



October 19, 2015

### **Countdown to Riverside City College's 100th Anniversary**

Winifred Turner was an Associate Professor / Reference Librarian at Riverside City College from 1961 to 1969. After retirement she returned in her 70s and 80s as a volunteer Librarian at R.C.C. Turner received a B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University and a M.A. from the University of Southern California. She also did graduate study at Columbia University, the National University of Mexico, the University of Guadalajara (Mexico), Western Illinois University and the University of California, Riverside.

Below is a photo of Turner (left) along with R.C.C. librarian Rosa McKusick (1951-1967) and head librarian Harry Bach (1962-1972)



Turner loved to travel. The two photos (below) appeared in the September-October 1966 issue of "RCC Reports".



**SAFARI SOUVENIRS** — RCC Reference Librarian Winifred Turner displays some of the souvenirs she brought back from an African trip last summer. Limited to only 40 pounds in luggage, Mrs. Turner collected small native wood carvings rather than anything larger.



**EAST AFRICA**—Librarian Winifred Turner points to the area of East Africa which was the focal point of her summer trip. She visited several countries during her photo-taking expedition.

The headline and article appear below:

## Librarian recalls African safari

RCC Librarian Winifred Turner has recently added big-game hunting in East Africa to her treasury of experiences. "Three weeks on a photo-safari through the game preserves of East Africa were the realization of a life-long dream," Mrs. Turner relates. "I remember my grandfather having a big old book with many pictures about Africa, and it always fascinated me." Foreign travel is certainly nothing new to Mrs. Turner; she spent many years teaching Spanish in Central and South America, and traveling through Europe and Asia. But, of all her journeys, she found the contrasts in the African countries of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania most exciting. Mrs. Turner recalls "exciting" contrasts between the nearly endless savanna wilderness with its grass huts and the large, modern and beautiful capital cities—contrasts between the life-and-death struggle of existence among the animals, and the calm serenity of city life. "Travel through the backcountry can be a little disconcerting," Mrs. Turner states. "Elephants have the right of way, and considering their size, it is not a point to be disputed." Tourists are not permitted to travel in the national parks and preserves except on guided safaris because of the danger from carnivorous animals. However, the government maintains a number of adequate lodges for overnight stops. "The most interesting and famous of these is the 'Tree House'," she continues. "Rough and unpolished as it is, here you are able to view the animals from a safe distance, and sleep in comparative security." The "Tree House" lodge is built high in a grove of cape chestnut trees, located in a natural salt lick of a sodium chloride bed. Its flat veranda roof, over the cubicle sleeping rooms, is the gathering place for meals and picture taking. "The area around the lodge must be approached with extreme caution," she says. "The transport vehicles cannot get closer than about half a mile to it, and from there, small groups must proceed on foot from one protective blind to another." Some animals, like the leopard, prowl for their food in the daytime. Others are night hunters. But, since all animals move about periodically, voices must be kept to a whisper, and clothing must blend with the scenery. "Of course, there were the baboons, too," the petite research librarian chuckles. "They are everywhere and into everything. If we hadn't kept our doors and windows locked, they would have entered and stolen anything they could carry." "Even on the veranda when we had tea, they would climb the railings and steal biscuits from our plates." Also included in her itinerary were Lake Manyara National Park, Murchison Falls, and a launch cruise on the Nile River. And there was time for rest and shopping in the capital cities of Nairobi and Kampala. "We did not visit the capital of Tanzania because of the extreme heat there," Mrs. Turner adds. "Most of the area we visited was at altitudes of 3,000 to 8,000 feet, with mild days and cold nights." In the back country there were many interesting sights to be recorded in her travel diary. "At Lake Manyara I saw a pride of lions sleeping in the acacia trees after their daily meal. They were draped over the branches like rag dolls thrown by some great hand." At Lake Nakuru she saw over one million flamingoes in the water at one time, and along the Nile there were hippopotami weighing two tons, 18-foot crocodiles, and six-ton elephants. "I also saw Mt. Kilimanjaro towering above its perpetual shroud of clouds, and visited a nearby village of Masai herdsman," she continues. To the Masai, who are tall, proud natives of the tall-grass-and-low-brush savanna lands, a man's wealth are measured in cattle. The women tend the grass-hut villages while the men spend their time guarding the cattle against attack, and they live on a diet of milk and blood from their animals. "The capital cities would put many of ours to shame," Mrs. Turner comments. "The buildings are new and very modern, and everywhere there are flowers and green laws. The 'dual carriage ways' (double roadways) are planted with huge bougainvillea trimmed into shapes of trees." At Nairobi, capital of Kenya, Woolworth's is the biggest store, but there are many small shops of all kinds, owned

mostly by Hindu shopkeepers. Another highlight of Mrs. Turner's journey was the new Makerere University at Kampala, capital of Uganda, where her main interest was in the library. "It is the most beautiful library I have ever seen in my life," she declares. "It's the latest in modern styling, and the interior is all finished in ebony, ivory, and stained glass." Higher education is fast becoming an important factor in the economic and cultural development of Africa and new schools are being built everywhere. English is being taught from the primary grades as a universal language. What new challenges does the world have to offer Winifred Turner — librarian, big-game hunter, and world traveler? "Well, there's Australia and Japan; Spain and Portugal. They are about the only places I have not been yet, but I will have to start saving my money again before making any plans."

When Winifred Turner retired, the following photos appeared in the June 1969 issue of "RCC Reports".



The article read:

Associate Professors Denton Titus and Winifred Turner will retire this year and be awarded the titles of professor emeritus at tonight's graduation exercises. Titus will be ending a career in June that began in an elementary school in Arroyo Grande and continued for more than 40 years. Originally coming to Riverside as an electric shop teacher at Central Junior High in 1939, Titus moved to the other end of Fairfax Avenue and joined the college staff in 1952 as its first electronics instructor. Since then, two full time teachers have been added to that department. He interrupted his teaching to serve three years as an electronics technician in the Navy during World War II. He has no special plans for retirement, other than to take short trips with his wife Florence. Many of them will be to visit their two daughters, Mrs. Lita Royse of Pomona, and her five children and Mrs. Jeanne Peters of Cupertino and her three children and two and a half year old granddaughter (Prof. Titus' great granddaughter.) Mrs. Turner, who came to RCC as a reference librarian in 1961 after two years at Poly, began high school Spanish teacher in Fremont, Ohio. Mrs. Turner says she is not so much retiring as she is "changing lanes in the freeway." She will now have time to develop an interest in writing nonfiction for children. Farthest advanced, she says, is a book with the working title, "Pets Are People." Mrs. Turner has two sons, Orison, an engineer in private practice in Riverside, and Mark W. Turner, an engineer with Pontiac Motor Company, who lives with his two children in Union Lake, Michigan. Looking back on her career in education, Mrs. Turner feels that RCC has provided an ideal atmosphere for a teacher to "do his own thing," to serve

*students and the community in the way he feels most fitted. She is gratified that she was able to help plan and to work in the new library, and she is pleased that she could teach the first course in the Library Technology program. Mrs. Turner wants her friends to know that after summer school, her address will be at 306 High Street, Apartment 12, Fremont, Ohio 43420.*

However, life in retirement did not suit her. An article from the May 1972 issue of "RCC Reports" told of how she had joined the Peace Corps.

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## Winnie Turner In Peace Corps

The article read:

*Winifred Turner, retired RCC librarian, found retirement too dull and set out to find a new "career." She enlisted in the Peace Corps and will leave in July to serve two years on the Windward Island of Saint Lucia in the eastern Caribbean. After a brief training period at the University of San Juan, Puerto Rico, she will then assume her duties as assistant librarian at the Morne Educational Complex, Castries, Saint Lucia, a city of about 25,000. The complex houses the extra-mural department of the Saint Lucia Teachers College, the Fortune Technical College and the Morne Secondary School.*

A photo in the December 1982 issue of "RCC Reports", told of a book she had written.



The caption for the photo above read:

*Professor Emeritus Winifred Turner explains how the fabric she is holding is made to a faculty member during a reception held to honor Turner for her book, "Slip Off Your Slippers and Slip into Malaysia." The 79-year old native of Ohio details her two and one-half years as a state librarian in Malaysia with the Peace Corps in 1972.*

Winifred Turner was profiled in the November 27, 1985 issue of the "Viewpoints" student newspaper. Below is the photo that appeared with the article:



JESS GONZALEZ/Viewpoints  
High steppin' Winifred Turner at age 83, still volunteers her time to the RCC library.

The headline and article, written by “Viewpoints” staff writer May Smith, appear below:

*Winifred Turner extracts every drop of living from every day of her life; when it would seem she has enjoyed it to the fullest, she squeezes yet another drop of sweetness from the memory of days well lived. The retired RCC librarian has traveled all over the world in her 83 years and presents travelogues of her journeys to convalescent hospitals, churches or wherever else she is asked. The beauty of doing this is she “enjoys her trips all over again.” This is not the only time Turner uses her special brand of philosophy and past travels to enrich the present. When faced with a sleepless night, instead of tossing and turning or counting sheep, Turner mentally retraces a favorite journey and is ready to greet the morning refreshed. Her philosophy must work. How else could she find the energy to walk two miles each day, swim when she can, do the travelogues and volunteer her time four days a week? Turner, who volunteers one day a week at the RCC library, also spends two days a week at the La Sierra branch of the public library and has been a volunteer at juvenile hall for the last 10 years. Turner’s “pay” for tutoring at juvenile hall is lunch—but the real reward comes when one of her students asks, “Will you sit at my table?” It is an honor to have the tiny, silver-haired grandmother share a lunch table and Turner is proud of the positive influence she has had on the youngsters there. More important than the tutoring is the personal contact and encouragement she gives them. Turner has a strong sense of family and heritage. She speaks lovingly and proudly of her parents, her late husband, two sons and two grandchildren. She was born in a 10-room house built of timber from the 140-acre Ohio farm that had been in her family for three generations. “I have the original deed to our farm in parchment dated 1832 with Andrew Jackson’s signature . . . all written in hand,” said Turner. This historical document is stored in a safety deposit box along with her great-grandfather’s parchment baptismal certificate from Nottingham, England. Although the farm no longer belongs to her family, she values the enrichment it brought to her life. Turner was widowed when her sons were young and she returned to the farm to raise them. “Back in the woods, there is a huge silver beech tree with all the family initials carved in it . . . four generations of initials,” said Turner. She lives with her youngest son, Mark, a project engineer at the Manville Company in Corona. Her oldest son, Orison Turner Jr., designs propellers for private planes. “He designed and built his own small plane. He takes me flying every once in a while. He has it at Flabob (airport)... It’s such fun riding in the little plane. You can fly low, and oh! You can see so much!” That remark is typical of the beauty Turner sees all about her and the zest with which she approaches everything in life. “She has great depth of feeling. . . she approaches everything in life. “She has great depth of feeling. . . she makes each person feel terribly important and she makes every effort to be a bridge-builder,” said Jo Ann Bailey, an RCC reference librarian who came to Riverside’s Poly High school library in 1959, the same year as Turner. Turner also spans the bridge of death, age and time when she sits at her piano each day and plays “Always.” It is the only song she knows how to play by heart and each time she plays it, it is a moment of closeness shared with her late husband. Turner sews her own clothes, saving money to support her travel habit. She does all of her sewing by hand and incorporates her love of travel and music. She puts a record album on to play as she stitches fabric purchased on her trips. To illustrate, she jumped up to show the colorful fabric trimming the burgundy colored dress she was wearing—fabric brought back from Malaysia where she served in the Peace Corps. Turner joined the Peace Corps at the age of 70. “I was a state librarian. . . right on the equator on the south China Sea where they have the most beautiful beaches Her voice softly rolls over the words, making her memory real and vivid to the listener. “Almost every day I would put on my bathing suit and walk to the beach—everybody knew me—I was the only one of my kind in town.” Turner’s job was to set up libraries in rural elementary schools and to train someone to take her place. The young lady she was training had just learned to drive and the two of them traveled about the*

*countryside. “She always drove barefoot. The cattle would bed down in the middle of the road—little one-lane country roads—and, being a farm girl, my job was to get out and shoo cattle off the road.” Turner, trim and spry, attributes her good health to exercise and a healthy diet with lots of calcium. At the age of 80, she was skimming the swimming pool when the skimmer caught a hornet’s nest high in a palm tree. “A whole swarm of hornets came down and in my haste to get away, I tripped.” Although no bones were broken, Turner was hospitalized for three weeks. Turner recalled another close call with her health. “I had a ruptured appendix when I was alone on the farm in a blizzard. I was upstairs, the phone was downstairs. I managed to get down and call my cousin who was a doctor.” Turner was unconscious on the floor when her cousin arrived. “He fought his way 15 miles (through the blizzard) to get to the farmhouse and called the ambulance. “I just barely made it to the hospital. They operated on me—and I’m still alive!” said Turner triumphantly. Along with family, health and travel, Turner places a high value on education. Still sounding awed at her good fortune of so many years ago, she said, “I was lucky. I received a fully paid fellowship in the English department (at USC) so I got my Master of Arts degree.” Although she taught for 43 years, the perpetual traveler is also the perpetual student. Just last summer, she flew non-stop from Los Angeles to London through the Elderhostel program (a program whereby senior citizens travel at a reduced rate and stay on campuses and attend classes). Turner spoke enthusiastically of her trip to England and Scotland. “Every morning, we had classes... we had excellent professors . . . and every afternoon there were tours,” said the ageless student/traveler. Turner, who takes all of her own pictures for the travelogues she presents, says “New Zealand was the most beautiful” place she has visited. “I walked the great wall of China. . . and visited with Indira Gandhi she said, her voice trailing off in disbelief as she recalled the violent fate of Mrs. Gandhi. When queried about the rumor that the only place she hadn’t visited was the Antarctic, the inimitable Turner replied, “Give me time . . . give me time and I’ll get there.” Somehow, it doesn’t seem unrealistic to picture this tiny silver-haired dynamo on a dog-sled mushing her way through the snow, snapping pictures for her travelogues and storing more memories to sweeten her days . . . and nights.*

**There are 20 weeks until RCC’s 100th Anniversary on March 13, 2016.**

The Riverside City College Instructional Media Center is bringing you this five-year countdown to RCC’s 100th Anniversary. Our intention is to give everyone a weekly glance at the many people and events that have been a part of the college. Our thanks go to the RCC Digital Library Archives and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations for allowing us to use their photo and newspaper collections. Thanks as well to all of the RCC students and Faculty Advisors that were a part of the yearbook and newspaper staffs. Thanks also to Tom Johnson and Gilbert Jimenez who wrote “the book” about RCC’s history. “Riverside City College 1916-1981- A 65 Year History” is available in the RCC Digital Library. For copyright purposes, all images originating from Riverside City College publications and the District’s Office of Strategic Communications and Relations are the property of the Riverside Community College District.