

To
Carol Hartley
with love
from
the people of St Paul's

CAROL

She is always busy, moving quickly which makes her handbag, always a bit lumpy, swing at her side. There are people waiting for her, always. They know that she will listen and help if she can. She would give away all her money except that then she would starve - not that she would mind but her family would! The poor know that most of us have hardened to their bad luck stories - but not Carol who listens, investigates, follows up, taking in every detail with seemingly endless patience.

By contrast, when she is in the chancel, robed and coming to the pulpit, we listen. Her voice is clear, every word well-placed, well-chosen, and every point of her discourse is based on scholarly knowledge. She is, *par excellence*, a teacher! This is someone who really knows what she is talking about, who serves it up as true fact and experience. She is possibly the best teacher-preacher I have ever heard. Who is she, and where did she come from? She was in charge of Anhouse, the residence in Stanley Road intended for Anglican students at UCT, for 11 years, and on the Church Council, mostly as churchwarden, of St Paul's in Rondebosch for 12 years.

To tell the story of someone else is always presumptuous, and particularly so in the case of Carol. Her parents, newly married, came from England at the beginning of World War II, her dad having the electrical engineering skills needed for the extensive railway network of southern Africa. Mr and Mrs Gaunt began their family life in Johannesburg but, being a railway employee, had to move every couple of years. Constant change was the hallmark of this family – different homes, different schools, different languages . . . they were hard times. During World War II Carol's father joined up, and went "Up North" while her mother coped at home with three children, Carol and two younger sons. Carol's mother was a highly trained scientist with a degree from Cambridge – she worked, when she could, at the Medical Research Institute at Modderfontein but the family moved so much - to Durban, back to Berea in Johannesburg, to Windhoek, to Waverley and Sandringham . . until after nearly 15 years her father left "the railways" for a more stable and interesting job in the construction of Kariba Dam. This was an exciting period because he was involved in the famous "Noah's Ark" operation which saved most of the animals from drowning in the dammed-up waters of the new Kariba. The family settled in Salisbury while father was working in Kariba.

Local government schools gave them their education and, with so many moves, it is hard to recall which school was here or there or for how long. Carol was able to choose to study another language and followed her mother's wise advice – French – a choice which would bring countless advantages later in her life. In 1958, soon after moving to Salisbury, she enrolled at Rhodes University and this is where she met her future husband, Rowan Hartley. After completing her degree she was happy to

find a temporary post at Jameson High School in Gatooma and, although not a full year, it was long enough for her to save enough money to go to England, to teach for a brief period and then to enrol at Bristol University for the Teaching Diploma course required for a teaching career.

Serious love affairs need communication and hers was no exception. Letters were the link between herself and Rowan, who was teaching at Grey College in Port Elizabeth but, once she had her Diploma, she had to come home to see Rowan. Carol and a friend were returning together, and both were short of money. Travelling overland would cost so much less than air-tickets and would be so much more interesting, and the two of them were already so accustomed to hitch-hiking together on the Continent, practising their French, so they decided to go together overland, hitch-hiking if possible. Off they went, across Europe to Trieste, Greece, Alexandria, by thumb, train, ferry and canal boat through Suez to Khartoum, and paddle-steamer to Juba. Their journey merits a whole book to relate their adventures! They saw the source of the Nile and continued south – Murchison Falls, Malindi, Kampala, Lake Victoria, Nairobi and from there they went by bus to Dar es Salaam and hitched into Northern Rhodesia – at that time the Federation was breaking up.

Carol taught for a year in Mufulira on the Copper Belt but, because practical French is needed for good teaching, she went to France for a year and again travelled overland but this time by more orthodox transport - bus, ferry, train! She taught in Paris for a year while doing Night School courses at the Sorbonne but was suddenly struck down with a severe kidney infection which put her in hospital for a month and when she recovered it was time to come home, this time in a more orthodox manner, by boat.

Rowan Hartley and Carol Gaunt married in 1965. Because Rowan was teaching at Grey College in Port Elizabeth they could live in the school hostel. Carol found a teaching post but it was not a happy appointment. The Headmaster was a “ware Afrikaner”, suspicious of the new and liberally minded French teacher who chanced to learn that he was the source of leaking Matric. exam papers! He could not forgive Carol but the Department of Education forgave him! No other teaching posts were available for Carol although the “corrupt” Headmaster was given a new appointment! The mid-60s was a time when Afrikaner dominance became vicious and corrupt, particularly in the schools. It was an impossible situation. Carol and Rowan left the country in 1967.

After teaching for a while in the UK, they moved to Canada. A post was available at Cranbrooke Senior Secondary School in British Columbia, and there they stayed for 22 years! Having truly settled, they grew their family - three children, two boys and a girl. Carol came from an Anglican background – her father had been an organist, active on Parish Council, delegated to Synod. Rowan had been a Baptist. They grew their faith, and perhaps this is where Carol first became aware of her soul’s message from God – Trust Me – the words which would return to her so often in the future. They loved their church in Cranbrooke, were very active in it, and Carol still has connections there. The children grew up and studied and became – guess what – teachers, all still living in Canada.

In 1991 a Principal’s post for Rowan was the reason for moving to Sechelt (an Indian name) just north of Vancouver on the west coast. They bought a house, settled down and Carol found a post in Vancouver. But in 1992 Rowan began “feeling weird in his chest” and was found to have advanced lung cancer. He had had “a little cough” a couple of years earlier, been Xrayed and told that it was nothing – that must have been the beginning. Thus began the heart-breaking time of radiotherapy, chemotherapy, trying to work, getting worse, being nursed at home and then hospital. “Trust Me” was a vital part of Carol’s life. He died in 1993 at the age of 53 . . . and he had never smoked in his life!

Carol continued to teach until British Columbia's economy, depending on logging and fishing, collapsed in 1997 and her school had to close. She had wanted to return to southern Africa, to respond to a sense that she must "pay back" as it were for all the good things she had had here. Her parents were in Zimbabwe, her brother and family in Cape Town. She returned in 2000, stayed at her brother's house, and began working for the Street Children trying to teach basic literacy to vagrant children. This was disappointing work because most of the youngsters were brain-damaged and could not learn. Her parents died and Carol helped them in their last illnesses. For 10 years she had her own flat and befriended many students at UCT, especially those with problems, sharing her flat with Olivier, who did a Master's degree, and his brother from the Congo. Olivier had serious accidents, but got married and he still has recurring problems.

Carol-in-Cape-Town was always full of zeal, a first class teacher with a heart bigger than her pocket. She found people who needed help and stepped in to give it! Already firmly attached to St Paul's, she brought her proteges there, and her rented flat was occupied by students with nowhere to go, people with complicated problems. When St Paul's desperately needed a new Warden for Anhouse, Carol was the perfect choice and, in 2012, she happily moved into her little flat there. She now had a home, students to care for and a garden to work in – she was especially proud of her proteas and other indigenous plants. Her care of the students was sometimes very tiring but there were rich personal links with the students as she became part of their joys, troubles, and their lives. Less welcome were some daunting problems with the WiFi and the maintenance of a large old house!

She was Churchwarden of St Paul's Church, Rondebosch until 2019 and was consecrated as a Lay Minister in 2016. Her readings and her sermons are inspiring. For many years she studied for a degree at the Theological College in Johannesburg but could not quite complete the course although she has acquired amazing theological knowledge. So as to earn money (she gives away so much) she has been knitting, and teaching French on line and editing student essays and theses, often into the small hours of the morning . . . besides learning Spanish herself.

Tragically she was beaten up in an unprovoked street assault just outside Anhouse and sustained a seriously fractured hip in 2019. Major surgery followed by remedial exercise, combined with an unquenchable courage, have not only enabled her to walk and work again but to do so without bitterness against her attackers.

Her brother Trevor lives here, a professor at UCT, living in Rondebosch, with his wife, Eleanor and this is now Carol's base.

In an impossible situation of divided loyalties, she loves living in South Africa but her income comes from a Canadian pension and, to keep that, she must go back to Canada. Her sons and daughter and grandchildren are all there - but much of her heart is in South Africa. How this division of love and loyalty will play out is impossible to predict. We who love her can only say,

"Dear Carol, loving disciple,

Thank you for all you have done at St Paul's. May you find a place to be at home again!"

God says "TRUST ME"