

[New] Jill (Rogers) Kamke - Some Highlights of my life after Northview

After Northview I studied English and Psychology at University of the Witwatersrand where I suffered a sea change, from a sporting duffer who lasted one day at hockey, to captain of the ladies' fencing team. I took up fencing because of the romantic ambiance around the sport but soon found that the precise movement and rapid thinking suited my temperament. My sporting activities culminated in half colours awarded by Wits, and captaincy of the ladies' team on an overseas inter- varsities tour of the United Kingdom, Germany and Belgium in 1966.

After graduation from Wits and a year at Johannesburg College of Education I taught English to 6 classes of Form One for a short while at Boksburg High and that ended any desire I might have had for educating the young. I married Egbert Jan Swart, a fellow fencer and a computer Engineer for IBM, when computers filled a whole room. We re-located to Constantia in Cape Town in 1972 and I settled down to a quiet life bringing up my two children, Ursula and Dirk. Teaching

had never suited me and while I was at home I studied at the University of Cape Town and graduated with an first class Honours degree in Library and Information Science.

Working as a principal Librarian for Cape Town City Libraries, I managed three large mobile libraries, a service to senior citizen complexes, a hospital library at Groote Schuur Hospital and initiated a service through volunteers to homebound readers. As technology threatened to overtake libraries' role of information providers, librarians concentrated on increasing



literacy and I inaugurated a "Babies Need Books" programme with funding of R600 000 to buy books. Many underprivileged children begin school without ever handling a book and extensive research in UK proved that the introduction of books to very young children increased their chances of better school results. The programme linked local libraries with clinics, where the sister in charge of child development educated the mothers of small children about the importance of books and gifted the child with a book and a

voucher for another book to be exchanged at the local library. Children could then join story hour and begin their education.

Cape Town became a unicity and was governed by the ANC under Nomaindia Mfeketo and I had an exciting and illuminating two years in the newly created transformation office of the mayor and a brief flirtation with Trade Unionism. My son, Dirk graduated from University of



Cape Town and emigrated to USA where he is assistant director in the I.T department at Cornell University. His wife Bronwyn, also from Cape Town, has a Ph.D. in microbiology and is involved in research at Cornell. My daughter , Ursula, is a counsellor in addictions while her husband, Ken owns a small computer company.

Egbert died of an aneurism and I spent a lonely year before meeting and marrying my beloved Robin Kamke and beginning a new life with the beginning of a new century. To celebrate I threw away my glasses and am now a redhead!

Robin is a civil engineer specialising in construction. When he was offered a job in Turkey on an open cast gold mine we packed our hiking boots and set off on a new adventure. The mine near Ulubey was developed by Tuprag, a Turkish company owned by Eldorado Gold in Canada. When we arrived in 2006 production had just begun and by the time we left at the end of 2013 the mine had the biggest gold production in Europe.

Life in Turkey was fascinating and I even learnt a smattering of Turkish so that I could barter in the markets. We most enjoyed the freedom to wander the hills in perfect safety, re-creating the past of Asia Minor for ourselves. To find an old piece of ancient pottery for yourself is better by far than to see a complete anfora in a museum, although the Museum of Ancient Civilisations in Ankara is not to be missed. Among many other explorations we traced the footsteps of Alexander through the Cilician Gates and found a recently discovered tin mine that had supplied the Hittites. Mrs Gordon's enthusiasm for ancient history in Form One had finally borne fruit.

We were also fortunate to travel to many lands during our holidays:

India, to float down the Ganges on an old boat with tattered sails and to visit Varanasi (remember Kim ?)

Myanmar (Burma) to wonder at the temples and the Irrawaddy River or the Road to Mandalay.

Italy, first on a tour from Venice through Rome to Naples to absorb some European culture and compare Herculaneum with the Turkish sites. The second tour included a visit to Vesuvius and Sicily and finally we hiked in the Dolomites in South Tyrol and promised to return asap.

Prague and Dubrovnik and London remain our favourite cities but nothing beats the Dolomites for hiking.



Robin retired at last and we returned to Cape Town at the beginning of 2014 and now sit in chaos while renovating our townhouse which we hope to use as a pied a terre for further travels. My beloved granddaughter, Juliet, is in matric in Cape Town.

This year (2014) we plan to visit Robin's grandchildren in the U.K. where we hope to explore Scotland, and my son Dirk's two girls in Ithaca, New York USA.

My wish is that we continue in good health and enjoy the adventure of life.

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