

# Priscilla Parkin, 1953-1971



Priscilla Parkin came to Crown College in the fall of 1970 as a young freshman and died in a tragic spelunking accident in January 1971. Priscilla and I attended Rio Americano High School in Sacramento and came to Crown College together. Priscilla was a VERY extraordinary young woman; someone who I was completely CONVINCED would go on to do great things. She was, what was called then, a non-conformist. She came to Crown College with high spirits and high hopes. The months that she spent at Crown College were, in my opinion, the happiest of her life. Priscilla was always enthusiastic and dedicated to whatever she was doing. Other Crown students remember her with bright eyes, an infectious smile and a spring (no, a leap) to her step. She took to caving with her characteristic enthusiasm and was often seen in her industrial style jumpsuit with mud smeared all over her. She was always very eager to describe her latest exploits and to try to convince me to accompany her.

Priscilla was also an extremely gifted student, especially in the area of mathematics, though her intellectual interests ranged widely. She tackled mathematics with brilliance and strength. There was no doubt that her abilities were barely tapped. She also had a soft heart and an

understanding ear and had the opportunity to explore friendships during that freshman year. She spent many patient hours tutoring me in Honors Calculus. Unfortunately, Priscilla was also a risk taker, and her reckless behavior led to her untimely death while exploring a cave in Davenport.

This tragedy yanked a genius out of this world before she had a chance to really make her contribution. I can only imagine what she could have accomplished, but maybe the world just wasn't ready for Priscilla. I am very pleased to learn that this scholarship has been set up to commemorate her life and her interest in the exact sciences. Maybe, when one of the recipients gets an inspiration, it's a gift from Priscilla from another world. Her spirit and talent were that strong.

-- Sandra Ginsburgh Barnes, Crown '74, with Janice Walton-Hadlock, Crown '74

The Priscilla Parkin Scholarship honors the spirit of a Talented, Intelligent, Happy and Very Alive young woman who died accidentally while doing what she apparently most enjoyed in life. Sadly, her death occurred before Priscilla had much time to possibly make more significant contributions to our lives. The enthusiasm with which Priscilla lived her life so positively touched those who knew her. They all remember her joyous smile and bouncing step.

-- Steven Wesolowski, Crown '74

I met Priscilla Parkin when we were both in the same second-grade class at Mariemont Elementary School in Sacramento, California. We became best friends and stayed that way ever since.

Priscilla was one of the smartest people I ever met, and one of the most exciting. She was intelligent, non-conformist, energetic, and adventurous. She was always trying something new, always creating, and always thinking. Throughout our school years together, she and I swung on the bars, rode our bicycles, and practiced gymnastics. We put on a scene from Shakespeare's Hamlet in the fifth grade and wrote a short story about a pioneer family making the trek West. She created math problems, mazes, and puzzles for me to do. And when she went to college she was able to master the toughest math classes. In college she also enthusiastically took up spelunking, giving me a book about caves the Christmas before her death.

I had always expected great things from her - that she would become a Ph.D. mathematician or a research scientist, for instance. But on January 18, 1971, in her freshman year at Crown College, UC Santa Cruz, Priscilla fell to her death during a spelunking trip.

Priscilla's potential was cut short. But I hope that this Scholarship Fund in her name will help other bright, energetic, and creative students to fulfill their potential instead.

-- Jean Jerome, Stanford '74



Christmas, 1970

Priscilla Parkin