

# Georgine Cook

Walking statues, Great Walls, wild elephants, Maasai warriors and extinct volcanos? An episode of Ripley's "Believe It or Not" or all part of the amazing running life of Winnipeg's Georgine Cook. An ex-smoker of age 38, Georgine was encouraged by a runner friend to try running in May 1981 and ran in her first MRA road race, the Bonne Bell 10K for Women, that fall. The rest, as they say, was history. For the next 35 years this iron lady was a fixture at Manitoba running events and accumulated a mind-boggling total number of road races completed, from 1 mile to the full marathon. Georgine's running accomplishments were acknowledged in 2015 with her well deserved induction into the MRA's Road Running Hall of Fame ([click here to view Georgine's Hall of Fame plaque](#)).

Georgine's most satisfying achievement in her running life was joyfully shared with her son James, a lawyer living in southern Ontario, when they became members together in the Seven Continents Marathon Club in 2016. To achieve this goal Georgine and James had to run a half marathon on each of the seven continents. This odyssey began in 2008 with Georgine fulfilling her dream of visiting China and running on the Great Wall, a race that included running on goat trails and passing peasants carrying water buckets on their backs. With Asia done the next leg was a trip to South America in 2012, which included a half marathon on Easter Island, home of the famous walking MOAI monolithic human figures carved by the Rapa Nui islanders over 600 years ago. A fortuitous late cancellation by a passenger allowed Georgine and James to be replacements on the long wait list Marathon Tours and Travel boat excursion to Antarctica in 2013. Their 3<sup>rd</sup> half marathon took place on St. Georges Island on a crude dirt road used by scientific teams doing research on the island. A half marathon race in Auckland followed by a vacation around New Zealand in 2015 checked off the 4<sup>th</sup> continent Oceania. A short drive south to Fargo, North Dakota and the Fargo Marathon and Half in 2015 brought their total to five with North America. Extremely proud of their Icelandic Viking heritage Georgine and James returned to their family's roots with a trip to Iceland in 2016 and half marathon race number #6 in Reykjavik, which counted as continent Europe. One continent to go Africa. What better way to visit Africa and complete the Seven Continents journey than going on safari in Kenya? Their last race was The Amazing Maasai Marathon in July 2016 held at the base of Mount Kenya, an extinct volcano. After the event, while on safari, Georgine poked her head out her tent one morning and saw a wild elephant walking through their camp. Georgine and James received their much cherished Seven Continents finishers medals together in a ceremony during the trip.

When asked about her favourite race Georgine unabashedly stated the ISLENDINGADAGURINN, which rolled off her tongue with remarkable ease, or Icelandic Festival 10 mile road race, for the rest of us. A race from Winnipeg Beach to Gimli dating back to 1966. This well travelled Norsewoman hails from Riverton, an Icelandic settlement north of Gimli and her Viking bloodline no doubt contributes to her athleticism. At 49 she completed a marathon in 3:13 which age-grades to a 2:44 open standard marathon. A 10K PR of 40:15 at 49 equates to a 35:58 race. Not bad for a late blooming mother of two who needed the encouragement of friends to get into running.

Georgine no longer participates in road races having completed her last MRA event in 2017, in the Run 4 Your Cause Awesome Twosome Relay. She hasn't stopped running though as she regularly puts mileage in on her treadmill, up to an hour. When asked what running has meant to her life she responded, without hesitation, that running was the "glue" in my life. A part of her healthy body, healthy mind lifestyle. As with other long-time runners her memory is choke-full of life enriching experiences and accomplishments shared with great friends accumulated over four decades of running. No regrets for this running legend. The bucket list was completed.