

Tribute to Gilkela (Doris Rayner)

'Gilkela' - Doris Rayner passed away peacefully on 9 September 1980 and Scouting is the poorer because of the loss of this great character.

My association with Gilkela goes back to 1932, when, as a very 'raw' candidate, I attended a Wood Badge Course which she directed at the old "Gilcape" behind her house. She met us at the gate and immediately allayed our fears with her gentle manner, her cheerfulness and her humour. She soon proved to us that these were not her only characteristics. Then, and down the years, she showed us her practical efficiency, her resoluteness, her firm loyalty and her ever present kindness.

Some years later she did me the honour of inviting me, together with Del Parker, to become members, in an assisting capacity, of the Training Team. The years I served under her, I found invaluable. Her technical knowledge and her organisational ability gave me much to build on in later years.

We shall miss her very much - but she will live on in the foundations of training that she laid so firmly - and in the lives of many, both boys and adults, who benefitted so much from her training.

She and Carl "Serpent" Rayner were a fine team to the end. We offer him our sincere sympathy and understanding in the difficult period of re-adjustment without her.

R HAWES (Rikki)



The news of the passing of Doris Rayner (Gilkela) brought back many memories - memories, for example, of the old Gilcape in the back garden of the Rayner's home at Diep River, when she not only ran the Cub Courses, but acted as Quartermaster on all the other Courses. As a Trainer ("Akela Leader" was the designation in those days), her sessions were always meticulously prepared and presented.

She had a proud Scouting record. After serving as Assistant Cubmaster (A.P.S) and Cubmaster (P.S) from 1917 to 1926, she was one of the first South Africans to qualify to organise and lead Training Courses. She was involved in the earliest Cape Western Courses, and from then on she and "Serpent" laid the solid foundations of Cape Western Adult Training.

But of course, it is not only what she did that was important, but what she was - a friend, a leader, an example and the embodiment of the Scout Laws and Promise.

Now she has passed to higher service, and has left us a goodly heritage and a trail to follow.

Frank O QUINN - Kudu

Source: Cape Western Scouter

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