

Dorothy Fielding Beaulieu's Eulogy on June 23, 2007

The morning air is sweet and clear, Awake! The day is new and full of cheer. Awake! With precious gifts in either hand, the early hours expectant stand. Awake! Awake! Awake! These are lines Dorothy often used in her ballet performances.

Dorothy Zoe Fielding Beaulieu was born in England on March 2, 1919. Her father had died 29 days before her birth and her mother, a well-respected English actress, was a strong and loving influence in her life. Dorothy and her mother moved to America when Dorothy was almost 2. Thirty two years later in 1953 she returned by boat for a visit and was present at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The grandeur and beauty of this experience had a strong and lasting impression on her. She spoke of it so often to me that I almost felt like I had been there with her.

Dorothy began dancing as a child and performed from the time she was in high school. She seemed to try to have a family life, as she married 3 times and had one son, but her talent and her great love and attraction for dance and drama kept her performing for many years. Later she owned and directed a ballet school in southern California for 16 years. It was during this time, in 1973, that Dorothy met the Fellowship of Friends in San Diego with John Graham and Jan Allen as directors. When she was unsure about moving up to the Fellowship property and leaving her life there behind, her mother, who was living with her and blind at this time, encouraged her to follow her heart. She moved to Oregon House where she lived until she died - except for one wonderful and memorable year when she lived in the Florence centre. Ute Rowland, a director in Florence at the time, told me that Dorothy had commented, after tasting the cheese there, that this was the way cheese was supposed to taste. She spoke often of this year in Italy and would have happily stayed there longer, enjoying the abundant art and culture. However Robert asked her to come back, so back she came.

While Dorothy lived here, she taught ballet to adults and then to children. She loved the children and tried hard to keep a very high standard in dress and manners. This was no easy task, yet she would not accept less. Some time later she stopped teaching ballet and did little jobs around Isis to keep herself busy. It was not unusual to see her doing a few dance steps when she could slip them in throughout the day. I realized, from being with her in many different situations, that she saw things colored through the eyes of a

performer – through drama and ballet – as it had been her life from childhood, with her mother and then with herself. I was always pleasantly surprised when she would bring me into that world for a few minutes with some comment or observation of the moment.

Dorothy so much loved Robert, the beauty and energy of Isis with the Galleria and its wonderful gardens, and the caring students that were so kind to her as her body and mind gave way to age. It brings to mind an angle from Robert that I found in her desk, “We are so fortunate that we are dear to one another, and even more dear to the Gods.”

Two students kindly shared with me some memorable and meaningful experiences they had with Dorothy. I would like to share them with you in their words:

The first is from June Billings. - “For 7 years (1989 -1996) I lived next door to Dorothy. There was often an opportunity to give her a short ride, to the store, post office, etc. I really enjoyed these rides because Dorothy never failed to mention the Work, the Fellowship, or something in the moment. As a student (at that time new to Isis), this showed me how one could live the work in daily life. I’m grateful to Dorothy for her gentle perseverance.”

The second sharing is from Elizabeth Kehl. - “It was Judson’s and my play to take a “wrong” turn on our way to this school. We thought we’d found the real thing, and moved from southern California to Arizona to be with a group there. We found it was not for us, and then joined the Fellowship of Friends in Arizona. But joining the Fellowship and leaving that group was a harrowing experience, and created much confusion within me. On one (perhaps our first) visit to Isis, we attended an outside afternoon tea at the galleria. I was seated next to Dorothy and mentioned something of our ordeal. She looked at me with the most beautiful sky-blue eyes and said, ‘That was your payment to come to a real school.’ With those words, everything made sense, and I could be at peace with what had happened. I’ll be ever grateful to her for that.”

I worked with Dorothy’s personal affairs for many years and would find literally hundreds of work I’s and Robert’s angles neatly written on index cards and placed in various spots in her home. The one I found the most often was, “We have a daily, working relationship with the Gods.”

Another from Robert that I particularly enjoyed, “Do not buffer...suffer. Do not suffer...rise.”

Dorothy so enjoyed tea and had delicate China cups from England to sip from. Clothes were always fun for her and she often commented on how nice one looked. She had the most beautifully blue and sincere eyes as she said it. I will not forget those beautiful eyes.

Dorothy’s valuation and gratitude for the school and the work, as well as her sensitivity to beauty, and especially her love for Robert were quite obvious to those who were around her. In the last difficult years of her life she was consistently gracious to whomever was there for her. We who have worked with her – giving her rides to the store as June and many did, bringing her lunches as Mohsen and others did, housing and caring for her as the Fletchers, Helen and Roger Pugh, Sharon and Thomas McLennan, and Elena and Girard did, nursing her instinctively and emotionally as Agnes, Dinara, Elena and others did – we struggled in various ways and have come away from the experience having received much more than we gave. Dorothy also has received much as Robert has told her that she would be “dancing with the stars.”

I would like to end with a beginning - Dorothy’s introduction to her performances.

“Come gentle people, open your eyes, and see what joy before you lies. Turn night to day with dance and play.

So let the music sound! On with the Play!