

Tom Andrews, Poet, Correspondence with Debbie Gill A&M 4694

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1979-1985 and undated



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Tom Andrews, Poet, Correspondence with Debbie Gill A&M 4694

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Descriptive Summary

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Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

No special access restriction applies.

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Biographical / Historical

Thomas Chester "Tom" Andrews (April 30, 1961 – July 18, 2001) was an American poet who grew up in Charleston, West Virginia with his parents, Ray and Alice Andrews, and an older brother, John, who died at age 16 in 1980. When Andrews was 11, he got into the Guinness Book of World Records by clapping for over 14 hours.

He graduated from George Washington High School (Charleston, WV) in 1979. He studied at Oberlin College during his senior year in college, and graduated from Hope College with a B.A. (1984). While at Hope he studied under Jack Ridl and developed his love of poetry. He then graduated from the University of Virginia with an M.F.A. in Creative Writing (1987). He went on to lecture at the University of Michigan (1987-1988), taught at Ohio University (ca. 1991-1996), then served as Faculty at Purdue University (1996-?). In 1999, he won a Poetry Fellowship to the American Academy in Rome.

Prior to being diagnosed with hemophilia, Tom developed a great interest in motorcycles. While his diagnosis meant he shouldn't continue to ride, he maintained his interest, he co-founded and edited the online magazine/forum "Beginner Bikes."

He wrote and edited many books of poetry; his works include:

1989 *Hymning the Kanawha* (chapbook), Haw River Books 1993 *On William Stafford: The Worth of Local Things* (ed.), Univ. Michigan Press 1995 *The Point Where All Things Meet: Essays on Charles Wright* (ed.), Oberlin College Press 1990 *Brother's Country*, Persea Books (about his older brother John) 1994 *The Hemophiliac's Motorcycle*, University of Iowa Press 1998 *Codeine Diary: True Confessions of a Reckless Hemophiliac*, Little, Brown (memoir) 2002 *Random Symmetries: The Collected Poems of Tom Andrews*, Oberlin College Press

His awards include a 1993 Iowa Poetry Prize for *The Hemophiliac's Motorcycle*, a 1989 National Poetry Series Award for *Brother's Country*, and a 2001 Guggenheim Fellowship.

Andrews died in England as a result of complications from thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura. At the time of his death, Tom was an Adjunct Professor of Creative Writing with Warren Wilson College and was affianced to Alice Paterakis. He had previously been married to Carrie Andrews.

Scope and Contents

Correspondence from Tom Andrews sent to his friend, Debbie Gill (née Carey). Most were written during his time as a student at Hope College in Michigan. Gill was studying at West Virginia University at the time of this correspondence. In these letters, Andrews speaks only briefly about his writing and education. The conversations are personal in nature, with Andrews mentioning trips home to Charleston, sharing jokes, discussing relationships, and sending regards to other family and friends living near Gill in West Virginia.