

Alberta Cook

On our holiday touring through Germany in October 2008 we met people from many parts of the world. Traveling with a group for twelve days allowed us to form several friendships, and it is those that make holidays unforgettable. Alberta was one of those people on the tour we were fortunate to meet and able to call friend. I felt early on that Alberta loved the arts. In her email notes to us, after we all had returned to our respective homes, she sometimes described the countryside where she lived or to which she traveled. These descriptions were beautiful word pictures and convinced me that Alberta was a talented writer. I was delighted, therefore, when I eventually not only learned that Alberta was a kindred poet, but that she entrusted her poem, "Roots", to me. Alberta writes from the heart, and what can be more precious than that. To my way of thinking it would be sad indeed, if the world would never read her poems.

Alberta Cook was born in Thurnscoe, a small mining village in South Yorkshire. By rights she should have seen the first light of day in Scotland. Her mother had travelled to Thurnscoe from Kelty Scotland a day before her birth.

Her parents had been married during the Second World War and her father spent most of the war years on submarines. He was on the Thrasher on which two officers were awarded the Victoria Cross for dislodging two bombs, after an attack by the Luftwaffe, a close call that could have ended in tragedy for all on the ship. Her mother and father did not make Alberta their priority and divorced after the war. "I seem to have been an unwanted baby," Alberta says. In fact, her father once told her that he had better things to do than being a father. So from the tender age of one, Alberta's grandparents raised her. She loved them unreservedly, and lived with them until she married.

Alberta and her husband were blessed with three children, two girls and one boy. Sadly two years ago they lost their son. Alberta says, "He had a wonderful charisma about him, was full of life and so very witty." For Alberta the pain of that tragic loss is still too deeply felt, but one day she hopes to write a book about her handsome son.

With her husband Alberta spent fifteen years in America before returning to England where they bought the village store and later also built a restaurant that they ran for ten years. "We turned it into our home," Alberta tells us, "and now reside beside a stream that changes every day, and see the herons fish and the kingfishers shine their iridescent glow, and ducks that wake us in the mornings. We also look over the cricket grounds that my husband and son played on."

Alberta is surrounded by a loving family. She loves to travel and take photos of beautiful things. Now she's also taking art lessons and likes to explore pages written in the Yorkshire dialect, among other interests. To me her poetry in "The Cricket Field", in "Roots" and in "Bluebell Woods" is warm and heartfelt, and I enjoy reading it immensely.