



Kerol Diane Rose

September 20, 1946 - January 16, 2025

In the early hours of a Thursday, we lost Kerol to the mysteries of the universe. Maybe less mysterious to her than to many of us. Family and friends had been with her most daylight hours, and we can be comforted that two of St. Vincent's wonderful nurses were holding her hands at the end.

Born in Winnipeg, Kerol grew up there and in Sinclair, Manitoba. By way of Montreal, Virginia, and Ottawa, she came to Nova Scotia in 1974 with her then husband Bill Stevenson and her older son Willie, eventually moving with their younger son Charlie to the Chester area. Here she made many lifelong friends. Art was central to her life, some of it intensely private, some collected and exhibited. She was enthralled with the luminescence of gold in every form: glimpses, maybe, into other worlds. Red, too. Before leaving machines behind for the meditation of hand sewing, she only used red thread in her Pfaff. Working as a single mom in Chester, one of her favorite jobs was teaching pottery in the schools, especially on Tancook Island. She had previously taught at Mary Winspear's remarkable Weston School in Montreal, and in a Black elementary school on a Virginia island. She had run her own pottery studio and shop in Ottawa, and a copy of M.C. Richard's Centering sits near her desk to this day. In the early eighties worked with Paula Scott in her sweater business, making some of the most innovative and beautiful examples. It was here that she noticed a young carpenter working on the house next door, Emanuel Jannasch. Manla ("Monla") and she would spend

the next 44 years ever closer together.

Books were another element of Kerol's life; she worked as a librarian in Winnipeg, Ottawa, and Bridgewater and volunteered at Chester Middle School with two inspiring and beloved humans: Helen Iseminger and Lee Collins. Some might remember Vivian Crooks, another important mentor from that time. Kerol also sold books, this trade led her from Chester's Thirsty Thinkers Tea Room to Halifax: first to Frog Hollow and then to Soho Books. Liz Crocker of Frog Hollow and Kerol remained tight friends. In Halifax she immersed herself in Buddhism, though distanced herself from the local organization rather early in its trajectory. The practice remained central to her life. She'd quote Denny Blouin: "we'll always have our cushions".

Kerol's early life had been tough. She began working her way through the after-effects with Rod MacLean, a process that evolved into training: first in Gestalt therapy, then Transactional Analysis and Psychosynthesis. Stella Girard encouraged her to begin leading workshops with Marilou Manning at Services for Sexual Assault Victims. Before long she was part of several health collectives and then opened her own psychotherapy practice above Woozles on Birmingham Street. This was her life's calling, helping clients through their suffering towards beauty, peace, and even plain survival.

She nurtured a lighter side through Catchword Productions, founded with closest of friends Jan Morrison and Linda Jackson. The trio produced raucous yet densely layered murder mystery weekends at the Oak Island Inn and throughout the Maritimes and New England.

Happily, Kerol and Manla ("Monla") didn't wait for retirement to travel. One highlight was an extended family drama across the iron curtain to Czechoslovakia and pre-war Germany. Another was visiting her McCarthy grandparents' homeland in the South-West of Ireland. Visiting the Basque

Country fulfilled another longstanding dream, and her favorite journey was to Istanbul, Ankara, and hidden corners of Turkey.

Another memorable trip was to Merlefest 2006 and its extraordinary lineup. Kerol's heart connection to music extended to many styles and genres but remained rooted in a high school friend's blues recordings. There's a whole book to be written here. Watching Grandkids Max and Scarlett develop as musicians was thrilling to her. So was finding her own voice in the Dalhousie Medical School Choir.

In 2019 family and friends saw that something was awry with Kerol's mind, and in retrospect the symptoms of Alzheimer's had set in years earlier. It seems Kerol was relieved to understand her state of mind and put her skills and insights to managing it. Kerol and Manla moved from Jollimore to a great building on the Peninsula managed by the sympathetic and watchful Layton Richard. When Kerol needed full time care, Liz Crocker suggested the best caregiver imaginable in Imelda Gayo. Imelda eventually passed on the responsibility, and Rebecca Mostoles proved to be her equal. It's hard to put their diligence and love into words, but both continued to visit their dear friend in hospital and nursing care. In September, Kerol needed noticeably more physical help. On Thanksgiving Sunday she was still able to take a beautiful autumn walk in the Musquodoboit Valley, but in a matter of weeks had to be hospitalized, first at the Infirmary and then at the Victoria General—where she had volunteered in the palliative care unit for many years. Late on Christmas Eve she was transferred to St. Vincent's Nursing Home, whose wonderful staff made that a beautiful gift. Then, in a matter of weeks we lost a friend and guide, a keen-eyed customer of vintage clothing shops, a mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and every kind of relative. And a muse.

Among the relatives Kerol lost were her brothers Davey and Brian; among

those who lost Kerol were her brother Robert Mantel: they discovered each other not so long ago.

The fates were kind: the less capacity Kerol had to live her life, the less time she spent at each threshold. We are grateful for that. Her body has been cremated. There will be a celebration of Kerol's life at a date and place yet to be decided.

If you're thinking of a memorial donation, you might consider the Alzheimer Foundation of Canada or the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia.

Tribute Wall

KB

“ I am so saddened to hear of Kerol's passing just today. She was loved, admired and respected to so many more than just me. I've thought of her frequently since our lunch visits over the years. I quickly developed a love toward her as I learned "life" from her while we worked together at Eastwind. Wishing I had kept in touch more xo

Kim Byrne - February 04 at 11:13 AM

EJ

“ We will be celebrating Kerol's life on Saturday, June 7th, at the event space in our building: St Joseph's Square at 5450 Kaye Street. That's kitty corner across Gottingen from the triangular Hydrostone park. We imagine people will start arriving around 4:00, eulogy and reminiscences will start 5:00ish, and there will be food and music to take us into the evening. All are welcome.

Emanuel Jannasch - April 16, 2025 at 07:58 AM

SG

“ *Once upon a time
walking along a Halifax street
a sudden rainstorm erupts
upon my unsheltered body.*

*Crossing an intersection
there is an instant
when I hear my name.*

*I see a car approaching
its window open.
Kerol flings an umbrella
to land at my feet.*

*Bending to retrieve this gift
I see Kerol laughing
as she guides the car through the intersection.*

Sylvia Gard - April 10, 2025 at 10:28 AM

JS

“ *I was blessed to have met Kerol through Psychosynthesis and she
became my therapist for training and beyond.
I had regular sessions with Kerol for ten years while I processed
early griefs and learned, under her wise and kind guidance, how to
reclaim my creativity.*

*I am sorry to have lost touch with Kerol the last several years, but I
think of her every day with gratitude.*

Julie Strong

Julie Strong - February 21, 2025 at 05:38 PM

MJ

“ It’s been an pleasure and a blessing to have known Kerol. I learned a lot from her in Psychosynthesis training and in our friend/therapist group. She was very special and unique. I loved her insights. I admired her flair - in clothing, activities, words, and creativity. She stayed true to herself. She gave me love and compassion and honest feedback.

I’m sorry we lost touch over the years, and really sad to know that she had to deal with Alzheimer’s and has now passed into the beyond. Safe journey my friend.

My sympathies to her family, whom she often spoke about with love.

Maia Jack - February 12, 2025 at 10:58 AM

RD

“ Kerol was a wonderful person and I saw her often when she visited my Mom, Stella, before her death. Kerol became a friend and a bit of a mentor to me and we met every couple of weeks at the Ardmore Tea Room until she had an emergency come up and we lost touch. I didn’t realize she was ill and not getting back in touch because of that. I will always cherish my memories of her.

Reena Davis - February 03, 2025 at 10:30 AM

BE

“ I am so sorry for your loss. Kerol was a wonderful, kind person and my mother Stella’s best friend. This past weekend, I read one of my mother’s journals from her cancer experience and Kerol was lovingly written about so many times. I’m sure they are together somewhere, shining brightly and keeping an eye on us all. 🙏💕
Becky Eisan

Becky Eisan - February 03, 2025 at 09:46 AM

KS

“Kerol was my therapist at East Wind in Halifax, in the 90’s, during the difficult years of my marriage disintegration and subsequent divorce. She was a mentor, friend, guide, and supporter. I owe her a debt of gratitude for connecting me to the psychosynthesis training program. I am grateful that her passage to the other side was smooth. “May the Circle be unbroken...”

Karen Schlick - January 24, 2025 at 01:38 PM