

Helena Janicki

Regretfully I will not be able to attend and reunion in South Africa being too far away in Dunfermline (the Royal and Ancient Capital of Scotland) to make the journey.



Seeing all the names being circulated (through the email messages) has been a wonderful nostalgic journey conjuring up so many happy memories - though sometimes I have difficulty in putting a face to a familiar name.

My life since 1962: I went to University in Pietermaritzburg as did Marlene Venn and Kate O'Meara (with whom I kept up contact and visits after I moved to the UK and she to the US until her sad premature death from cancer).

Although I followed my parents to the UK in 1966 and worked in London for a few years I returned to Jo'burg and worked there (in property management for JCI) until 1987 when I returned to the UK and lived and worked in the London area for 18 years. When I retired decided to return to my roots in Scotland - and Dunfermline - the town where I'd been born.

I really loved London and while living there truly relished and made the most of all the theatres, museums, galleries, exhibitions and wonderful history which is there in such abundance. I still think it the greatest city in the World offering so much of everything but unfortunately the after effects of polio had been getting worse and I found myself increasingly less able to avail myself of, and enjoy, what London offered. To be so near all those "*domes, theatres and temples*" but unable to get to them was just too painful so in 2005 I moved north to a much smaller place where I already had relatives and which was familiar to me.

The move has been good. It took a bit of effort putting down new roots but I've made some good friends and we've a good Library with lots of activities - it was the first of almost 500 Carnegie Libraries world-wide endowed by Andrew Carnegie who was born here - about 200m from my present flat in a retirement complex - oh yes it's come to that I'm afraid.

My days of walking with a stick and calliper only are long past and I now need crutches or my electric wheelchair but there too a smaller centre like Dunfermline is better as I can reach so many places on these wheels. I also enjoy the fact that Scotland - being smaller - is very accessible by car and is also incredibly beautiful to visit so I've enjoyed going further afield too. The weather leaves a lot to be desired but I guess you can't have everything.

I've visited SA a few times since I left but probably won't make it again which is a pity because it too is a beautiful country and I've still got close friends there. Skype is good, as is email, but it's not the same as sitting down over a meal, glass of wine or cup of tea and just having a jolly good chat. I was deeply involved in politics and related aspects while living in SA and naturally I still follow events there closely because a large part of my heart will always remain there - you can't grow up and live in a country for over 30 years and not remain concerned and caring about it forever.

When we have our frequent dark and dreich winter days here in Scotland I think back with happy nostalgia of safaris, beaches, the Drakensberg, the Winelands of the Cape, tropical flora, braais and all the other wonderful things I'll always miss.

I'm really looking forward to receiving my copy of the Class of '62 booklet to see what everyone else has done and is doing now.

My love to all of you.
Lenna

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