

## Short talk by Julia Parker for Faculty Open day 22.3.2014

Hello! It's wonderful to be here today. **So Life After Diploma.**

Well of course it's a new beginning and I'm sure many interesting things will happen for you, the class of 2014.

21<sup>st</sup> of March 1967 – exactly forty seven years ago yesterday I head that I'd got my Diploma. Obviously I was very excited – like you are. However, a bit later that day I had to go to the shops. We lived in a tower block at that time and coming up in the lift I met a neighbour I knew slightly. He said he had a new piece of furniture and asked me if I'd like to see it. I said yes – it was a dining table I think.

We got talking and our conversation turned to the Queen. We decided she had problems and then he said 'I think she needs an astrologer.'

Now I swear to you he really had no idea what I did.

He went on 'Do you happen to know one? **This really is true.**

I gulped and meekly said (and I was meek even though I'm a Sun sign Leo!) 'Well yes' and explained what I'd just learned.

Oh' he replied, would you do me? How much do you charge – Five pounds?'

Now I'd just seen a silk dress in C and A's (remember C and A's?) and thinking quickly I thought if I do this job I could buy it. I accepted the offer.

Two days later I had to go to a formal luncheon and sat next to a rather pompous man who asked in a very grand voice

'What do y'do?'

'I'm an astrologer!'

'Oh! Jolly interesting – how much do you charge?'

'Five Pounds!'

'Will you do mine?'

Within in about eight days I had a waiting list.

Thinking of you new Diploma holders starting out, I am convinced that word of mouth is the very best way to build up your clientele – you'll be good and it will happen. I've always found simply advertising isn't up to much; but an article, piece about you, or a radio interview are all better. so I suggest if you have a reasonable 'freebie' magazine drop though your letter box weekly or monthly, in most cases, if you invest in an advertisement they will do a feature on you –probably with a photograph. This should be extremely useful as it will reach a big variety of people.

However, for me a few weeks after getting my Dip I was asked by the Principal of the Faculty – Margaret Hone, to come on the Council. Most people were terrified of her

especially Charles Harvey – who got his Diploma the year before me. Anyway, she liked me and I stood up for myself. Not much after that I was the Faculty Secretary. Some job! This was the beginning of twelve years in depth involvement of the Faculty - six years as Secretary, then after a break when a new constitution was formed, a further six as President. But I'd never been a secretary of anything. Our four meetings a year would start at 9.30 in the morning and with luck we'd be going home around 7.30 or eight in the evening. I would record everything on miles of tape of what went on, so that I could write up the Minutes.

**Cut to 1969.** All the while I was gradually building up my clientele – mostly regulars - and their files would be added to if they had babies, divorced and what have you. By the way, written reports were the order of the day to back up a lot of counselling.

At this time I was asked, by way of the Faculty, to appear on a BBC TV programme with Patrick Moore. They were putting out an occasional series of programmes called 'One Pair of Eyes'. The presenter had a free range of anything he or she wanted to include. So Patrick decided to have People Who Spoke Venusion, Flat Earthers and so on, and of course he must have a loony astrologer. The film crew came to my apartment and were very dismayed. They asked where was my crystal ball, my bead curtains and surely I put on special robes when communing with the stars? Well, Patrick interviewed me, and was surprised when he at once realised that I knew my Solar System astronomy and beyond so well! But the outcome of all this was a vital turning point for me.

At the time he was friendly with a young chap called James Mitchell, who was starting a publishing company. He said to him 'You should publish a big book on astrology and you should get Julia Parker to write it. Now Patrick always hated astrology – and this was unbelievable.

**Early 1970 .** I was at my brother's wedding in Jamaica and I received a long letter from Derek telling me I had to write what was to become **The Compleat Astrologer**. I was terrified as I thought of all those marvellous, far more experienced astrologers than me, but they said I had to do it. James told me to stop taking clients from the beginning of June. Well I looked at my chart and nothing was happening - until the beginning of October when all hell was breaking loose! So I didn't lose my clients. We started writing on the 1<sup>st</sup> and handed in the last bit of copy on Christmas Eve. At the time we had our first electric typewriter and didn't just work to a word count, but to a character count, setting the machine to the number of characters allocated for the line of text. We worked with an editor and designer from day one, and every day I had phone calls 'Oh Julia, take out nine characters from there – add two more. . . and cut three words from... I was really thrown in at the deep end.

The book which was/is huge, was published in September 1971 (Sun on my MC day ,and other bits and pieces) It sold 40,000 copies before publication, and we did an extended tour of the States to publicise it. It has been translated into ten foreign languages and was pirated in Israel in 1982.

For a long time I did more consultation work and Derek and I produced both our individual and joint books. He with mostly biographies me with Dream interpretation and of course astrology and two novels, until much when later in **1990** my phone went and it was Peter Kindersley who had designed The Compleat Astrologer. He now had his own thriving company.

He said 'Julia can you re-write The Compleat Astrologer?'

'Oh yes' say I – 'with twenty more years' experience!'

**Parkers' Astrology** was launched in 1991 in the same bookshop in Bristol twenty years later on the same day of the year and at the same time as The Compleat Astrologer - which was fun. It too has been translated into as many languages. But it didn't end there. In **2000** he phoned again. 'Julia, we want to extend Parkers' Astrology by a hundred pages - has anything new come up?' Well, of course it had - I immediately thought Horary, Location, Mid points (which would have taken up too much space in the original edition), Chiron - and so on. This book, like The Compleat Astrologer, has gone into many different editions and is a hefty tome of well over 400 pages with updated tables and things.

In **2002**, much to the shock horror of our friends, we emigrated to glorious Sydney! (you'll be back in a year! ) Not a moment's home sickness. The astrological scene here is vibrant with every State having its Association under the umbrella of the Federation of Australian Astrologers. So I am involved with the Sydney branch where plans are being laid for the 2016 bi-annual conference which will be held here. Their exams to Diploma standard are as demanding as ours and not dissimilar. Derek and I are as busy as ever, with more books coming off the production line. Recently we did a book of text with all our own photographs called 'Building Sydney's History'; then before that Parkers' Encyclopaedia of Astrology and most recently we had a lot of fun editing twelve volumes of poetry – one for each sign. 'Poems of Love and life for...Aries'... Taurus and so on. This was for Random House who publish it both on the net and in hard copies. We're also getting more of our older books on the net too.

But I must go back to **1998**: when on returning from the USA Atlanta Conference I had a letter from the Faculty telling me they had made me a patron, I was so surprised and just couldn't believe it, though I eventually compared it to an Oscar for Life Time Achievement. I am so proud of this honour and whatever ties I might have with other Societies, the Faculty always holds pride of place in my heart. Thank you so much for inviting me today. Like me all those years ago, because of your Diploma Success, life is bound to develop and move on in interesting and possibly unexpected directions. Have a load of fun and enjoy the rest of open day - which first came about during my time! 'Bye for now!

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