

Interview with Teresa Lescaudron, recipient of the QBA
Outstanding Contribution to Music Education in Quebec award.
(2011)

September 16, 2012

1) What is your official job at Twigg Musique?

Educational Consultant: to sell and service the band programs for English schools in the Montreal area.

a) What do you really do?

Haha – everything. Sometimes I act as a psychologist. I listen a lot and give my opinion (appropriate or not.) Every story I hear is familiar, so I try to give advice based on my own experiences and those of my other customers. Someone, somewhere, has lived through that same experience before. If I can draw on those experiences and help someone I feel I've done my job.

b) If a stranger asked you what your job was, what would you answer?

Never..salesperson, but..... I NEVER KNOW WHAT TO ANSWER!

2) What is your musical background?

I started piano lessons at a young age. I only practiced to get out of doing the dishes,(haha) and it only lasted a year and a half.

In grade 8 I played the flute. I had to because it was a pre-requisite for saxophone. For grade 9 I switched to saxophone and started playing in the jazz and concert bands, 7:30 am rehearsals and all! I loved it! It made me who I am today. I made a core group of friends and became part of a close knit community.

I grew up in Granville Ferry, N.S. and went to school in Annapolis Royal, N.S. In provincial competitions our bands always came in 2nd to Truro, (thanks a lot, Guy Cox and Scott Cheyne) except for one time! We were in St. John, NB and my friend Joanne and I (two "good" girls) were at the Delta Brunswick having lunch. Suddenly two RCMP officers approached us and hauled us off to be in a line up because we matched the description of two criminals. We were really worried because no-one knew where we were and it was almost time for our band to play. Luckily they let us go in time and we made it to the competition with minutes to spare. I guess it got the adrenalin going, because for the first and only time, we won GOLD!

3) What about band trips?

Our trip to Antigonish, N.S. for a jazz festival is the reason I ended up at St. Francis of Xavier, studying music. A trip to Saskatchewan was my first time on an airplane. Our trip to Nfld.... All these trips gave me the taste for travel I still have today. If I hadn't gotten into music I think I would still be in Annapolis Royal, I never would have travelled and I wouldn't have the confidence that brought me to this point in my life.

4) After University what did you do?

My first job was a teaching position in Terrace, B.C. I hadn't ever heard of it and had to look it up on a map to figure out where I was going. I was interviewed by phone. My ticket cost me \$900 in 1989! (I still have it) I taught grades 8,9 and 10 band. Quite quickly I decided that teaching was not for me.

My next stop was Edmonton. For 5 years I managed the print music department at National Music.

My next experience was as branch manager for St. John's music in Saskatoon. I stayed there two years before I was convinced to come to "la belle province" and work for Twigg Musique.

5) What were your impressions of music education in Quebec compared to the other provinces you lived in?

It is a very different system here in Quebec. The students only go to grade 11, so they cannot achieve the same levels. In Montreal the schools own their own instruments and out west the students rent. For this reason I think the students here don't have the same sense of responsibility towards their equipment.

Teachers here in Quebec are more appreciative of workshops etc. They are more friendly and willing to help each other.

6) Who would you consider your mentors?

- *Allan Ash*
- *Greg Way, formerly St. John's Music, Toronto.*

- *Lyle Bennett, formerly St. John's Music, Calgary.*

- *Benoit Turcotte, Yamaha Canada*

- *Michel Simard, Twigg Musique*

7) What would you consider your greatest accomplishments thus far?

a) The genesis of the QBA and bringing together the English music teacher's network.

b) Camp Musical d'Asbestos – English session. (2000)

c) The QBA annual Retreat.

8) *Do you still play an instrument?*

I own a bass clarinet. I studied sax at University, (Gordon Foote, Richard Hornsby) but an unkind community band director in Terrace B.C. made me feel so bad about my playing that I put it in its case and never took it out again. Five years later I missed playing so started playing for the University of Alberta lab band with Dr. Tom Dust. They needed French Horn, bassoon and bass clarinet. French Horn and bassoon were too hard so I decided on the bass clarinet. I love the instrument and play with the 306 Maple Leaf Wing Band. It is very important to me to keep playing.

9) Which interesting people have you met along the way?

Through National Music: Anne McGinty, John Edmonson, Michael Sweeney, Sammy Nestico, Fred Fennel, Jeff Jarvis, Mike Tamaro, Quincy Hilliard, Robert W. Smith, Doc Severinson (that was cool!)

10) Teaching wasn't your thing. What advice would you give to a new teacher today?

Don't try to be one of them. You are their teacher. Teach. Don't try to be cool

11) If you could change one thing about music education in Quebec, what would it be?

Public awareness. Music programs are a huge expense, but I wish people understood how amazing music and band programs are for

*kids. It builds their confidence, self esteem, self awareness, team spirit and togetherness just to mention a few.
I have met the most outstanding people and my best friends, all because of music.*

Interviewed by Debbie Summerlin, September 16, 2012

Postscript

I met Teresa in 2000 when I started the band program at my school. She is right. She isn't just a salesperson. She is my personal psychologist, my source of inspiration and the rock that holds all of us music teachers together. She is right about another thing. Everybody that matters to me I have met through music. It changed my life too.