

### CLAUDETTE REED UPTON-KEELEY (1948–2008)

On 12 October 2008, Claudette Reed Upton-Keeley passed away in Georgetown Hospital, on Grand Cayman Island. Claudette is remembered as a thoughtful human being, with whom we all delighted in spending time. Her respect and enjoyment of diversity enabled her, as editor, activist, friend, feminist, idea person, and organizer, to care equally for people, wildlife, and the environment, whether in Alaska, the Yukon, Alberta, or the Caribbean.

Claudette was born Claudette Diana Reed in Asheville, North Carolina, on 17 May 1948, the first child and only daughter of Haldee L. and Helen T. Reed. While at public school, Claudette was an outstanding student, a champion debater, a National Merit Scholar, and president of Enka High School's National Forensic League. In 1965, she enrolled at Duke University, where she earned her bachelor's degree in English literature in 1969. A few years after graduation, Claudette moved to Anchorage, Alaska, where she became employed with the Arctic Institute of North America (AINA) in 1975. During the winter, she administered AINA's Anchorage office, and in summer, she supported the scientists at the AINA research station in Kluane National Park, Yukon Territory, in a number of ways. She served delicious food at the beginning and end of each day and challenged the researchers with refreshing ideas and curiosity about their research. In 1977, she married Philip P. Upton, a senior pilot with AINA. They continued working at the field station during the summer, but moved from Anchorage to Calgary to work at the AINA headquarters at the University of Calgary.

In Calgary, Claudette became the production editor of *Arctic*. She worked closely with honorary editor Len Hills from 1979 until 1983, when she became acting editor and then editor, a position she held until early 1985. Claudette's skill as a professional editor helped *Arctic* become the renowned journal it is today.

Claudette's husband Phil passed away in 1984. In 1987, she started a new chapter, marrying Martin Keeley and moving to Point Roberts, Washington, where she continued editing and established her professional career as a freelance writer. In 1993, the British Columbia Medical Association appointed her editor-in-chief of its publication the *British Columbia Medical Journal*, a position she held for seven years. Claudette was the first non-medical professional to serve in such a capacity. Claudette was also a founding director of the West Coast Editors' Association and was later named an honorary life member of the Canadian Editors' Association, after serving as its president for several years. With the advent of the Internet and the ease of communication, Claudette returned to the life of a freelance editor in the mid 1990s.

In 1998, Claudette and Martin relocated to Cayman Brac. She was able to expand her editorial business to cover most of the world via the Internet. She edited the official history of Cayman Islands, *Founded Upon the Seas: A History of the Cayman Islands and their People*, and assisted



Claudette Reed Upton-Keeley.

with the writing of *Hearts and Sails*, which records the tradition of the Caymanian Catboat. For these achievements and her continual involvement with Caymanian history and culture, she received the National Heritage Award in 2007. Claudette's love for the written word knew no bounds. She willingly helped everyone to appreciate the beauty of writing with simplicity, understanding, and clarity.

Claudette's passion for social justice and the environment, which began in university, grew while she was in Anchorage, at Kluane Lake Research Station, and in Calgary, and this passion kept her extremely busy in both Point Roberts and Cayman Brac. In Calgary, she was involved as a leader in issues associated with women's rights and reproductive rights, an activity she first became involved with at Duke University. This focus continued in her later homes as she worked with planned parenthood organizations, business and professional women's organizations, land and water boards, and other women's, family, and environmental organizations wherever she settled. While living in Point Roberts, Claudette and Martin became central figures in saving the local heron rookery and protecting a landmark promontory—valuable historically for its deep roots in Native American West Coast culture—against potential

damage from inappropriate development activities. Her work, and that of many others, was rewarded in 2008 by the purchase of a large swath of the land known as Lily Point, to be preserved forever as parkland.

Claudette valued her personal life with her wonderful husband Martin, who held a special place in her heart, and her many adopted cats. She was a good friend who supported others whether they were struggling or on track. She encouraged both honest discussion and playfulness, empathized and remained loyal without losing sight of reality, and—equally outstanding—was able to ask for support when she needed it.

Claudette reached into many different sectors of our society and touched people because she cared. She became an exceptional editor by caring about the best expression of others' thoughts; she guided the agencies and boards she worked with to achieve their mandates while respecting the

views of others by caring about the people's choices; and she supported individuals in achieving their potential by caring about and nurturing relationships.

In every aspect of her life, she had a remarkable ability to bring disparate people together and inspire them to work toward outcomes, earning their respect through her calm, intelligent, and reasonable presentation.

Claudette is survived by her husband, Martin, and two brothers, Ron Reed and his wife Manya Pungowiyi of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Andy Reed of Asheville, North Carolina, and four stepchildren from her marriage to Philip Upton. We will all remember her.

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