

Getting to Know Each Other Better Interviews with Meredith Anderson

This month I had the pleasure of interviewing Kate Friedman.

My husband and I loved to travel, exploring new places nearly every year of our 47-year marriage. Our first big adventure was in 1973, when we backpacked through Europe



for three months. We visited Germany, France, and Italy—where I met his parents in Venice—climbed the Eiffel Tower, and explored the Greek Islands and Yugoslavia (now Croatia). One of the most memorable stops was Sardinia, where my in-laws and their business partners treated us to a

stay at the luxurious Pitrizzi Resort on the “Costa Smeralda.” The suites were hidden inside a mountain of boulders—an unforgettable experience.

For work, we moved from California to Illinois, spending twenty years there. The weather was a big change, so we often escaped to warmer destinations during winter. We loved spending time at beach resorts in Miami with his parents and taking trips to Club Med in Mexico or the Dominican Republic. Club



Med offered all kinds of activities, but my favorite was the trapeze—I loved it! Our four-year-old son even skipped kids' camp to stay back and film my aerial feats.

When we first arrived in Chicago, we searched for a home and found a beautiful place in Evanston, on Park Place. When I told my mother the address, she surprised me by saying, “Your dad grew up on that street!” That was just the beginning of a series of coincidences. The real estate agent turned out to be my dad’s cousin, Carol, and she was selling the very house that had belonged to my dad’s family. Inside the attic were historical documents spanning generations, including family ties to English royalty, the Pilgrims, and political figures. This unexpected discovery brought my siblings and me closer together, and in the process, we learned more about our father’s remarkable history. He had been a celebrated WWII bomber pilot in the 9th Bomber Squadron and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross by none other than legendary WWI fighter pilot Eddie Rickenbacker.



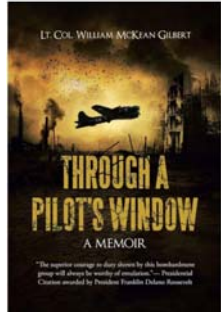
My sister later gave me a draft of our father’s military memoirs, which I edited and had published.

Before we had children, I wanted to become a dental hygienist, and

an Army recruiter convinced me to enlist, promising free training. However, he said I would need to start as a cook until a spot opened in the program. I was stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, home to the Army’s paratrooper training. Unfortunately, during that time, a serial killer was targeting female cooks on the base. My husband, alarmed for my safety, threatened to go to the media, and soon after, I was granted an honorable discharge.

Six years ago, my husband passed away. Not long after, I met Richard, who has brought joy and laughter back into my life. My husband would have liked him. My kids, family, and neighbors do as well. Richard has a generous heart—he does yard work for the widow next door, takes in trash cans for neighbors with mobility issues, and even helped a stranded motorist start their car.

Dancing has always been a big part of my life. My husband and I took dance classes whenever we could, and our favorite was the Viennese Waltz. One of our favorite songs was “In the Mood” by Glenn Miller. Fittingly, I met Richard on the dance floor, and we’ve been dancing through life ever since.



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