

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

**Q:** Alright, this is July 17th, and an interview with Herb Goldstein.

**A:** Right, right, and I just started rambling about a neat publication, we were talking about, part of the project was collecting publications. Kaleidoscope was the name of a hand-made publication. It had an unusual format, it was hand-bound, usually, with yarn or something through punched holes in the binding. Something that a collective was printing, they must've had a printing press in their living room or something, some of these groups did, and every couple of weeks hand delivered that week's issue to, uh, over 300 communes, collectives, group living situations in the Bay Area. And picked up the next weeks news, cartoons, things wanting to be bought, sold, hikes or whatever to go on. So that was a really neat networking thing, and one of the magical parts about it was that it went, it was outside of the U.S. postal system. That's also a good way to do networking, if somebody actually knocks on your door, you'll get something done that might not happen if it just went through the mail. Take for instance this interview right now. It just so happens that I was here today when Deborah came by. I wasn't able to get it coordinated previously. Uh, and I think that publication is talked about and I do have a couple of issues in my own personal archives or treasured period pieces, as I think of them. I think that was maybe from 1971. Let's see. Also at that time, I visited several groups and I had lived in communities myself throughout the period you're talking about. That is, I started 1969 and was still in community in 1975. I personally lived by myself for awhile, but I came back community about 8 years ago. Up, --

**Q:** What communities did you live in?

**A:** Okay, then I'll get back and tell you about some of these other communities that I had some personal knowledge of. But in 1969 I went to Heathcoate Center, School of Living's Heathcoate Center in Freeland, Maryland. And, there were over 20 people living there, there were hippies hanging out of the windows! Uh, an old mill built in the 1840's. This was a, felt like a real central nerve work of a part of the movement. We had a publication which was by and for intentional communities, called The Green Revolution. It actually was a broader publication than that and had, its predecessor published by the School of Living for 40 years before that. Maybe not quite that long, 'cause it's only in its 50th or 60th year now. But Up, talked about homesteading skills and stuff, but many of the issues which, oh, I've got some back copies of those, and they are available on microfilm from, uh, I forget the name of the university! Balin [?], Hall Labs may keep microfilm of this. I'm sure you've gotten stacks of the alternative publications. It's some major microfilming project for all the alternative publications, and Green Revolution is one of those. But, let's see, we did that publication and at that community there were seminars, and lots of visitors. School of Living had been promoting intentional community earlier on. Some communities even got their start at School of Living conferences at Heathcoate Center. There's a delightful story about Sunrise Ranch.

**Q:** I've been there.

**A:** Okay, you've been there. Well, maybe I think the Sunrise Ranch that's been there has dissolved.

**Q:** Oh, I went to the emissary community in Colorado.

**A:** No this is not an emissary community, this was one of those spontaneous, alternative to the establishment, we're-going-to-just-do-it-groups, that were springing up in the mid-sixties. But people had come together at Heathcoate at a communities conference, and having met there decided that they

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

just had to go on and start a community. Had a couple of glorious years, as did many groups in those days. A whole lot of them, uh, of course, lasted for two years or less. But anyhow, I was talking about groups I had lived in. I was in Heathcoate Center for two and a half years, and then on --

**Q:** And was that considered an intentional community?

**A:** Yes. Definitely was. One of the things that I had done in those days was publish a directory of intentional communities, and I may have some of the copies that I hand-mimeographed up, of that. I think it was one of the earlier directories as such. I had done my own research just sending requests to groups who had written Heathcoate, requesting just a thumbnail sketch of them, and permission to publish a directory, and uh, I don't know, I guess the first one had 35 communities in it, and we eventually had quite a few more. And uh, . . . one of the projects I did with that was co-publish it at Up, at Twin Oaks. It wasn't exactly co-publishing, they did some uh, they had a . . . lithograph or a regular printing press, an off-set printing press, and we just had a mimeograph machine, so we worked some labor exchange. This was a big deal because in those days there were different pieces of the communities movement . . . Heathcoate would have been classified as an anarchistic community, whereas Twin Oaks was a planned community. And Up, there was some hostility between groups, I mean not wars or anything -- there was a period when it just wasn't possible to have good cooperation, because there were ideologs thinking "Ours is the right way to do it." But let's see. I moved on from Heathcoate to Downhill Farm, where I lived for 7 and a half years. From there I was by myself for awhile, and here at Common Ground. This is not actually a complete biography. I hope this isn't how my biography is written, because I'm leaving out some important details.

**Q:** Well can you tell me where Downhill Farm was?

**A:** Yeah, it was located in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, near Hancock, Maryland. And . . . Up, I had been at Heathcoate for two and a half years, and Heathcoate Center, the intentional community part of it that I was a piece of, never really was a place where people came with the idea that they would be there forever. People came to Heathcoate, they made contacts, they learned about living in the country, organic gardening, building mechanics, I mean it was just a place you could learn an awful lot. And then people went off and did their own homesteading, started their own communities, joined communities. I was considered, like I was there, considered it home for one of the longer periods of time anyone . . . two and a half years -- a lot of people were there for six months. Two years was a fairly long time. Um, . . . but during the last few months I was there, I was actually on the road doing a research project for Judson Jerome, who had gotten a grant from Twentieth Century Fund to write a study about contemporary communities. And I was about to, actually I was about to take off on a trip to different communities around the country, and I wangled a deal with him where he paid a very small stipend in exchange for a copy of the journal I was keeping. And my contact with him for awhile -- his study led him to want to start his own community. Having been a professor at Antioch University, on Sabbatical at that time, I believe. And the people who were all research assistants for this book project ended up founding this community called Downhill Farm.

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

**Q:** Now did Judson Jerome live there too?

**A:** Yeah, he was there for the whole there I was there, actually I was the first person to move onto the land, and he and his wife Marty didn't come for about six months or something. But uh, yeah, I lived there, and we continued to work on the book project for I think, another year. The result was called Families of Eden, the actual book was uh, as originally submitted, much more descriptive of many more communities, and Twentieth Century Fund chose to edit it down to more a biography of Jerome, rather than the original intent of a sociological study.

**Q:** Yeah, I met someone else who did a journal for him, Lucy Horton, do you know her?

**A:** Sure.

**Q:** Country Commune Cooking?

**A:** Yes. Lucy Horton did, there were a couple of other people on the road to communities. Twentieth Century Fund was forwarding us chapters of an Andrew Wilde book as he was writing those, that was neat to be able to see. But that wasn't incorporated into Families of Eden. And I probably have some good information for this project, for back in '71, '72, when I was doing that project, one of my jobs was gathering information of over 1,000 communities.

**Q:** Do you still have a copy of your journal that you gave to Jud?

**A:** Actually, I do, it's really embarrassing, the way it was written and all that kind of stuff. But I do have a copy of it, I don't know where I would find it right now, it's in a stored box, but, like I say, I've kept some things for personal diary type reasons, and it's not embarrassing for, like other than, writing style, etcetera, etcetera, like I might write differently now. But yeah, I bet I could find that kind of information, I just don't know when. But that was neat. We visited several communities for that journal purpose. I'd be glad to share that, but I'd like to change the release I signed to have it more restrictive. Let's see, some other things that happened during that period. One thing that was a neat loose organization, I think we called it, it was one of these three letter acronyms, like Fellowship for Intentional Communities, but this was the Intercommunities Network. Yeah, the ICN. And it was, there were monthly meetings, uh, it had various communities, I'm trying to think how far north they were involved, maybe up to Julien [?] Woods, and south to uh, Twin Oaks. Actually a lot of them were along like this 522 corridor. But there were . . . most, they started off as rural groups, the ICN. And there was a publication and I turned over at one time to Alan Butcher a set of um, a set of the monthly publication issues which I had kept. Actually I had turned over at different times to Twin Oaks, who was requesting archival information, that kind of thing, and I wouldn't have copies of that now. But he was specifically studying that, so I had sent in, what might be fairly rare issues. One of the projects that the group did was uh, buy a couple of school buses, uh, and we fixed them up and sold one to try to pay for both of them, and then there was a school bus that was owned by Intercommunities, which uh, ... circulated between different groups. We used it a lot at uh, Downhill Farm. We used it actually as a delivery vehicle for these flower pots we were manufacturing ourselves there on the land.

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

**Q:** Now the ICN stuff that you sent to Alan Butcher, was that for his personal use, or was that when he was living at Twin Oaks?

**A:** No, he was at Twin Oaks, I believe, and it was for a, some kind of archive being created.

**Q:** At Twin Oaks? Well, their material's archived at UVA, so maybe it's in with all that stuff?

**A:** Could be. I don't even know where that stuff ended up happening.

**Q:** Alan probably knows, I'll ask him.

**A:** But I was involved with that organization. From 1970 until it was dissolved, I was a member of Community Educational Service Council, Inc., formerly known as the Homer Morris Fund. I was a board member and officer of that for . . . over 20 years. Are you familiar with that?

**Q:** Just vaguely.

**A:** It goes on either side of your project's dates, but goes right through it as well. It was started I think in 1954, and I do have a lot of archival information of that organization sitting up at my house right now, still, to find a more proper home. And it started with the purpose with making small loans to intentional communities to help them with business purposes. And it succeeded at that, in a small way. Starting with an endowment of about \$14,000, which eventually grew, but the revolving loans were such that we lent out over \$200,000, maybe over \$250,000 by lending out, usually up to \$3,000 for three years, to groups, and getting it repaid and lending it out again. So we made a small amount of money go a long way. And I've got some archival information on . . . that, and it may reflect the little bit about the communities period you are talking about, 'cause it does go '65 to '75.

**Q:** Now, CESCO kind of became the FIC Revolving Loan Fund, didn't it?

**A:** Yes, what we did when we dissolved CESCO was turn over its assets to the FIC for a revolving loan fund. So we didn't really feel like we were ending the purpose of the organization, but turning over its function to another group, who would be in a better position to advertise, administer, and do good things with that amount of money. And I think it was over \$40,000 that we turned over, but I forget. It's only been a couple of years and I know all the details, but I, my mind seems to have gone mushy, and I've got it here on my computer to look up if I ever need to find out. Let's see, I ought to dig out some of those drafts of the Family of Eden, maybe I've got some of that information for you too. Because a whole lot of the material gathered was never published by the Twentieth Century Fund. That was a grant where they paid Judson Jerome a contract amount to produce a book over a 2.5 year period or something. They own the rights to it and published what they wanted.

**Q:** I'd love to hear a little bit about what Downhill Farm was like.

**A:** It was interesting. Like I said, I put in over seven years there. It was a long time. I had intended that to be my forever home. And it was, like it kind of stung a bit at the end when I realized this just wasn't going to work for me. But I guess it did some evolution. It was 100 acres. And ... I'd have to go back and look at old memorabilia to know what some of these exact details were. I want to say there were a dozen adult members for a lot of the time, but I can't even remember for sure, it kind of fluctuated a bit. We had members who did come and go, but a lot of people stayed there for years. We build a nice little

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

log cabin there. A lot of us lived in evaded chicken coops, which certainly was not uncommon for the period, to just fix up whatever shelter might be available. Um, we lived for little money. Coming from Heathcoate Center it was a small amount of money too. Each one of the people living there when I first got there was assessed \$30 a month, and that paid for all of your food, although we produced a lot of it from the gardens, the common expenses of electricity and several other common budget items were paid for out of that. We even kept a uh community truck going. Even though \$30 a month doesn't sound like a whole lot, a lot of us, including myself, had to really figure out each month how we were going to get that. We were so involved in being there or visiting other groups or something, we weren't working as such. Revenue from the Green Revolution helped pay some of the electric bills and stuff too. Uh, but uh, ... I remember when we increased it to \$37.50, that was a real big to-do, but we needed the extra money to buy a freezer with or something, and so. We just had to do it. The people there at Heathcoate did odd jobs. We ran an add in uh, the local newspaper, "Odd jobs by odd people. Heathcoate Labor Pool." Some of our neighbors still remember that. I was talking about Downhill Farm when I started, and I was going to tell you about the financial part of it, and then I was backing up to Heathcoate. But I could tell you more about the kinds of things we did, at either of the places, for money or recreation, or whatever.

**Q:** Well at Downhill Farm were you income sharing?

**A:** No. At Downhill Farm each of the adults were putting for most of the time \$100 a month for common expenses, and then we had to pay our own medical and clothing and housing. If you were going to build a house, that is. I think the community might have, out of its common assets, pay for fixing up our chicken coop spaces.

**Q:** Did you incorporate, or did Jud Jerome own the land, or what?

**A:** I do know the answer to this. The land was originally bought by Jud and Marty Jerome. And, ... I forget how long we were there, but the intention was that it would be owned by the community. One of the things the community paid for out of our \$100 a month per adult was the monthly mortgage payment. Jud and Marty put down the down payment, and signed the mortgage and all that, found the place. And I guess invited the rest of us to join. So, they originally bought the place, the community immediately started making some of the mortgage payments. After a year or more, again I could look up the dates on this because I do have this information, Downhill Farm Community incorporated in the state of Pennsylvania, as a Pennsylvania non-profit corporation. And shortly thereafter entered into a purchase agreement for Downhill Farm which was filed up there in the Fulton County courthouse. So, Jud and Marty were not willing to just sign over the title to the community as a corporation, but they were willing to do this encumbrance of the land, and it was what's called a contract sale, so that after the community paid back to Jud and Marty the total price of the land, ... it would, the title at that time would transfer to the community. And, that's how it was originally set up. The original seller of the land just a few years into the contract, she was, she had self-financed it rather than going through the bank, and she made an offer to settle for something less just for a lump-sum payment. And Jud and Marty took her up on that and just paid it off, so they at one time owned it outright like that, and monthly payments continued to Jud and Marty to reduce their principal, and interest being paid to them. And when you look back at it, it was a very good price. I think it was originally \$35,000, and the owner ended

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

up taking \$32,000 after a discount. I think it was 4% interest. And there was some wonderful buildings on there that were originally farm buildings, but we converted to community use. Very good buildings. And all of that for what ended up to be \$32,000 or \$32,500. And, this community couldn't afford to buy it. I mean, Jud and Marty had the means to do that, but none of the other people who came there had real money to put into the community. And Jud and Marty always resented that to some degree. It wasn't ... I mean there was a problem there. Eventually, I'm just going to fast-forward to a few years after I left the community, it wasn't too many years after that that Jud and Marty got the community to tear up the contract purchase so that it would just be in their name forever and not transferred to the name of the corporation. And within a couple of years the community dissolved anyhow. I was completely out of contact with it during that period of time.

**Q:** Do you know what its dates are then, approximately?

**A:** Uh, I don't think it went past 1979, but I'm not sure, I might be able to find out.

**Q:** And it started in --?

**A:** Seventy-one, I think, I'd say it was '71 to '79.

**Q:** And then it just became Jud and Marty's farm?

**A:** Well, they too left. Um, they moved back to Yellow Springs, Ohio, put the thing on the market, and I could come up with dates for that kind of thing, but that was in the early '80's that all of that was happening. It eventually sold, they probably did real well with it as far as investment goes. Um, ... Jud died four years ago maybe. I don't know if Marty is still around. Just personal sharing, these people I've totally lost contact with were really dear to me while I was living with them, and then when I go somewhere else, I lose contact. I know that's not normal for a lot of people, they keep in contact with old friends. I stay current with whoever is right around me now.

**Q:** Did you have cottage industries?

**A:** Yeah, at Downhill Farm, not soon after we moved there -- well, our first real industry was this book, because we were actually getting paid for uh, doing that by Twentieth Century Fund. The research grant provided for paid assistants, and I was one of those, as were several other people living at the community. We were getting some checks from the foundation for that. And the work was being done diligently too, like we put in the hours. Um, and before the end of that book, we developed a couple of cottage industries. We, let's see, somebody who came from California came with a machine for making wrought iron flower-pot hangers, so that you could hook this piece of bent metal over a wall and screw a clay pot to it or something, and you would have flower pots hanging on it. Plants were really just beginning to take off then. I mean, somehow potted plants really mushroomed shortly thereafter. It wasn't an easy product for us to sell, though. It was neat, because the hydraulic press for that was made out of the landing gear of an old B52 bomber. So, it was turning swords into ploughshares, it was cool. Uh, and we were simultaneously developing a log flowerpot business. We uh, we cut down uh, what was considered in our area a weed-tree, called chestnut oak or rock oak, and we would core out the center of it with a big band-saw, take a slice off the core, use a pneumatic nailer to pop it back on, treat it with linseed oil, box them up, and ship them out! And anybody in the community could put in as many hours

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

as they wanted at any of those stations, and it really hummed along for awhile. People kept track of their own times. You got a grand sum of \$3 an hour, which I think was above minimum wage then, but it may not have been. In any event, everyone who participated thought of it as a good deal, because the industry was right there to walk out of the door, and step right into. I did a lot of the management for that particular industry. That was just one of the things I fell into. We used that intercommunities bus as a delivery vehicle. We would ... after being not very successful at trying to sell these flower pots directly to florists or nurseries, uh, we started selling them to distributors, who then had a lot of those kinds of stores as accounts. So, we probably ended up with less than a third of the consumer dollar, but we could deliver truckloads of them to just a few customers, truckloads would actually be busloads.

**Q:** Did you eat all your meals together?

**A:** Yes. At Downhill Farm, we had our, let's see, dinner was always a group meal. I think we helped ourselves to breakfast and lunch, but there was just a single kitchen in the whole farmhouse that we all shared in common. None of the other places that people lived had their own kitchen facilities.

**Q:** Were you vegetarian?

**A:** Uh, well I had been a vegetarian since, I don't know, '67 or '66 or something. But uh, not everyone at Downhill Farm was a vegetarian, although most of our meals were vegetarian. We did have chickens, which we raised mostly for eggs, but occasionally had their heads chopped off and placed in a pot, and we also raised a couple of pigs. And rabbits were raised also. And they would've been raised for meat. So, yeah, there was meat eaters there. But the meals always were prepared with vegetarians in mind also.

**Q:** Did you have any sort of system for sharing domestic work?

**A:** Yeah, these are good questions, I haven't thought about this whole place for a long, long time. We started off purely, what again was called an anarchistic community, where you would just not have a system. And I do remember at one time we developed what we called a chit [?] system, where everyone was expected to do a certain number of chits, I don't even know if that was the right word. I think we used it, it doesn't sound right now. Everyone was expected to do a certain number of hours over a monthly basis, and there was a list of jobs to apply those to. But, for the most part, I think it was volunteerism, um, you know, like the gardens were one of the central community activities. Actually, all, I mean not just gardens, but food in general, like suppose somebody might have looked at what the community was about, and they would have figured it was about growing, preserving, preparing, and eating food. We all seemed to expend a lot of our energy doing those thing, and did that as a group. But I'd have to think back to see what other type of system -- we never had a planner-manager system. There were weekly meetings.

**Q:** And did you use any particular process, like consensus, or did you just vote?

**A:** Yes, it was always consensus, and there were definitely times when the system was, now I can look back and say "abused", by people who were more vocal, and articulate, and so it wasn't well-facilitated as consensus could be, to make sure you get everyone's view point. And listen to that.

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

**Q:** Was Judson Jerome a leader?

**A:** Another good question. Not in a -- no. No. If you uh, came there and said "Who's the leader?" I think we would've said, "We don't have one." I have been to groups where someone is definitely identified as the "leader." But Jud certainly wasn't that, although he was very influential in different ways. I'm being kind of guarded here. There was maybe some kind of seamy stuff which I probably am going to continue to repress or something, but there's a lot of stuff that he himself wrote about. Like in public, he was quite the womanizer. I mean, he wasn't embarrassed about that, even though I always thought he should be. But, for the last couple of years I was at Downhill Farm, and for the couple of years that it had continued there after, he and Marty were part of a ménage a trois with another woman that lived in their house too, so uh. Actually, I think that settled them down some. He was a rambunctious man. Let's see, I had a herd of dairy goats there, which was really neat for me, and uh, uh, you know, I can think back nostalgically on some idyllic afternoons where I'm playing a recorder with the goats following me through the woods. I mean, because they were pets. They were real nice.

**Q:** Did the group have any sort of vision or mission?

**A:** I guess to eat. Uh, I don't really think so. We were identified for a few years that I was living there as part of the school of living, and were enthused about doing seminars. So we would have groups of people coming to discuss any number of topics including intentional community, but there were many other topics at that time that we could present. Jud started doing poetry retreats and workshops. He was a poet, I don't know if you're familiar with his biography, but it's probably right there in your card catalog. He was mostly a poet. Uh, but we uh, as a group, wanted to be known as one of the anarchistic type groups. There wasn't a particular religious focus. We were trying to live a good life on the land and community. We were focused on being organic, as far as organic farming is concerned. And at the time, we weren't for political reasons, or ideological, it wasn't dogmatic that we were being so low-resource consumption or energy consumption, but I think the amount of input into that place for the number of people that were living well would please any of the ecologist that would like us to live lighter on the earth.

**Q:** How did someone become a member there, or did you even call it "membership?"

**A:** Yeah, we did. We had a process. And uh, I guess there was a provisional membership period, and then membership, and there was probably a six month minimum time for people to live on the land before the decision about membership could be made. And then like our other decisions, it was made by consensus.

**Q:** Did you have a lot of people just dropping in?

**A:** We did. Not as many people as we had at Heathcoate center. I'll go back to that time, and I mean I can remember there were weekends with over 50 people just dropping in. It's true. We had hundreds and hundreds of people there during the summer. At Common Ground, which was more out of the way, and less well-known, there were fewer people dropping in. Some people actually did come to see or visit Jud Jerome, because they knew some of his writings. But that was -- yeah a few people did that, most people came to visit a community. Um, and I don't even remember the numbers ... on a summer day, but that may be high, there were a lot of times when it was less than that.

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

**Q:** And how many of those were members?

**A:** I think a dozen. I don't even know if we had more than 15 people as members at one time. I'd have to go back and think about that. One of the things I had done for a summer that I was living there was go down to what was then called Nether's Community School, and help build a solar project, a solar-air system for Carla Oykster's [?] house.

**Q:** Do you know John Rippey?

**A:** Uh, yeah, yeah. He was there then, and, I'm trying to picture his face, and I'm either seeing him or mixing him up with one of the other people that were there. Is he at East Wind now?

**Q:** Yeah, he is. Kind of tall, fair haired.

**A:** Yeah, I think we played poker together. I did get to know the Nether's people during that summer, but there were other people that I was working with on a daily basis to get this project built. But I had known Carla from years before that, or a few years before that when I was still living at Heathcoate. One of the places I used to go visit was Ragged Mountain Ranch, out there near Sperryville, and near there was Carla's family. I don't know how she was hooked up with Heathcoate, but somehow she knew somebody there, and I ended up going to her place for a work project and spent the month there, or something. And they were, she was dissatisfied with the public school system that her three daughters were being subjected to, and having been at Heathcoate for a year, I was completely contacted with, connected with the alternative schools movement, which is something we really were learning a lot about. I gave her some of that information, and she made some contacts and ended up started Nether's Community school.

**Q:** Were there kids at Downhill Farm?

**A:** Yes. Let's see, Jud had, Tofer [?], he was less than five when they moved there. His daughter Paulie was older. Like I remember he as a 12 year old, but I was there for 7 years, so I think she was, I forget what age range she was living there at, and a little bit older daughter, Michelle, was there. Clerg [?] and Eileen had a small child that was a just a couple years old when they moved there. There weren't very many kids.

**Q:** Were they homeschooled?

**A:** Yes. I think that Jerome's kids were. I remember the daughter, Beth, went to the public school system one semester, but quickly quit that. It didn't work out, socially. So I guess the kids were homeschooled. And I don't even remember folk, what I knew about that at the time, I know that, let me see, I don't think the Jeromes were encouraging their kids to go on to higher education or something. Uh, some of the homeschoolers had a, just generally in those days, some of them wanted to homeschool because they wanted their kids to do better than they could do if they went to public school. Some wanted them to be homeschooled because they didn't want them to do better, I mean, kind of with a political concept, like, the establishment stinks, and we shouldn't be raising kids to easily be assimilated by it. I remember having that discussion with John Holt once when he stopped by Downhill Farm. Let's see, I'm much more up with what homeschooling is now happening right here in Virginia at Common Ground. I don't know if Mel went over that with you here.

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

**Q:** Well he took me out so I could see the school and all.

**A:** Well that's kind of outside of the scope of your current study, but we think of this as exemplary. And back then, I'm not sure, I can't remember. I remember helping Tofer learn how to read, way back when he was about five or six. Uh, other kids, there was a, we did have a member who got pregnant, or maybe she came pregnant, went to the farm in Tennessee to have her baby, and then came back with that infant. Um, and . . . I don't remember other kids. The experience was really one that's mixed for me. I do have, some warm nostalgic memories, but there's also a part about it that ended up being painful. And is kind of blocked out, and I'm just not uh, not really in contact with that. It's not, this is not an uncommon way of being that some people have who have joined a community with the idea that this was going to be where they would live forever, and then ended up feeling like they had to leave.

**Q:** What were attitudes like there toward things like drugs and sexuality?

**A:** Well, the place is gone now, and it's certainly past the statute of limitations I guess for these things. Drugs and sexuality. I never saw any hard drugs around the place. You know, there was not a puritanical work ethic, but we really did do a lot of work there. It wasn't a place to come and use as a crash pad or something. There was some pot around. I'm even trying to remember if some might have been grown there at one time. I remember one person growing some, and we weren't real happy about that. Um, but there was some patch of it. I was, myself, not a regular user of grass during the time I was there, but I think there were some people who were. Yeah, but that was available. So there was a non-paranoid permissive attitude. I think alcohol was used, I thought, or over-used, by Jud and Marty, although they did take a year off to prove that they weren't alcoholics or something. I remember when we moved there I was kind of amazed at how much wine they drank, and then they took a year off of that and went back to it. Not during the day, that would just be evening, and biding, uh, let me see. I guess there would be some occasional psychedelics too, but again, it wasn't uh, the place definitely wasn't drug oriented, and that would've been just something occasional, and not used by everyone, but just some people who had come having previously used those occasionally that would sometimes still do it. But never to a point where people were incapacitated. At least not more than a couple of hours or whatever. Let's see, drugs; nudity was not only permitted, but some people flaunted it. And . . . you know, like we couldn't, we had a hard time having any time of facade of being straight or something, because neighbors might come down the road, and we'd be in our garden nude, and turn around, and go back up, and so there was a reputation of it being a nudist camp. We had an outdoor shower without any curtaining around it.

**Q:** Was that your only shower?

**A:** No, there was one inside too, but that was really a main shower during certain times of the year. So you could be in full view of the fields and woods, and they would be in full view of you. Let's see, so, yeah, so there, people did not express any problems with nudity. The only problem might be what it did socially. I remember trying to show an insurance agent around the place who was evaluating us for fire insurance, and we kept turning a corner and running into a naked person. And I was embarrassed. But that kind of thing would happen. Let's see, as far as, you also asked about sex. Sex, drugs, and nudity. Those were the questions that people focused on back then too. It was uh, which I thought was always sensationalist . We would have reporters come down or call us up and say, "Tell us about the sex, drugs, and nudity!" And what we really wanted to tell them about was, "We're building a new society! We're

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

thumbing our noses at the establishment and doing what we want to do, and we're out of the box!" We wanted to, we felt those notions were more important than what we happened to be doing with our sex, drugs, and nudity. Yeah, we would have people doing their sociological studies come down, --and by the way, I don't know how many questionnaires I filled out during those days, from people doing their studies. And people would come down and do interviews and ask us about our sex habits, but were rather shocked when I would turn the question around and ask them!

**Q:** Well good for you!

**A:** "Wait a minute! I don't have to say that! I don't live in a community!" And so the idea to me was, "Why does living in a community lessen my right to privacy?" But, let's see, having said all that, as I indicated before, Jud himself was I think problematically promiscuous, although eventually he would take "no" for an answer, I guess. Others were monogamous. There was, I think we had people who came, several people who came to join the community were estranged from their spouses, and sometimes problematic marriages came, and people broke up when they were in community. But there were some marriages there, that sometimes were open marriages. We were never a group marriage. I think the only identifiable exception was when Jud and Marty and Sandy were wanting to hold themselves out as like a ménage a trois. Uh, let's see. Sex was . . . there wasn't any community policy about it. We were not such as Charista, or the other way, like Padanaram. Those might be opposites of what you're sexual practice expectations are. I wasn't a Padanaram long enough to really get into that, to know if they had their exceptions or something. But maybe using the Hari Krishna ashrams as an example of the opposite extreme, where single people were expected to be celibate. Uh, so, and I would say the same thing for my Heathcoate experience, although I think, I guess there was looser sex back then.

**Q:** Does Heathcoate still exist?

**A:** Oh yeah. It went through several evolutions to its present form, and it's still currently evolving. It did after I left, there was some period of time, I don't know how long it was after that, where it turned more into a crash pad. 'Cause it was so loose, rules-wise. There were people who came to just kind of hang out there without contributing work to the place. And that kind of drives out the workers. So it changed to a different tone. The land there had been bought by this organization, School of Living, which has a board other than the people who were resigning at Heathcoate. After a while the School of Living hired a director to move in there, and I think he kind of cleared out some of the people who were crashing there. And that person moved on. A new community started of young ecologist people, and . . . that eventually turned into an all-women's community. So it was a Heathcoate Women's Center for a few years. And eventually, that changed also, as their numbers dwindled a couple of years ago, in order to just keep the place with the current, with the community structure as it was in place, the last couple of people who were there have more people come in. There was a group from Baltimore that was wanting to find land to do co-housing on. And they moved up there.

**Q:** So now it's a co-housing community?

**A:** Well, they may call it that. I'm not sure that they do, but they may well call it a co-housing community at this time. It's there, I'm going to be going there tomorrow. One of my ... roles as a School

Interview with Herb Goldstein

Interviewer: Deborah Altus

July 17, 1996

of Living, Community Land Trust administrator, I get to help them with this negotiation -- they're wanting to acquire the few acres with a house on it right adjacent to Heathcoate. And I'm going to go help them work out the details. That too is slated to actually be bought by the school of living, the land, and it would buy the buildings on it, and the School of Living Land Trust is a rather purist trust, where it's only concerned about holding the land in the trust, like that being the natural resource, and the improvements or buildings on it, uh, can be privately owned by the users of the land. I know we're changing the subject, but that's always been dear to my heart, how Common Ground is arranged right now. And this is just a little bit outside your period -- the work that I've been doing with the School of Living for Land Trust started in 1976 as far as actually functioning as a land trust. But way back in 1969, it was already being, um, promoted. It was one of the seminars that School of Living did annually, was to promote community land trust. And I got involved with it way back then. I'll tell you how I really got started getting involved with the land trust, is that I took a project on for myself back in 1970, where I wanted to learn the best legal vehicles for communities to own land and do business, and I wrote to a whole lot of different communities asking for copies of their legal documents. And I got a nice little collection as a result of those generous responses. And studying the question about owning land, I came to the conclusion that the Community Land Trust model is really good for intentional communities. It can solve several of the "what if" problems, and increase the propensity of success by eliminating the possibility of some future generation of group selling out to a developer for personal windfall. And it can otherwise have little provisions in there for promoting community, but it can actually be a vehicle for securing land for the communities movement, or resources at least. And uh, the School of Living has done just that. Although it's not committed to having land in its trust only for intentional community, it does have that focus also, so we're able to do that. It's a lot of work, but I like it. I've made some -- I occasionally help some individual groups that aren't what I consider a community land trust, um, going down to ALM, where I just yesterday or the day before yesterday finished up that I had promised much earlier.

**Q:** Yeah, Robert said you were doing some work for them.

**A:** And I hope it's done! And we have a little bit more stuff to do, but I think we've got all the pieces ready for them to put together now.

**Q:** You know I hate to do this, but I really have to cut the interview off, because I have to go down there. I'm really sorry.