

Icon in the Galapagos

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C'est le récit de plusieurs voyages avec Doris aux Galapagos et dans d'autres pays dans le monde et les rencontres avec les femmes qui la reconnaissent comme la rédactrice en chef de Chatelaine et qui partagent avec elle leurs souvenirs du magazine et son impact sur leur vie.

One of the greatest surprises of my travelling life was Doris's announcement that she too longed to visit the Galapagos. I hadn't figured her for a nature lover. In fact, it turned out that neither of us would know a sea lion from a blue-footed booby and exactly why we wanted to go there is a bit obscure. I suppose the famous explanation "because it's there," is as good as any. We shared a desire to explore the world, in comfort it's true, but nevertheless to explore, and if we were going to go to the Galapagos it had to be now, before we were too old to stagger around the lava fields. (We made it in the nick of time.)

I was about to say that this was the first trip that Doris and I had taken together but actually we had travelled together once before, to the Niagara Institute in Niagara-on-the-Lake for a conference. There is a photograph that immortalizes our arrival, showing two fervent feminists who regularly preached the gospel of independence, smiling happily while our travelling companion, a particularly small man, stumbled into the Institute ... carrying all our bags.

As we planned our trip, I asked myself more than once why I, terrified to the point of phobia, was going to spend days in a small ship in some of the deepest water in the world. Convinced that I would be seasick the entire time, I arrived, to Doris's vast and uncharitably obvious amusement, with all the anti-seasickness material known to modern medicine and a few folk remedies: Gravol, patches, wristbands, everything but knockout drops. Doris laughed, rather raucously I thought, and told me not to be silly, I was certainly not going to be seasick. To avoid her scorn, I went to bed without any of my remedies in spite of the purser's warning of very bad weather. I slept soundly for

eight hours. The ship was still pitching violently in the morning but, clinging to ropes, we lurched to the dining room to find that we were the only passengers looking hopefully for bacon and eggs.

No seasickness. I tried to credit my Viking blood but I really know that the power of Doris's personality had saved me!

Doris always said that she hated shopping but on our trips she somehow managed to find the best merchandise on offer. In a famous market town near Quito on our travels in Ecuador, I stared, I hope not open-mouthed, at a small group of old women chattering and laughing conspiratorially as they clutched bags full of small, living animals (don't ask), gaped at the colourful crowds bargaining good-naturedly at every stall, at the babies sleeping through the chaos on the piles of brightly coloured fabrics their mothers had woven and were selling. Doris looked quickly at all this splendour, absorbed it all, and then strode purposefully into the maelstrom, disappearing and reappearing, finally emerging triumphantly waving her trophy: a vest, closely embroidered in brilliant colours, which she wore for the rest of the trip, looking as elegant as a Vogue model. "Three dollars," she kept saying in astonishment. "Hates shopping," I kept thinking jealously.

On our travels, I was frequently impressed by Doris's modesty. Everywhere we went, wherever there were Canadians, someone would recognize her. Doris would admit with a slight smile that she was Doris Anderson, even *the* Doris Anderson, as she was sometimes asked, and listen, with no sign of how often she had heard them before, to the stories they invariably told: how much *Chatelaine*, the magazine she edited or years, had meant to them as they stayed home with the kids in Chilliwack, Scarborough, Brandon, Truro, everywhere in Canada where women were longing for information, advice, and challenge. The encounter with Doris may have been, for many of those women, the highlight of their trip but Doris seemed unimpressed by her status as icon.

After the Galapagos, we travelled again, of course, to Turkey, to England, to Mexico more than once. I am finding it very hard to think and write about Doris in the past tense, and to know that after all those adventures together, there will never be another one.

Kay Sigurjonsson, a friend of Doris initially through the women's movement, was a founder of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and of the Canadian Women's Foundation. She was also involved for many years in civil liberties work and in the struggle for Native rights.



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