

Jodi Frediani

UC Santa Cruz opened in 1965, the year I graduated high school. The Beatles had debuted on Ed Sullivan the year before. I was sorely tempted to attend this new, exciting campus, but had planned on becoming a veterinarian and had been accepted at UC Davis. That in spite of the fact that I'd received an award for being the top student in my Advanced Biology class, but had been advised by the presenter of the award at UCLA to marry a vet instead of aspiring to be one since I planned to have children.

Even for a kid who'd grown up in the metropolis that was and still is the San Fernando Valley, where band members in my graduating class had been told they could not graduate unless they cut their hair so it didn't tickle their shirt collars, Davis was a dud. Cheerleaders yelling 'blood drip, drip, drip, kill, kill, kill' creeped me out. We girls had to be in our dorm rooms by 7:30pm weeknights and were checked up on by dorm monitors. Even going to the library was out, except for one night a week.

I had already begun smoking pot, but now hung out with the longhairs and wore multi-colored, bold flower print bellbottoms from Woolworths. And I drew two words on the soles of my feet with magic markers. "Fuck" on the right and "You" on the left. So when I sat down, barefoot on the quad lawn, legs stretched out in front of me, my feet sent out what I thought was my true message to the establishment, as I smiled demurely above. My naturally curly hair had been released from the straightening chemicals that got me through high school. I had arrived, except Davis was not the place to be.

I transferred to UCSC that fall and moved into one of the trailers placed in spoke formation on what later became the East playing fields. As a second year student I attended Stevenson College. My fellow trailer park comrades and I trekked up the hill rain or shine, three times a day for meals in the cafeteria. We sometimes hid boys in the shower in our trailers, as they were not allowed in our 'rooms', but who could keep them out! I was now officially in heaven. But the shower wasn't just for hiding guys. We started a mini coffee house in the trailers. My recollection is vague, but the most salient memory is that we washed coffee cups in the bathtub! Campus police gave students rides in the back of their pickup trucks through the redwoods to far flung lecture halls across the largely unpopulated campus. Dances were informal, and classes were cool. And, hey, we had no grades! Only 'narrative evaluations'.

I seem to recall that our trailer coffee house was the seed, which gave rise to the Kite, which later morphed into the Whole Earth Restaurant. I do remember clearly serving and eating Carli Stevens' outstanding cheesecakes. Her husband Stan, who was in charge of the map room at the university library, delivered them to the Whole Earth. Many, many years later, my dad worked together with Stan on several history projects, with Stan becoming my dad's best friend.

I suppose it wasn't all that surprising to anyone paying attention that I ended up in Santa Cruz. As a teenager I had stayed with my parents, who were social justice activists, at Greenwood Lodge tucked away at the end of Prescott Rd. in Soquel. My folks were friends with the Beltrams who owned the Lodge and were also politically active. In 1972, my parents followed me north and built a house on Prescott Rd, just down the road from the Lodge. As a kid from the age of eight I attended Haskell's Raskells, a summer day camp in Little Tujunga Canyon in the foothills of the San Fernando Valley. It was owned and run by Oliver Haskell a friend of my parents and also a leftie from way back. I continued my stint there as a teen counselor to the nine year olds and camp music counselor leading all the campers in renditions of 'The Cat Came Back' and 'Rise and Shine'. I did some of my earlier pot smoking with the hip counselors on adult-only weekend campouts at the beach. Haskell's Raskells also had an overnight camp in Bonny Doon, though I never got to go to it, but the Bonny Doon mystique snagged me anyway. Apparently the Santa Cruz Mountains harbored free thinkers well before the 1960s got underway.

Back at UC, one night friends and I climbed over the fence surrounding the swimming pool below Cowell and went skinny-dipping, until the security guard found us and kicked us out. Other times, I remember dancing naked under the redwoods as a band played near by. Clothes were considered part of the 'establishment' and avoided whenever possible. I actually made decent, legit money as a nude model for art classes in Los Gatos for awhile, probably one of my earlier 'meditation' exercises, as it was cold in the room and I had to maintain my pose regardless.

Off campus, I attended Ralph Abraham's Gurdjieff and I-Ching study groups at his California Street house. I found my way to full moon celebrations at T. Mike Walker's spread out on Trout Gulch Road in Aptos. I rode my three-speed bike (the only way to navigate Davis) around Santa Cruz until someone stole it, though I never locked my car downtown, and even left the keys in the ignition when I went shopping.

At some point, maybe a year or so after I arrived, I moved up to 1000 Alba Road with a couple of friends and rented the first house on the left. We'd sit on the wonderful covered porch where we took great pleasure watching the rain dripping musically off the roof. Eric Clough was there at that time and the property was essentially a nudist colony. We felt right at home.

Sometime in 1966 or 67 I was back in the San Fernando Valley on break. A Love In was being held in Griffith Park the next day, so my friends and I drove around to florist shops that night and gathered up their 'day old' flowers. We brought them back and filled a bathtub and bathroom sink with slightly wilted roses and other mildly 'tired' blossoms. The next day we took them all to the park and wended our way through the crowd of hippies as we handed them out. Quite literally, we were Flower Children.

Back in Santa Cruz during that period, I hung out at the Catalyst in the St. George Hotel. I loved the greenhouse-style glass ceiling, and the cozy coffee house atmosphere, soothing folk music rambling in the background. Later in 1969 when a proposal to build homes for 25,000 people on Wilder Ranch was launched, Al and Patti DiLudivico, who had opened “the Cat”, were at the forefront to halt the project. I was barely old enough to vote, but joined in, glad to be able to finally follow my parents’ lead of getting involved politically in my community.

I think that was also the year a number of my friends burned their draft cards on the downtown Post Office steps, protesting the Vietnam War. They were thrown in jail for their efforts, but felt righteous. And none of them ended up in Vietnam.

In lighter moments, I danced with abandon on campus in the Stevenson dining room where lightshows were as key to the mood as the music, and at the infamous Barn in Scotts Valley. I remember going there to hear Country Joe and the Fish. Barry “The Fish” Melton and I went to Grant High School in North Hollywood together. We were in the same French class, and I remember him playing guitar while singing French songs for us. He had perfect pitch. He was the best guitarist I knew personally. It was very cool to reconnect at the Barn and dance to the band’s great music.

As a UCSC student, I loved Paul Lee’s philosophy class and wrote a paper about Alice in Wonderland. Then Dr. Lee brought master gardener, Alan Chadwick to town. Little did I know how radically that would change my life! I remember listening to an early lecture Alan gave where he described his vision for the University, planting fruit trees and flowers along the campus access roads, creating multi-hued, perfumed herbaceous beds that would ultimately flesh out his exotic hillside garden below Crown College, free fruits and vegetables for all, and I was hooked. At one point I did an independent study with Jasper Rose on the “History of the Potato” while working in the Alan’s garden. But it wasn’t long before I dropped out of school to work in the garden full time.

If I recall correctly, though, I did go to Europe for a short stint. I think it was in 1967. I was originally traveling with my parents then stayed on in Paris on my own. I met a Dutch hippie who spoke good English. We saw an ad in an English alternative newspaper for the opening of ‘Bottoms’, an independent film by my cousin Tony Cox and his wife at the time, Yoko Ono. So we headed to London where we went our separate ways, with me staying on at Tony and Yoko’s flat.

I slept on a queen size mattress in a white wooden box. More like a coffin with a lid, though I kept the lid off. The living room was also done all in white. Everything. And Yoko had me do ‘research’ for her. She wanted to make a hammer-and-nail piece out of glass, and needed a small hammer to use as a model. I phoned all over England searching for what I was told was a ‘toffee’ hammer, but no one had seen them in years. I also babysat Tony and Yoko’s young daughter, my cousin Kyoko. Yoko confided to me that Tony beat her and she didn’t know what to do. I said, “you can’t stay with someone who

beats you now, can you?” Shortly after, I got a ride with a couple of musicians, and I headed to Edinburgh via Liverpool for the Edinburgh Festival.

In Liverpool at a party I met a man named John Gorman who was dressed in a bellboy’s outfit and long hair. He was a member of the satirical musical group, the Scaffold, along with renowned British poet Roger McGuff and Michael McGear, Paul McCartney’s brother. On my way back from Edinburgh, I stopped and hung out again with John Gorman, staying with him and his flat mate. I only learned many years later, that those guys and their Liverpool compatriots were friends of Ralph Abraham’s partner, Ray Gwyn Smith. Ralph and Ray have been friends and neighbors of mine for something like 30 years. How small is this world anyway?

When I finally returned to London and Tony’s flat, Yoko and Kyoko were gone. When I asked what happened to them, Tony said they were with John Lennon. Yeah, sure, I thought.

Back in Santa Cruz after my summer away, Alan Chadwick became one of my important mentors. He’d appear to me in dreams. Besides being a great gardener with vision, he was a person with a raging temper who managed to do beautiful and wondrous things in the world. I, too, had a temper and was always being chastised for it. I hated it and myself, so Alan was a personal guide along a torturous route to adulthood, self-love and service to the world. He gave me the nickname of “Blackie” which stood for Black Witch. I’m not quite sure why, but it was an honor to receive a nickname from Alan regardless of its implications. He was later dubbed a “Gardener of Souls”. “He taught, prodded, cajoled, and berated his many students until they became competent, authentic, and creative human beings.” (<http://www.alan-chadwick.org>) I felt blessed to be able to be a part of that glorious community, and I later became an organic gardener and farmer myself. In 1971 I traveled to England with my husband and young daughter to study biodynamic agriculture at Emerson College in Forest Row. Those seeds were planted in Alan’s Garden.

Alan taught me to love the beauty of flowers, which here-to-for I had thought of as being superfluous, lacking in pragmatism. Today, my vegetable gardens have fallen by the wayside, but my roses and nearly 50 year old lavender plants continue to bring me great joy through their vibrant color, sustained beauty, rich, sweet scent and nourishment to my soul as well as to bees and other flying insects. Deep appreciation of natural harmony and reverence for all life were among the many gifts Alan gave to a fortunate and blessed generation of wide-eyed budding gardeners. And he taught us about the power and importance of observation. In the spirit of true generosity, we gave the figurative and literal fruits of our work away, placing cans of cut flowers – zinnias, carnations, dahlias, poppies, phlox and roses - and boxes of fruit and vegetables at a road side stand below the garden for students and faculty to take for free. It was a heady time!

I, and my fellow gardeners back then, slept in the woods beyond the last flowerbeds, just below Merrill College. It was quite magical and liberating. We'd sleep among the madrones, oaks and woodland elves and tip toe out into the dawn mists and golden sunshine to water and pick flowers before a communal breakfast in the garden chalet each morning. There Alan would regale us with tales of traveling through South Africa as a member of the Queen's Shakespeare troupe. He'd share stories of his mother's gatherings, which as a child, he attended with the Theosophical Society, including Austrian spiritual philosopher and developer of biodynamic agriculture, Rudolph Steiner. Chadwick was known for his French Intensive Horticultural methods, but Steiner's influence was not far behind.

Later, a group of Alan's apprentices moved into a communal house on Pine Flat Rd. in Bonny Doon. Smoking marijuana was simply what we did in our off hours, and I remember insanely sitting in front of the electric kitchen range in our new house, watching the rainbow colors on the burner knobs change as we rotated the dials. My 'bedroom' was a corner of the living room, cordoned off with a hanging madras bedspread or two. Needless-to-say, they did nothing to cut the noise of laughter, talk and music, making me a bit insane. After losing my temper one too many times and trying to evict one of our housemates who had said repeatedly he was moving out, my other housemates finally figured out I could not sustain my sanity living in such conditions. So they cut a window into the outside wall of one of the larger bedrooms. It had a door at each end, and they constructed a wall cutting the room in two, giving me my own bedroom with window and separate entrance.

Pot or hash was our recreational high, though a fair amount of Acid (LSD) was consumed in those days. I remember being at a party in a house on lower Empire Grade by the University. A huge brick of hash was the centerpiece on the kitchen table. Stoned out of our minds, we all spread flat out on the living room floor, lights dimmed as we listened with our whole being to music, perhaps Simon and Garfunkel, I'm no longer sure. Certainly beat drunken brawls!

Among my fellow gardeners were Beth Benjamin and Jim Nelson. Later they started Camp Joy together, but before that time, Jim and I were a couple for a short while. They were among the housemates up on Pine Flat. Jim and Beth have gone their separate ways, but we continue to stay in touch to this day, all still involved more or less in the magical realm of horticulture and growing food and beautiful flowers.

Time gets compressed when looking backwards, and it's hard to remember the exact sequence of things. Perhaps it makes no difference. At some point I moved into one of two houses on a piece of property off Old San Jose Road in Soquel. Likely 1969. There was also a run down chicken coop off to the side. Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters had lived on that land not all that long before. The interior of the other house was madly painted in psychedelia, a testament to their past presence. The first Acid Test took place in a house in the Soquel area known as 'The Spread'. I read that, "The Spread was like a

rundown chicken farm.” Very possibly the same place! At any rate, that house had clearly seen its share of LSD. But the walls were also riddled with bullet holes. We’d heard that the most recent tenants to vacate the property had included a hot car ring. To make the story more believable, there were Porsche bodies in the gully just beyond the chicken coop, and the main gate was wired for bright lights and security cameras.

The property also came with a couple of ducks and a pig. Sweet pig, but we’d get regular calls from the folks in the subdivision at the end of our dirt road asking us to come collect the little porker who was rooting about in their lawns. I remember coming home one day to find the front door open. Pig had managed to let herself in, tipped over and rummaged through the compost bucket and made herself comfortable sacked out on my mattress on the floor. Oh those were the days! Clearly, the energy of the place was pretty insane. I didn’t last long there. In fact, I think it was shortly after that, that I dropped out of the university for the second time and took off to travel through Europe.

Things were changing and I needed to get away. Ronald Reagan was Governor of California and even though my folks were paying for my college education, I didn’t want to see money going to the university system since the Governor was the head of the UC Regents. I knew I didn’t like him, and only many years later read of the rather nasty stuff he did to Clark Kerr and UC professors in the name of fighting Communism. Seth Rosenfeld, an investigative reporter who worked for the San Francisco Chronicle in the early 2000s wrote an in depth book on Reagan’s role in the harassment of students, professors and administrators of the University of California in the 1960s. Entitled Subversives - The FBI’s War on Student Radicals, and Reagan’s Rise to Power, the book came out in 2012 and filled in lots of missing details for me. So much for idealism! Didn’t make my parents happy that I was dropping out again, but I set off on my world travels that spring on my own dime, after applying for readmission the following fall quarter.

Early in that trip, I met John Frediani, the man who would become my husband for the next 20 years. We met in Athens, Greece, in a little taverna over pseudo vegetarian bean soup, though I had seen him the day before on the Acropolis and had wondered how to go about meeting a stranger in Athens. He was traveling with a guy named Hank and they were on their way to India, which sounded like a good idea to me. We all went to Crete together where we stayed in the caves at Matala along with bunches of other hippies. I hear Joannie Mitchell showed up there a year or so later.

John and I left Hank on Crete, but we only got as far as Afghanistan before I picked up a severe case of dysentery. (Eating ice cream from a street vendor was not a good idea, especially since the town of Herat did not have 24-hour electricity!) I also realized that if I continued on to India, I would not get back in time for fall classes.

On our way back, we almost ended up in a Turkish prison after getting pulled off a Turkish train without tickets. We had heard that Krishnamurti was speaking in Gstaad,

Switzerland, and we wanted desperately to go hear him. We had enough money for the train, but it was a Friday afternoon and we didn't want to wait till the following Monday to get Turkish currency, so we hopped the train without tickets. We did make it to hear Krishnamurti, thankfully, and even went to visit his compound outside of London later on. We also ran into Steiner books at a London bookseller. The connecting threads were thick and sticky. Wherever we went, we seemed to get entangled in them.

Of course, the Internet did not yet exist, so it wasn't until we returned to California that I learned I had been accepted for the winter rather than the fall quarter. Pissed me off so much I didn't go back to finish and get my degree until my marriage dissolved over 20 years later. John and I found a house to rent on Smith Grade across the road from the Lingemann property. The house came with some goats left by the landlord to clear poison oak. We tamed them and began what would later turn into a 'career' as dairy goat farmers.

We became friends with John and Nancy Lingemann and started our first garden on their land. Nancy was also a protégé of Chadwick and still gardens to this day. John's dad, Curly was known for his wild ways, having taken up with a friend of his daughter's. I spent quite a bit of time on that mountain with John and Nancy and their community, and even visited Curly's 'cave' house, dug into the side of the mountain up near the top. I remember that the stove hood was made from an automobile hood. And in the odd way that everything seems to be connected, it turns out that Hank, John Frediani's traveling companion, his best friend from New York was living up on the Lingemann land.

The following spring I got pregnant which opened up the next full chapter of my life. Raven Lang became my midwife and Nancy Lingemann also attended my daughter's home birth with her 6 wk old infant daughter. I loaded film in my camera while in the second stage of labor so someone could photograph the birth.

When our daughter was just 3 mos. old, the Smith Grade house we were living in burned to the ground. So John and I moved back to 1000 Alba Rd with our young daughter. Raven and Kenny Lang were living there at the time, the home birth movement was in full swing, and I lent a hand in creating the Birth Book. Besides lots of editing, and writing my own birthing story, I researched and wrote a history of childbirth featured in the beginning of the book.

I got very involved in the home birth movement becoming a childbirth educator, a midwife and a member of the Birth Center that we started downtown. Santa Cruz was at the forefront of this movement to empower women. Here's a passage I just re-read from the Birth Book, "We began the center because we as women understood it to be a necessary and a good step in the liberation of women. None of this would have happened if we had waited for organized medicine to come around, or if we had been scared of the laws we break, or if we had waited for money. I want now to say POWER TO THE

PEOPLE, AND YOU CAN DO IT IF YOU WANT.” That was kind of the mantra of those times.

At 1000 Alba John and I lived in what I recently learned was called the ‘goat shed’. Holly Harman, author of “The View from Inside a Hippie Commune” lived in the same shack a year or so later. It was just barely large enough for a double bed, with a bit of room for a small bed for our little daughter. The shed (pictured in Holly’s book) was next to the pond on the property.

A few months later, John and I went off to England to attend Emerson College in Forest Row, the Steiner College we’d learned about from Chadwick. Well, at least John attended studying biodynamic agriculture, because I had become a full-time mother of a six-month old crawling baby. We were there for about six months when the urge to get our own plot of land became too much to ignore. We packed our bags and headed back to Santa Cruz.

When we initially returned, we moved on to a friend’s land just below the Lingemann property on Smith Grade. We lived in a bentwood geodesic dome friends at 1000 Alba helped us construct. The struts for the canvas cover were put into a frame and the whole thing was immersed in the pond on Alba. Once fully wet, the struts were removed and dried, permanently bent in the necessary arc for the dome structure. John did the math and I cut and sewed together long strips of canvas that finally became the roof and walls for our dome. I did the stitching in the big house on the Lingemann property, which had a living room long enough for the unfolded strips of canvas. The dome would become our home once we moved onto our own land.

We engaged a realtor, looked at lots of property, but the short version is that we bought 47 acres off Smith Grade, a mile or so down from the Lingemann ‘mountain’ with financial assistance from my parents. Our son was born in the dome, and it wasn’t until he was six months old that our real house was far enough along that we could move in. Originally, we just had sub-flooring and plastic sheeting for some of the larger windows, until we had enough money to purchase beautiful, wood frame windows custom-made in Davenport. The rest of the windows in our house had been scavenged from Alcatraz by Jim Nelson and the Camp Joy gang.

Our dream of an organic farm began to become reality. For the next 20 years John and I with the help of our children, and apprentices who lived on our land in domes and yurts, raised dairy goats. We had one of the top milking and show herds in the country. We also had calves, and sheep, chickens and a couple of donkeys, plus dreadlocked livestock guard dogs. We were one of the many organic farms that sprung up as a result of the magic that Alan Chadwick had wrought up at the University. Santa Cruz became ground zero for an amazing organic agriculture movement, which has since swept across the country. Midwifery became legal in California, and now Santa Cruz County is drafting a medical marijuana ordinance. Our children have grown, our goats and our partnership are long gone, as are many of the dreams from that era, but I’m still in the same house and on



the same land today working on manifesting a new set of dreams. And Ralph and Ray have been my neighbors since they moved onto their property a stone's throw down our private road over 35 years ago.