

Kris L. Hardin

1953 ~ 2012

CARMEL – Kris L. Hardin passed away August 21, 2012 after a courageous five-year battle with brain cancer. During that struggle she displayed grace, kindness and wit to her many friends and family. She never lost her humanity or the love and wonder of life.

Kris was a gifted anthropologist and writer who spent years in Sierra Leone, West Africa, doing fieldwork among the Kono people of Kainkordu. All of that research now resides in the British Library Collection, London. Kris was a talented painter as well who only recently shared with family and friends her many oils and watercolors that were done over nearly a decade.

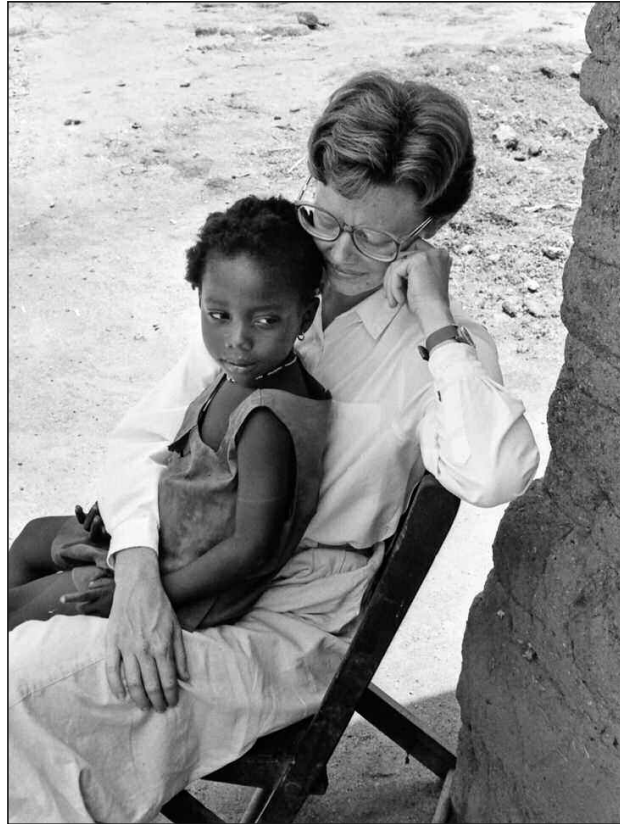
Kris was born in Fresno, CA on March 7, 1953. Following her undergraduate education, she earned a PhD in anthropology from Indiana University, a Fulbright scholarship and Rockefeller and Smithsonian fellowships.

Over the next 25 years Kris, with her husband, Michael Katakis, collaborated on projects all over the world, Producing exhibitions and books derived from her work. Her last book was “Photographs and Words”, published by the British Library in 2011. In 1999 Kris was elected “Fellow” of the Royal Geographical Society in London. In 2011 she was presented to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth.

Kris was one of those rare and remarkable people blessed with a wide array of talents and with the traits of humility, quiet eloquence and a deep wisdom coupled with a dark, intelligent humor. Her friends were from every walk of life and from around the world. When you were with Kris you simply wanted to just stay.

To the dear friends here, and from around the world who were there when the skies first darkened and then stayed close all through Kris’ terrible ordeal, there simply are no words. Finally, to the many health care people, especially Dr. Susan Chang, Dr. Nancy Rubin and Ms. Beverla Miles, who gently cared for Kris and to the selfless and kind Hospice “volunteers” who gave so generously of their time. Thank you all. Your many kindnesses shall not soon be forgotten.

Kris is survived by her mother, Eleanor Hardin of Fresno; her brother, Douglas Hardin, Jr. and her husband, Michael Katakis.



MY TRUE NORTH

Journal entry

29 September 2003

Sounio, Greece

Kris and I have hiked up to the ruins of the Temple of Poseidon and the sea opens up before us. The breathtaking vista makes clear why the temple was built here. If Poseidon, the god of the sea, had lived anywhere he would have lived here. It is magnificent and we are gloriously alone with these ruins created some 440 years before Christ. Kris is sitting on one of the massive overturned columns as she opens her rucksack and pulls out the small watercolor box I bought for her in Paris years before. She is turned sideways and with her large sunbonnet and skirt, in silhouette, she looks like a traveler from another century in one of those old books that you would find in London. From the day I met her, I thought her the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. As a young anthropologist she had just returned from living in West Africa for years. Brains and beauty I had thought at our first meeting when I could no find the words, any words. She was kind as I stumbled. She has always been kind. As I watched her painting, I could not help but think of all of the miles we had traveled together since that first meeting, thousands of miles. I have learned much from her for she is always engaged in the world wanting to understand that which she does not understand. She is my center, my friend and my True North always guiding and welcoming me home.

– M.K.

*“Wheresoever she was
there was Eden”*

– Mark Twain