

Obituary

EAHIL 2015: Guillemette Utard-Wlerick would have enjoyed it



Guillemette Utard-Wlerick
born 1 September 1951, died 12 June 2015

I met Guillemette Utard-Wlerick a few years ago at the “Réseau National des Documentalistes Hospitaliers”.

Very quickly she convinced me to join the “European Association for Health Information and Libraries” (EAHIL). Guillemette had been a member of EAHIL since 1997 in Budapest and she and I shared experience of the organisation from the time of the Brussels meeting in July 2012 onwards. At that time, she was to deliver an oral presentation on “Evidence-Based Medicine: a critical approach” in Brussels. I realised afterwards how courageous it was, opening a debate with all those who supported evidence-based medicine in practice, and to deliver an analysis criticising it. And this fact reveals Guillemette’s character. She was always keen to determine what was good and what was wrong, the positive and negative side of each theory, idea and method. This is why she enjoyed coming to EAHIL so much every year, it was such an intellectual challenge to her but also it was a great pleasure to meet old friends. She has been a council member of the organisation for some time and has represented France in this capacity.

Guillemette was convinced of the essential role to be played by medical librarians and also of the importance of the relationship between the librarian and the customer. During her entire career as an information specialist, she was focussed on listening to their needs, and she facilitated many learning sessions. And this is how she made a great many friends amongst doctors and researchers, one of them living now in the United States who remembers the day he met her at the medical library just as he arrived from India as a young post-graduate doctor in biology, and was at a loss to get the information he needed. This friendship has lasted for 32 years.

Guillemette loved life; she enjoyed exploring all these wonderful cities each time we attended a conference or a workshop, tasting different kinds of food, matching her dress with her bag and shoes, and dancing at each reception dinner. Many members of our Association have known Guillemette for years and we, her colleagues, feel her loss deeply. She died suddenly at the time of the EAHIL workshop in Edinburgh. She had had a stroke while she was at home preparing her trip, and died shortly afterwards of a heart attack. She leaves behind her husband Jean-Claude and her two children Vincent and Frédéric and now my thoughts are for them, as I am sure are yours.

As members EAHIL, I’m sure we will all particularly remember Guillemette’s “joie de vivre” .

News from EAHIL

A few articles and tutorials in which Guillemette participated:

- Dollfuss H, Bauer B, Declève G, Verhaaren H, Utard-Wlerick G, Bakker S, Leclerq E, Murphy J. International trends in health science librarianship: Part 2--Northern Europe. *Health Info Libr J*. 2012 Jun;29(2):166-71. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-1842.2011.00986.x.
- Ornetti P, Brandt K, Hellio-Le Graverand MP, Hochberg M, Hunter DJ, Kloppenburg M, Lane N, Maillefert JF, Mazzuca SA, Spector T, Utard-Wlerick G, Vignon E, Dougados M. OARSI-OMERACT definition of relevant radiological progression in hip/knee osteoarthritis. *Osteoarthritis Cartilage*. 2009 Jul;17(7):856-63. doi:10.1016/j.joca.2009.01.007. Epub 2009 Feb 9.
- Patrice Benoit, Alexandre Boutet, Benjamin Macé, Guillemette Utard-Wlérick. PUBMED tutoriel. Paris: Université Paris Descartes, Bibliothèque Interuniversitaire de Santé; avril 2015. <http://www.biusante.parisdescartes.fr/medecine/formation/pubmed1-tutoriel-biusante.pdf>

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