

Heather (Luke) Holmes

Dear Class of 1962,

Here's a little glimpse into the life and times of Heather (Luke) Holmes since we all left Northview High 50-odd years ago.

I was at Wits from 1963-1966 and graduated with a BA in Social work.



In Jan 1967 I married Peter Holmes (the brother of Marj Holmes', my classmate) – perhaps you can recognise us in this wedding photo?

My first job, 1967-1968, was at the then Department of Social Welfare and Pensions in Jo'burg as a Social Welfare and Probation Officer. Phew! It was very gruelling and soul-destroying work, - a serious reality check for an idealistic new graduate.

From 1969 to 1971 we lived in the UK (Welwyn Garden City - WGC) where our first daughter, Annemarie, was born in July '69 – more or less at the same time as Neil Armstrong took his “one giant leap for mankind!”

Peter taught at a High School in WGC whilst I was a stay-at-home mom. During school holidays we travelled in the UK and Europe in a VW Combi-Camper. How many others from the class of '62 also did that sort of thing at the time I wonder? Maybe quite a few? England won the Soccer World Cup IN England while we were there. Quite a big deal for them - and pretty memorable for us too. [Pete's quite a soccer (and cricket and rugby and golf) fan & a big Man U supporter. I'm likewise by default – especially of cricket.]

Back in SA - 1971 – 1979 and we settled in Raedene, Jo'burg and our 2nd daughter, Shannon, was born in Sept 71. I took on part-time work with the Wits School of Social Work which I continued doing over the next 8 years. Our 3rd daughter, Lisa, was born - May '76 and we owner-built and moved into a house in Gallo Manor in 1977.

Back to the USA – 1980-1982 - one of the big and formative adventures of our lives. We went mainly for post-grad studies and were there for about 3 years. We lived mostly in Pasadena, Southern California. During the school terms Peter studied full-time in a MA in Theology programme while I studied part-time in an MA [Marriage & Family] Programme. He graduated but I didn't complete the course though what I did manage to finish set me up for the next phase of my career back in SA.

Our kids had the rare experience of being “bussed” along with other ‘whiteys’ in our area, to a school in a mostly black area. It was brilliant for them to experience (excellent) black teachers and have lots of black friends. [Coming back to lily-white Waverley Girls High was a culture shock for them! In fact, Shannon didn't like it and took herself off to St Luke's College, a LEAF school near Kyalami.]

During our 3 Summers in the US we worked on staff at various Christian Youth Camps in California and Colorado. This was our other reason for going to the States and we also travelled widely throughout the US and Canada during the summers. The high-light was a coast-to-coast camping trek from LA to NYC in a ridiculous Pontiac that we named “The Yank Tank”. For us It was a tough choice, in those dark days of “Die Ou Krokodil” Eighties, to come back to SA. In the end we did so because of a conviction that we must try and make a difference there whatever the consequences.



LA: Ferry between Balboa Island & Newport Beach.



Washington Fundamental School
1980-1981 - Grade 6

1982 – 1991: Back in SA [Gallo Manor].

I had the privilege of getting a job at Family Life Centre in JHB (a branch of FAMSA) where, for nearly 10 years, I worked with a great team doing therapeutic work with families and couples. I also got involved with students again, running FLC's Student Training Unit for UNISA and WITS students - in clinical and field work. Peter meantime put his camping experience to work, most notably running dynamic, fully integrated youth camps despite the difficulties and challenges in our country at that time.



A Tennis "Party" with old friends.
Taken when we returned to the US
for a visit in '93.

1992 – 1995:

In 1992 my career took a dramatic and significant turn. As a result I gave up formal Social Work and, to cut a long story short, I ended up being employed by the Nedcor Group as one of 2 representatives for "Big Business" on the Interim Crisis Committee (ICC) for Alexandra Township. The committee was convened by the National Peace Secretariat to deal with the extreme conflict that had erupted in that area in 1991 and which threatened stability way beyond Alex.

The process that led to peace in the Township is documented elsewhere (sorry, I don't have a Web link or references) but newspapers called it "a miracle". Because I was '*on the ground*' and part of the ICC for that critical period before and after the 1994 Elections I witnessed this amazing transformation 'close up and in person.' The ICC was, of course, one of many such National Peace Accord initiatives across the country. They helped make possible the big Miracle of SA's peaceful transition to democracy.

1995 – today:

After a short period in Nedcor's Human Resource division, I joined The Pacific Institute (TPI). It's an international consulting organisation working in corporate, education and community contexts. Their core curriculum is called *Investment In Excellence* ... and I'm not going into detail about all that here. The significance in this career change was that I shifted my focus from remedial to preventative psychology interventions. It's been a good place to be for the last 18 years because of the diversity of work in which I've been able to

involve myself. For the last 12 years, since retiring from Scripture Union after 30 years, Peter joined me at TPI and has worked extensively in mostly private schools. If you're interested, please go to the South African website and from there you can access the international one. It is: <http://www.tpi.co.za/index.php/en/>

So, after 47 years Peter and I are still (usually!) happily married. Between our 3 daughters the family has expanded to include 2 great sons-in-law, 3 grand-daughters, 2 grandsons [17, 14, 11, 11 & 8], 6 grand-dogs and 2 grand-bunnies.

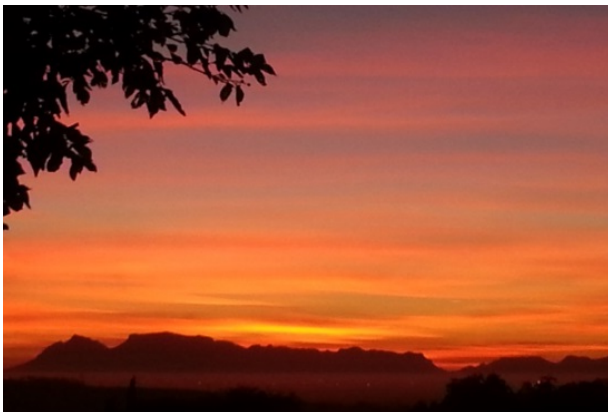


Joshua, Caitlin, Rebecca,
Lauren and Justin

We moved to Somerset West in 2011 because we've always wanted to live in the Western Cape and because our girls and their families are all here.

So, we now live - surprise, surprise – in a retirement village. It's a very large and stunningly beautiful (golf) estate on the Somerset West / Stellenbosch border. When not working Pete's major pre-occupation is playing golf. (After 20 years he's not riding The ARGUS this year.) Mine is the above-mentioned family. I'd prefer mind you, after last week's pet-sitting, to lose or stew the bunnies!

As we're still working we must commute to Jo'burg about twice a month and when there, we stay with Marj in her lovely home in Craigavon, Fourways.



Sunset over Table Mountain as
seen from the front door at our
Retirement Village.

So – that's the life (so far) of Heather Luke since 1962!

Let me add that, looking back, we're immensely grateful for our health, our work, our family and friends and, above all, our faith in a God Who has been the constant and centre through it all – especially the more difficult, traumatic elements of life in SA of which we've all, no doubt, had our share.

Cheers! Hope to see ALL of you in 2017 or perhaps sooner.
Heather

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