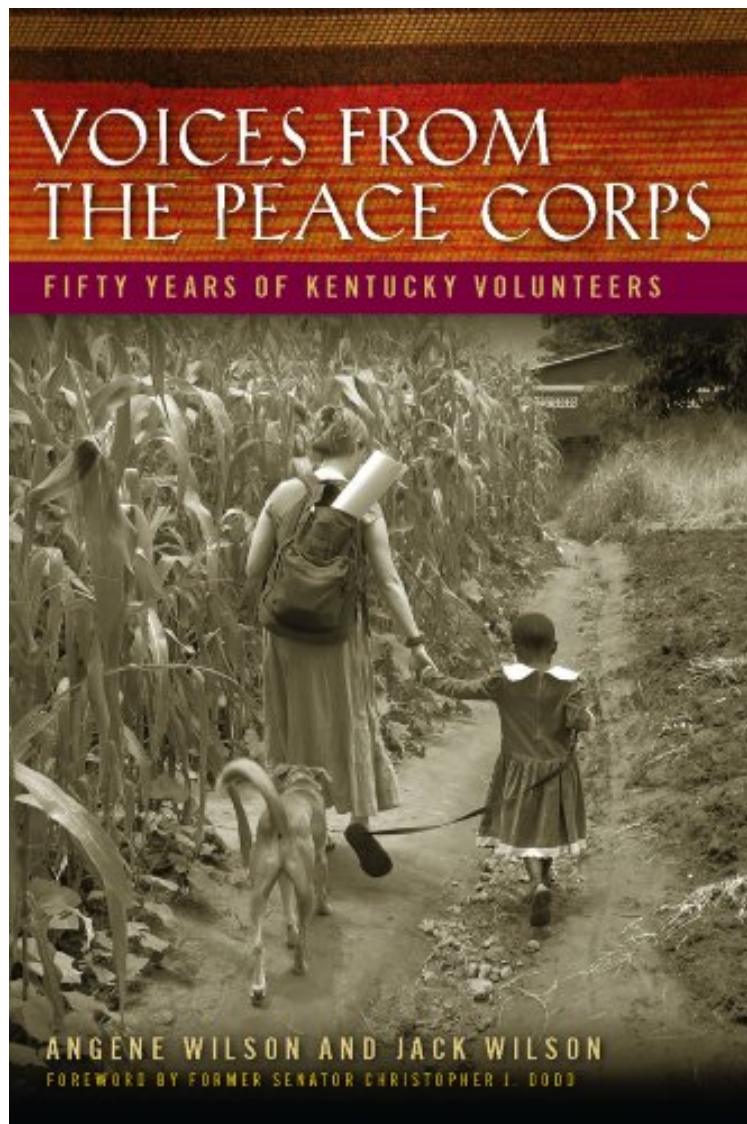


[E-BOOK] Voices from the Peace Corps: Fifty Years of Kentucky Volunteers (Kentucky Remembered: An Oral History Series)

Voices from the Peace Corps: Fifty Years of Kentucky Volunteers (Kentucky Remembered: An Oral History Series)

Angene Wilson, Jack Wilson

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Angene Wilson, Jack Wilson : Voices from the Peace Corps: Fifty Years of Kentucky Volunteers (Kentucky Remembered: An Oral History Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Voices from the Peace Corps: Fifty Years of Kentucky Volunteers (Kentucky Remembered: An Oral History Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Peace Corps Experience from the InsideBy C. A. SQUIRE,

"Author" What a treasure! Angene and Jack Wilson's *Voices from the Peace Corps: Fifty years of Kentucky Volunteers* is a masterwork of scholarship, organization, history, and memoir. *Volunteers themselves* in the first Peace Corps group sent to Liberia, the Wilsons embody the deep understanding needed to add context and connective tissue and the professionalism to wrestle a mountain of material into an accessible page-turner. Even among notoriously resilient, flexible and open-minded Peace Corps people, the Wilsons are a head above. For nearly 50 years they have maintained friendships, recounted briefly at the end of this volume, with their Liberian students and colleagues that have grown into richly intertwined lives. And now, after seven years of research, interviews and writing, they have amassed an invaluable record of the Peace Corps experience that is historically detailed and personally touching. Their book, mere bound sheets of paper and ink, is as interactive as a relational database. Readers can go to topic chapters, follow the threads of particular Volunteers or just open to a random page and discover an engaging episode. Built on interviews with 100 Kentucky Volunteers, *Voices* illuminates the universal Peace Corps experience. The Wilsons chose four individuals and a couple to each represent one of the decades since the founding of the Peace Corps. Reflections from these Volunteers open each chapter and provide continuity through topics. Other individual voices are interspersed across the arc of a tour of service telling about their decision to join, their training, work in host countries, dealing with strange food, homesickness, friendships, travel, illness, exotic animals, different social practices and expectations - all the facets of their lives over 5 decades in cultures around the world - to their reentry in American society and the lasting impact of their Peace Corps tour on their lives and on the individuals and communities among whom they lived. All of this happens with such clarity, the narrative flows as if it were one voice. The annotation is thorough yet discrete; country and dates of service identify each Volunteer, yet never impede the story. The book also contains photographs and an excellent index and bibliography. All former Peace Corps Volunteers will find themselves in these pages. Anyone who has lived in a foreign place will feel in familiar territory, and anyone who has never left the shelter of home will feel empowered to step into the world. I highly recommend this superb book. You will see in Angene and Jack Wilson true writers and planners at work and begin to understand why the Peace Corps has prevailed and inspired so many. For another wonderful Peace Corps story, get the following adventure of five young women Volunteers: *Harmattan: A Journey Across the Sahara* by 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. *The Real Peace Corps Story* by P. David Searles. Here is a book that tells the Peace Corps story in the most meaningful way one can imagine: using the voices of volunteers who have served in many countries at different times to collectively present a picture of the Peace Corps experience that has the ring of truth to it. What one reads in the book are the heartfelt reminiscences of dozens of former volunteers as they discuss their personal experiences relative to eleven topics selected by the authors, beginning with 'Why We Went' (the title of Chapter 1), then on through 'training,' 'settling in,' 'jobs,' and all of the other aspects of Peace Corps life that volunteers have shared throughout the past fifty years. *Voices from the Peace Corps* began life as an oral history project at the University of Kentucky. The voices included in the book all have a present connection to Kentucky - the book's subtitle is *Fifty Years of Kentucky Volunteers* - but what they are saying accurately represents the entire former volunteer universe. Readers from around the country will enjoy the book and get much from it. The authors - Angene and Jack Wilson - were both volunteers in the early 1960s, and Jack was a Peace Corps desk officer in Washington and then Country Director in Fiji. As shown in a postscript at the end of the book, their personal experiences as volunteers, staff, and later as key players in the activities of Peace Corps alumni make them the perfect people to have led the immense effort needed to bring this endeavor to its excellent conclusion. (In fact, I found it helpful to read that postscript first in order to appreciate fully the bona fides they bring to the project.) One must admire the Wilsons' decision to devote such an important segment of their retirement years to the task of compiling, organizing, and making sense of such a vast amount of raw material. The result is a very readable and important book. For that, the Peace Corps family should be grateful. Now, what generalizations can we draw from these reminiscences? What do they tell us about the volunteer experience? Other readers will have their own answers to the question, but here are mine: * The experience was profoundly life-changing. * The most important part of the experience was the friendships made with local people. * Former volunteers are overly modest in assessing the value of the jobs they did. * Cultural challenges were more daunting than the physical ones. * Women often had a difficult time because of sexism and unwanted romantic attention. * Returning volunteers were uniformly dismayed by American materialism. * RPCVs end up on the liberal side of the spectrum and enter 'service' professions. * Formal religion does not to be an important part of post-Peace Corps life. * RPCVs are far more aware of international issues than is the population as a whole. * The earlier altruism has morphed into a combination of altruism and adventurism. * America is a better place because of the presence of former volunteers. Happily there is little in the book about the politics of the Peace Corps; its organizational and administration history; the comings and goings of neither programmatic emphases, nor who was in charge, where, and doing what. That type of information is available in other places; here the volunteers speak out. The cost of *Voices from the Peace Corps* is \$28.00. That may seem pricey to many but I'm here to say buy the book anyway. You will be rewarded when you read it, and you will have in your personal library a book unlike any other written on the subject of the Peace Corps, and one destined to be a cited source for all coming Peace Corps books. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A quality person's book who lived a good life by Customer I was lucky enough to actually know Jack Wilson. I think so much of him I bought extra copies to give to

friends who know him and who might not see this book offer. Jack is one of those people who make Kentucky a better place to live, who has lived a life of service putting people and the environment ahead of self, and who walks the walk as well. The life spent making the world a little better place is a good goal for anyone. Since Jack was one of those people who does it, I want to recommend this book as an honest life lead with integrity, showing how to make the effort to be a little less material oriented and a whole lot more people oriented. If we are lucky enough to have our beautiful state a little more green, waters a little less covered in grease balls, and drinking water that keeps us healthy, it is because people like Jack were born on this earth to tilt at windmills for us all and to push the forces of darkness back. It is good to know someone with ideals that can work in practical roles with intelligence to get things done. I was lucky to know Jack Wilson, and if you read his book you will be too.

President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961. In the fifty years since, nearly 200,000 Americans have served in 139 countries, providing technical assistance, promoting a better understanding of American culture, and bringing the world back to the United States. In *Voices from the Peace Corps: Fifty Years of Kentucky Volunteers*, Angene Wilson and Jack Wilson, who served in Liberia from 1962 to 1964, follow the experiences of volunteers as they make the decision to join, attend training, adjust to living overseas and the job, make friends, and eventually return home to serve in their communities. They also describe how the volunteers made a difference in their host countries and how they became citizens of the world for the rest of their lives. Among many others, the interviewees include a physics teacher who served in Nigeria in 1961, a smallpox vaccinator who arrived in Afghanistan in 1969, a nineteen-year-old Mexican American who worked in an agricultural program in Guatemala in the 1970s, a builder of schools and relationships who served in Gabon from 1989 to 1992, and a retired office administrator who taught business in Ukraine from 2000 to 2002. *Voices from the Peace Corps* emphasizes the value of practical idealism in building meaningful cultural connections that span the globe.