influences on her mother's side. This bestowed upon her, aside from acute memories of being expected to wear uncomfortable old-style undergarments as a young girl, a strong sense of the importance of personal integrity and a concern for righting the wrongs committed on behalf of public institutions as well as by private entities such as organized crime groups. The problems of "big policing" then, as indeed the problems of "big crime," the twin themes of this volume, lay at the heart of her most significant scholarship. As a researcher interested in organized crime, her work (including her notable book) in the area of criminal conspiracies reflected a complex view of the world in which there were frequently no bright lines between the "good" and the "bad" actors, but also that often bad things occurred on the "official" side of public affairs. She was right to bring these matters to public attention, and to impress upon the many students she taught the importance of looking critically at those who hold and exercise power of any kind.

Her scholarly commitment was as long as it was deep. Her ongoing care and concern for her students was palpable. She continued to work right up to the last months of her life, supervising students towards completion of their degrees. I was hoping to see her in Toronto in June 2019, and she'd indicated before my arrival that she looked forward to catching up, though there was the matter of her medical treatment that might affect when, and for how long, we might meet. Unfortunately, the meeting was not to happen. She'd been put back in Mount Sinai Hospital at the time of my visit and was taking no visitors. In my last couple of communications with her, she always managed to talk down her own problems and to continue to show interest in the lives of others. I had called her a few months earlier, having had word that she was quite unwell, only to be greeted by her on her home phone expressing surprise that I'd called her "all the way from Australia" and inquiring when I would next be visiting Toronto. Her selflessness, lack of self-pity, and residual sense of humour, despite everything, was striking.

I was just one of many of those fortunate to share time, food, wine, ideas, and laughter with Margaret over her eventful and meaningful life. Such friendships are rare. Those who knew her professionally or personally were lucky indeed.

(With thanks to Philip Stenning and Fred Martens for sharing memories and prompting mine.)

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