

Slain professor's family forgives murderer



ANNE CLEARY: Iowa professor who grew up in Etobicoke was slain by enraged student.

By Michael Tenzzen
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The grieving family of a slain Iowa professor, who grew up in Etobicoke, has sent a letter of "love and forgiveness" to her killer's family in China.

The letter, in Chinese, was sent along with the slayer's ashes to his parents' home near Beijing.

A psychology scholarship for foreign students in Anne Cleary's name has also been established, the murdered woman's brother, Frank Cleary, said yesterday.

Cleary was a brilliant student at St. Joseph's High School in Etobicoke, who went on to become a world expert in educational testing and aptitude.

"It's very ironic," university official Mary Greer said in an interview. "Anne was so very active with students from China, was herself born in China, and she was killed by a student from China."

Cleary, 56, and five others at the University of Iowa were gunned down Nov. 1 by Gang Lu, 28, a despondent graduate student enraged that he was eliminated for a top academic award.

The killer, who came from China in 1988, received his physics doctorate in May. A county prosecutor in Iowa City said Lu bought his .38-calibre revolver on the same day he appealed the university's rejection of his application for the

award.

The prosecutor said Lu, although not an American citizen, had no trouble buying his weapon at an Iowa City gunshop, the Fin and Feather.

After his bloody rampage, Lu shot himself outside Cleary's office.

Cleary, vice-president for academic affairs at the 28,000-student university, was the official who finally rejected Lu's appeal, Greer said.

Lu shot Cleary, whom he did not know, in the head. She died in her office in the administration building, Jessup Hall, near the end of Lu's 10-minute rampage.

"She was so devoted to international students," said Margaret Clifford, a university professor and Cleary's best friend. Frank Cleary said his sister, who held a doctorate in psychology, specialized in recruiting top students from China.

"But it's just a coincidence that her killer was Chinese," he stressed.

Clifford said the Cleary family's letter to Lu's family will be hand-delivered by a Chinese consular official who will also take the gunman's ashes to his family. She said Cleary made frequent visits to China.

"The only people who could be grieving more than we are Gang Lu's family,"

Frank Cleary said yesterday. "He was a brilliant student himself, and his family must be devastated. It's all so tragically sad."

Cleary attended St. Joseph's at Islington Ave. and Bloor St. from 1949 to 1954, said Sister Claudette, who taught her.

"Anne was a very good student and one of the first we had at the new school. A very nice girl," she said. "Oh, I remember her red hair well. I was really shocked when I heard." The school is now called Michael Power-St. Joseph's.

Anne Cleary, her parents, Frank and Janet, and three brothers, lived on Edgehill Dr. in the Kingsway area of Etobicoke.

The University of Iowa held a memorial service Thursday night, attended by 8,000 students and staff. The university's president said Cleary's death left the school with "a broken heart."

Cleary, who never married, was highly popular at the university and in her own neighborhood. Children loved her because she held birthday parties for her cats and their cats and organized large 4th of July parties.

"We are all still in shock," said Greer, 28, a close friend of Cleary's. "Anne was so very dedicated to students. She was always having them over to her house."

"As we gathered in grief and fond memories, our thoughts and prayers also went out to you, the family of Gang Lu, as we know how you also must be grieving at this time," the Cleary family wrote Lu's family.

"Together, we all can gain strength and support from this. Anne would want it that way."

In a statement found in Lu's room after the slayings, Cleary's name was on a hit list of people Lu felt responsible for disgracing him, Greer told The Star. "He targeted Anne."

Also killed were the chairman of the physics department, the physics student who won the award, and two other professors besides Cleary.

The winner of the award, which includes a \$1,000 cash prize, was also from China. He won for his doctoral dissertation in physics.

Cleary's secretary, Miya Sioson, 23, a student from the Philippines, was also shot in the head. The bullet entered the young woman's spine and she will be paralyzed for life from the neck down, Greer said.

Cleary was buried Monday at St. Joseph's cemetery in Iowa City.

She leaves her brothers, Michael, 48, of Brussels, Belgium; Frank, 58, of Connecticut; and Paul, 42, of Boston.