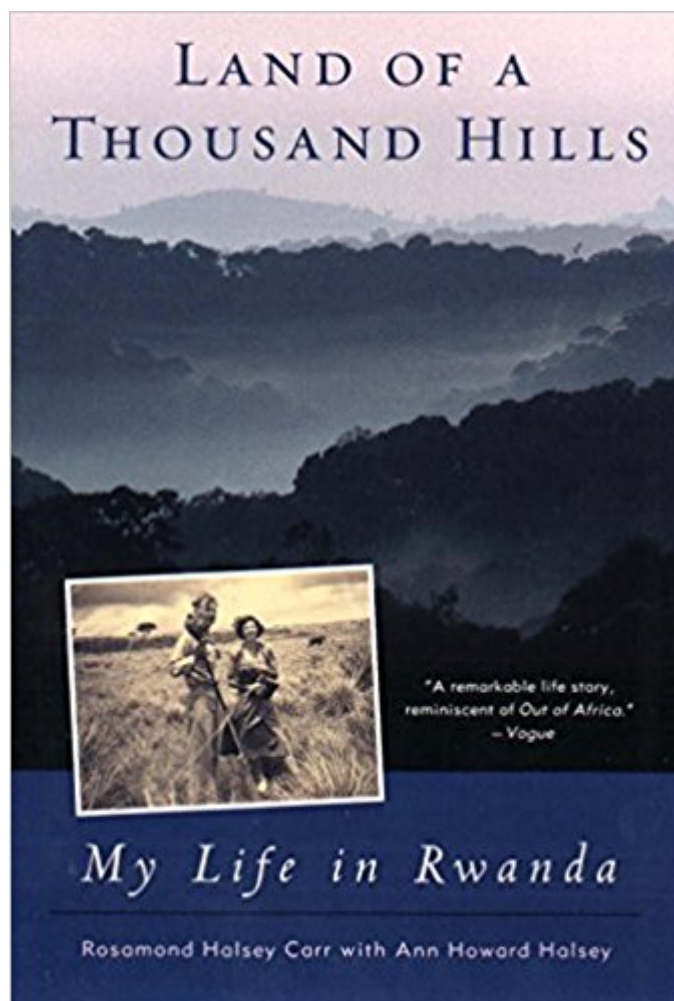


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# Land Of A Thousand Hills: My Life In Rwanda



## Synopsis

In 1949, Rosamond Halsey Carr, a young fashion illustrator living in New York City, accompanied her dashing hunter-explorer husband to what was then the Belgian Congo. When the marriage fell apart, she decided to stay on in neighboring Rwanda, as the manager of a flower plantation. *Land of a Thousand Hills* is Carr's thrilling memoir of her life in Rwanda—a love affair with a country and a people that has spanned half a century. During those years, she has experienced everything from stalking leopards to rampaging elephants, drought, the mysterious murder of her friend Dian Fossey, and near-bankruptcy. She has chugged up the Congo River on a paddle-wheel steamboat, been serenaded by pygmies, and witnessed firsthand the collapse of colonialism. Following 1994's Hutu-Tutsi genocide, Carr turned her plantation into a shelter for the lost and orphaned children—work she continues to this day, at the age of eighty-seven.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you enjoyed *Out of Africa* and *West with the Night*, here's another amazing woman's story of her adventurous African life. Rosamond Halsey Carr left her job as a young New York City fashion illustrator in the 1940s to join her hunter-explorer husband in the Belgian Congo; after their divorce, she decided to stay on in neighboring Rwanda as the manager of a flower plantation. For the next 50 years she lived an extraordinary life, witnessing the fall of colonialism, the loss of her friend Dian Fossey, and the relentless clashes between the Hutus and the Tutsis. Although this book includes a poignant insider's account of the events surrounding the horrific 1994 genocide, it also provides a beautiful portrait of the Rwanda that was—and still is. After being evacuated during the genocide,

Carr returned to Rwanda and, at age 82, rebuilt her home from the ground up, intent on opening a home for some 100 orphaned children. Carr's humble tenacity and bold strength animate her historical, cultural, and personal accounts. Arriving in Africa in 1949, she witnesses the traditions of the royal Tutsi dynasty, sails up the Congo to camp in pygmy villages, encounters leopards, mingles with European aristocrats, finds and loses love, and lives through Congo independence and civil war. Her passion for the country and its people makes for a life story that is both tragic and hopeful, and full of interesting details that animate the spirit of Rwanda. --Kathryn True --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Fifty years ago, New Jersey socialite and fashion designer Rosamond Halsey Carr sailed from Brooklyn Harbor with four new cotton dresses, a lifelong supply of cold cream and hopes of injecting passion into her marriage with British big-game hunter Kenneth Carr. Although conjugal bliss eluded her, the hills of central Africa captured her heart, and she passed up safety, security and marriage with a later love to stay in Rwanda. Carr saw at close hand Along before the genocide of 1994 A the warfare between Hutu and Tutsi in 1959, violence spilling over from the Congo during the 1960s and independence for Rwanda A on four days' notice A in 1962. Rich in details about elephants, marriage customs and the author's flower plantation, this charming memoir transports readers to the land where Dian Fossey (whom Carr knew and profiles here) studied her gorillas. The horror of 1994 forced Carr off her plantation and out of the country for a few months, but she is now back, running an orphanage for victims' children she started in an old barn. By today's confessional standards, Carr, who is 86, is reticent about her personal life. Literary flourishes are few here; rather, along with her niece, Halsey, she writes simply and evocatively, entertaining readers with vignettes about her European, African and American acquaintances. Money did not come easily to Carr, but out of Africa has come an abundance of spirit. First serial to Vogue. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This young lady from New Jersey married a British adventurer, divorced him after a time and stayed in Rwanda to become an important figure through the decades of painful change up through the 1994 genocide. Rosamond Carr's telling of her personal story in Rwanda is the most clear, thoughtful telling of this complex national journey I have read. My wife and I have spent several months in Rwanda working with national parks and training guides. Like Ms. Carr we fell in love with the landscape, the people and the wildlife. I have read a dozen books about the beautiful nation, but none so built on love and respect as this. She explains in a balanced manner how the transition

from tribal relationships through colonial control and into a modern nation happened in the last decades of the 20th Century. Her unique relationship to Dian Fossey and proximity to the mountain gorillas is also enlightening. If you've read *Gorillas in the Mist* or *In the Kingdom of Gorillas*, this adds another layer of understanding behind the mountain gorilla survival story. Rosa Carr's niece helped her write this and it is wonderfully readable, pulling you through to learn more.

The UN Women/USNC Gulf Coast Book Club meets every second Monday at the Sarasota North County Library from 2:30-4:00. For further information, please contact Leita Kaldi Davis, lkaldi@hotmail.com. Our UN Women Book Club met on Monday, May 13, 2013 at Cafe of the Arts, Sarasota, to sip African red tea while discussing *Land of a Thousand Hills: My Life in Rwanda* by Rosamond Halsey Carr with Ann Howard Halsey. Everyone agreed it was a fascinating read about an extraordinary woman who, in 1949, left a career as a fashion illustrator in New York City to accompany her hunter-explorer husband, Kenneth Carr, to the former Belgian Congo. Some years later, after their marriage fell apart, Rosamond moved to Rwanda where she grew pyrethrum at first, then a flower plantation near the Virunga volcanoes. Her life as an American single woman surrounded by Hutu, Tutsi, Batwa and other peoples is reminiscent of certain blissful sections of *Out of Africa*. Rosamond also befriends many distinguished westerners and becomes especially close to famed primatologist, Dian Fossey. (She is actually profiled in the film, *Gorillas in the Mist*.) Portraits of other Europeans, like the Bielskis, the deMuncks, Madame Giscard d'Estaing, and a few Italian entrepreneurs are vivid. Rosamond struggles to keep her enterprises afloat, but faces bankruptcy more than once due to natural and political upheavals, the worst being, of course, the Hutu-Tutsi genocide in 1994. Though she is forced to return to America, Rosamond soon comes back at the age of 82 to her beloved, ruined Rwanda to turn her devastated farm into a shelter for orphans. She died in 2006. Much of the exquisite writing, especially descriptions of the stunning countryside and charming people, is from Rosamond's memoirs, edited by her niece, Ann Howard Halsey. Many fascinating photographs illustrate the book. Our conversation centered, however, on the in-depth historical narrative within the book, from colonial times to independence to the genocide to present-day Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. We all learned things we hadn't known before about the impact a small African country can have upon the world.

Beautifully written, so much interesting detail, and a wonderful story about a great woman.

There have been many books written about one of the greatest human tragedies, the Rwandan

genocide, however, Mrs. Carr's book revealed some details I didn't know about. I was not aware that horrific killings continued well into the late 90's which caused her to leave her beloved home. But I am getting ahead of myself. Mrs. Carr's book revealed her deep love for Rwanda and the people who worked for her and who she interacted with all of those years. To return into a country still so unstable after such a tragic event took courage and determination. I can only imagine the beauty of this country that she so vividly described. Even though she described political events leading up to the genocide very well, it was a very well-written memoir of what Africa meant to her. Well worth reading. Rest in peace.

Having spent some time in Rwanda off the beaten path ....especially Gisenyi which figures so prominently in Ross Carr's life, I can understand why she loved the land and the people so. This book was a pleasant reminder of the beauty of the country and the strength of its people. Her story is inspiring and human. I was given the opportunity to visit her home and what remains of the Imbabazi Orphanage near her home, as well as to meet individuals who knew her and took tea with her. Her narrative gives a clearer understanding of Rwanda's tumultuous past and promising future.

We happened upon this book when we were traveling in Mexico and more than 20 years ago we read it. Today I finished reading it for the second time. I found it so well-written and interesting. What an amazing woman and life story.

Beautifully told. Amazing story of her love for Rwanda and it's people.

I really found it hard to put down this book once I started. The stories of colonial central Africa as told through the author's life experiences in Rwanda was both fascinating and informative. The book also provides excellent background on the tragic genocide that took place in the early 90's. It's part love story and part tragedy--the author's life story is a very good read and an inspiration by demonstrating that one individual can make a difference even in the face of unimaginable odds!

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