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BY

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Teaching is a most rewarding job, especially if you want to make a positive difference for good in the world and at the same time develop a valuable and highly transferable skill set. That is my experience. My story began in Kashmir India, where I was conceived in January 1947. India was then in the throes of the struggle for independence. My father, a British, Sandhurst-trained military officer, was a Colonel in the 16th Punjab Regiment of the British/ Indian Army. My mother had lived in, what was then, India, since the age of three when her father had been reported missing in action. Amidst the violence and rioting, and under cover of the darkness of night my mother, pregnant with me and with 3 other children under the age of nine, made the perilous trip first by train and then on board the Empress of Scotland back to England where I was born in Temple Combe, Wincanton Somerset in October 1947.

In 1948 the decision was made to immigrate to Tasmania where my mother's sister, Veronica Tozer had settled on a farm on the North West Coast. My mother, her three children and baby Frances accompanied by a governess made the long voyage by sea to Hobart. My father stayed in India and joined us a couple of years later.

After this rather perilous beginning to life, it was my good fortune as a child to live within easy access to Veronica Tozer, my mother's sister. Between the ages of 1 and 8 years she set my compass for life, although I didn't know it at the time, in the way that children do not understand or appreciate what they have, sometimes until they have children of their own. Veronica Tozer was a prodigiously talented musician, a concert pianist and the mother of international concert pianist Geoffrey Tozer. As a knowledgeable and gifted teacher she had a profound influence on my personal and professional life. She surrounded me with music. Music was my inspiration, my consolation and everything in between. I couldn't get enough of it. I cannot remember a time when I was not sung to or did not sing. I still sing with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra Chorus. I'm singing tonight in Launceston!

Veronica Tozer not only taught me to sing and play the piano, she taught me to think in sound with inner hearing and to listen with musical understanding. She taught me that music requires discipline, eye, ear, hand, head and heart coordination, listening, and aesthetic response. She taught me that music engages the mind and the emotion, stirs the imagination, is fun and has a positive effect on self-esteem and creative development that carries over into all aspects of learning. **Plato**, the Greek philosopher, and founder of the first institute of higher learning in about 300 BC, **put it this way, "I would teach the children music, physics and philosophy; but most importantly music for in the patterns of music... are the keys of learning"**¹

¹ In Manners, Elena *The Power Of Music ,Pioneering Discoveries in the New Science of Song.* Pub Walker Pub.Inc. New York 2011

Veronica Tozer believed in me, listened to me, inspired me and challenged me to be the best I could be. Above all she gave me a lode star that has guided me ever since, and that is that valuing imagination and celebrating original and critical thinking, the very things that make us human, promotes initiative and life-long learning.

Such was my aunt's inspirational teaching that by the age of 15 I had my A Mus A and a list of prizes and was performing on ABC radio and Television. Such was my aunt's inspirational teaching that she osmotically transferred to me the joy of teaching and learning so that after completing my Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, English Literature and History, and after having three children, I completed a Diploma of Education as a mature age student and registered as a teacher. I am still a registered teacher. I have never looked back, thanks to the wonderful mentoring I received as a beginner teacher and, in later years, the outstanding Professional Development program at my workplace.

Immediately on qualifying as a teacher I was appointed as a general class teacher, and music specialist at Friends' Junior School. After 18 months, I was asked to be acting Head and after a few years, and the birth of my 4th child, I was appointed Co-Head, then Head of Junior School, a position that allowed me to implement the International Baccalaureate Programme for children aged 3 to 12, an academically rigorous programme, that acknowledges the the sciences, maths, humanities and the arts as being equally important, as well as being interconnected. The programme promotes the nurture of curiosity, imagination, creativity, initiative and independent critical and

conceptual thinking, as powerful life-long learning tools. As a bonus, in implementing that programme, I learned a lot about managing change.

I was able to pursue my passion for music alongside my teaching career and as I did so I discovered why my aunt and mentor had been such good teacher. I realised that she was herself a learner and that to be a good teacher you had to be a willing learner with a healthy curiosity.

Learning is the gateway to everything. As the philosopher and former slave, Epictetus² observed around 55 AD “Only the educated are free.” Learning is something that has no use by date. A readiness to learn makes it possible for you to earn a living and change careers several times if need be. The more successful you are at learning, the more knowledgeable you become; and the more knowledgeable you become, the more competent, independent, self-sufficient and confident you will feel and the more confident you feel, the more you will say to yourself “Yes I can.” Successful learning puts **you** in control and makes **you** resilient because you know, that if you have to, you have, *or can find* the resources to deal with failure or the unexpected.

And the unexpected is what I had to deal with on 2nd April 2008 when my husband was appointed the 27th Governor of this state and my official title became wife of His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania; a curious title considering none of my other jobs made reference to being a wife or otherwise; and a curious role, as the wife of the Governor has no job specification, no role description and in fact has no employer. But she does have to conform to considerable protocols, carry out official duties and satisfy

² In AC Grayling *The Meaning of Things* Pub. Orion, London 2002

diverse and varied community expectations. There is no structure for feedback on how you are performing but if you muck up, as has been the case, the community makes its feelings known in no uncertain terms.

Once again I became a learner and applied the principles I had spouted so often during my professional life. The learning curve was steep. I am still struggling with my dismal failure after four years practice, to perfect the art that Prince Philip has perfected, the art of walking three paces behind my husband, the Governor, for we have always walked side by side, but I *have* applied my experience in education and the arts, and my learning in philosophy and the humanities, and drawn on my inner resources and life experience to create a community role for this 21st Century Governor's wife that I hope is useful, of some substance and contributes positively to a civil society. To do any job well you have to feel fulfilled, challenged and a sense of achievement; winning the respect of people for what you say and what you do, not who you are or how you look, is what brings satisfaction, reward and I believe happiness.

As an educator I believe I have a duty to contribute to the breadth of community understanding, if the opportunity presents itself. Accordingly, my present position keeps me pretty busy. My official duties include hosting with my husband, visiting Ambassadors and other significant visitors to the State; hosting receptions for community organisations and for national and international meetings and conferences, such as the Antarctic Treaty Meeting, the Super Science Fellows Symposium, the College of Psychiatrists and so on. I am patron of over 20 organisations. In addition to the traditional official duties I conduct a programme of my own, making myself available to callers,

attending and speaking at external events, such as a memorial for those affected by suicide, opening art exhibitions, launching books, opening conferences, and there is always a speech to be researched and written on such topics as the importance of International Humanitarian Law. In 2010 I delivered the William Oats and Honore Deane Memorial Lectures at UTAS.

I like to keep in close contact with other members of my tribe; those who are passionate about music. I have created opportunities to promote established and emerging Tasmanian musicians, such as Virtuosi Tasmania, Elanee Ensemble, 22SQ and the Tasmanian Youth Chorale, to a wide range of local, national and international guests, and to record in the Government House Ballroom. Each year I have held a choral concert and workshop with conductors and singers of Australia's leading youth choir, Gondwana Voices for school children, especially those who would not otherwise have such an opportunity. While the Governor and I engage older children who visit in a role play about democracy, and hung parliaments, I like to teach the younger ones a Quadrille to dance in the ballroom, to make their visit to Government House unforgettable.

I have also taken on active roles such as the Chair of the Tasmania Antarctic Gateway Working Group, which is a collaboration between the Australian Antarctic Division, Antarctic Tasmania, DFAT, and other like bodies to share information, collaborate and grow the 170 million dollar Antarctic business in Tasmania. There is little spare time. For the past 6 I have continued to teach at Adult Education running a parent child music education programme and a choral singing programme for beginner adults, enabling them to experience the joy of music from the inside out, by preparing a major choral

work to sing in the Opera House in Sydney with choral singers from all over Australia, in Chorus OZ.

Although busy, the role of the Governor's wife is a very rewarding one for there are always new and interesting people to meet and new things to learn. Last year there were over 15,500 visitors to Government House and this year on Open Day we shook the hands of 5,000 visitors aged 0 to 95. People, from the very young to the very old, bring the house to life. Everybody likes to hear praise for what they do and what they contribute to their community. My husband and I get about the community and give deserved praise and encouragement. Our experience is that Tasmanians are optimistic people generally and respond to recognition for their work and commitment.

As Cicero, who was a great believer in public duty, said around the year 50 BC, "There is nothing so like anything else as we are to one another, kindness, generosity, goodness and justice are the deepest ties holding the human community together."³ When all is said and done, how we treat each other is the key to success in public life and life generally. To take people seriously and value them as individuals nourishes their sense of identity and self-worth. But it is not all one way. Engaging with others with both mind and heart makes you feel connected and useful and gives a sense of purpose and well-being. As I said teaching is a most rewarding job. But whatever you do in life if you; find what you are **good** at, find a **passion**, become a **learner**, become **knowledgeable** and **think for yourself**, with the **purpose of making a positive difference for good in the world**, you will succeed.

³ AC Grayling *The Meaning of Things* Pub. Orion Books 2002

Thank you.