

Chasing Down Passion

By Linda Loveland Reid

Director of The Ticking Clock Project at 6th Street Playhouse

Born in Hollywood, then to rainy but lush Crescent City where father was a fisherman, and finally family settled in Healdsburg where I picked lots of prunes and eventually married my childhood sweetheart, from which was garnered three lovely children and one divorce.

I set off on a quest to find myself. My life partner is Harry Reid, writer, playwright and architect. Over the years, the muses have sent their blessings and I enjoyed a busy journey that includes oil painting, writing, and directing theater. Albeit a late blooming scholar, in 1999, at age 57, I collected two BAs (*cum laude*) from SSU in History and Art History. I am currently serving as President of Redwood Writers, the largest branch of California Writers Club in the State.

I was a teen-mom and had three children by age 20. Later, my grown children and I formed a family business, *ReidLoveland Insurance*, and still work together, 98% of the time with fun and pleasure. Was being a teen mother a good idea? Not recommended. If you do it, plan to change your life that day.

First novel (*Touch of Magenta*) was released in May 2009. To my surprise, it reflects my own experience, one which at age two stamped a curse or challenge (depending on how you see life) on me. *Touch of Magenta* explores integrity and morality, never simple issues.

I attribute everything I've done, or will do, to hard work. That probably sounds prosaic, but that's it—a willingness to stay the course and a healthy dose of curiosity and passion. On this wild trek they call life, I've tried to live by two mottos: *Be careful where you're going because you're going to get there.* And: *Never mistake your wish bone for your back bone.* As you might imagine, my kids still love me to preach these grabbers.

So, my question is: What are you passionate about right now? Passion is the fuel for a happy life. Passion, like bliss, must be obeyed.

Thanks and...may you live 'til you tilt!

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How I Found My Stride

By Mary Praetzellis, Associate Director Anthropological Studies Center

I remember my mother reading the five of us books about Egyptian archaeology. I never had a career path. Unlike most youngsters, I never wanted to be an archaeologist. My journey towards managing an archaeological research facility had more to do with the Beatles and the Black Panthers, the urgencies of romance, and the complexities of campus politics, than with the stories my mom read...or at least their content.

I had the perfect childhood—nurturing, secure, democratic, rich in spirit and love. Everything I could want lay within the radius of our modest track home at the end of a cul-de-sac. Family provided the tools, if not the desire, for success. I left as expected to attend UC Berkeley after high school. Here devastating homesickness co-existed with an intellectual and political awakening only fractionally drug induced.

All this was nothing compared to the catharsis at graduation time four years later. Then I realized the purpose of an education was to secure a job. And I had failed miserably: a BA in Anthropology, which trained one to do what exactly?; an arrest record for a peaceful demonstration in Sproul Hall; a “vintage” wardrobe from thrift stores and free boxes; and a job reference from ZZ’s Hot Dog.

I packed my bags and went to England to work on an archaeological excavation in York—one of things I could almost do, but very badly. There I met Adrian, now my husband. In order to make that relationship work I had to learn the archaeology craft—hard manual labor, detailed recording, and mind-bending analyses. So I mastered the tortuous wheelbarrow run and translated hundreds of pages of field notes into a one-page matrix. I became an archaeologist, but a homesick one still, which is why Adrian and I married and moved to Sonoma County.

Now I am a manager; I no longer get to dig. But I do get to write and to enable others to learn the craft and earn a living applying it. This is more than enough for me.

My advice to anyone wanting to become an archaeologist or anything else would be: Why? Be open to following the path that life provides you, making it yours along the way. What is more important: Where you end up or how you get there?