



Library Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Service, Education, and Community for Tennesseans

My Life with Kangaroos

A Deaf Woman's Remarkable Story



Beets Herrmann
with Michael Gaida and Theresa Jöhl
TRANSLATED BY PAUL FOSTER

Title

[My Life with Kangaroos: A Deaf Woman's Remarkable Story](https://tndeaflibrary.nashville.gov/library/materials/my-life-with-kangaroos-a-deaf-womans-remarkable-story)
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Doris Herrmann was born deaf in 1933 in Basel, Switzerland, and from the age of three, she possessed a mystical attraction to kangaroos. She recalls seeing them at that age for the first time at the Basel Zoo, and spending every spare moment visiting them from then on. Eventually, her fascination grew into passionate study of their behavior. Her dedication caught the attention of the zookeepers who provided her greater access to these extraordinary animals. Despite her challenges with communication, Herrmann wrote a scientific paper about the kangaroo's pouch hygiene when raising a joey. Soon, experts from around the world came to visit this precocious deaf girl who knew about kangaroos.

Herrmann appreciated the opportunities opening up to her, but her real dream was to travel to Australia to study kangaroos in the wild. For years she worked and yearned, until Dr. Karl H. Winkelsträter a renowned authority on kangaroos, suggested an independent study in Australia at a place called Peppy Beach. In 1969, at the age of 35, Herrmann finally traveled to the native land of kangaroos. During the next four decades, she would make many more trips to observe and write about kangaroos.

My Life with Kangaroos explores every facet of Herrmann's connection to these engaging marsupials. Her single-minded devotion not only made her a leading self-made scholar on kangaroos, it transformed her own personality and her relationships with others. As she forged bonds with kangaroos named Dora, Jacqueline, Manuela, and many others, she engendered great affection and respect in the people around her, truly a remarkable story of success.

Author

Doris Herrmann ; with Michael Gaida and Theres Johl ; translated by Paul Foster

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