

Interview with Noelle and Sandra Barton

Interviewer: Tim Miller

September 15, 1996

NB = Noelle Barton, SB = Sandra Barton

**Q:** This is September 15th. And we are in Sebastopol with Sandra and Noelle Barton.

**NB:** Olompali started because of two people, that never lived at Olompali. Neither one of them ever lived at Olompali. I believe this is very important, it is like a family tree, how people met each other, got connected, and why things escalated to where it went. I think I have your letter. Pat Stone, who came out from Kansas City with was Glenn McCae's [?], [unintelligible], he did the light shows there. He was from Kansas City, and both of them came out here. Um, then she was living out at the house boats. Then Melkin was a friend, his name was Melkin, Melkonian, he was a friend of my mother and father's, and he helped us buy our house in Mill Valley. So around 1966, when all the California Hall, and the [unintelligible] ballroom, and the Fillmore was going, one of the nights we all go out to party, Melkin picks up this beautiful redhead, you know, buxom redhead, that's dancing all vibrant, brings her home, and now we have Pat Stone as part of our family. Pat Stone was on the house boat, and she has her friend, Barney, who was the only equipment crew for the Grateful Dead. Everything they owned fit into a little cargo van, you know. It's like "carry your own equipment", you know, one amplifier. So I would drop by her house, and then we'd go to free concerts. So she introduced us to her friend Don McCoy. Don McCoy owned the health ward [?], down in Sausalito, and all the houseboats behind it. She also introduced us to Bob McKendrick and Sheila McKendrick. They had three children. And there's a poster, some of the early posters of gigs that they organized. So then we met Don, Bob -- you knew Jack Barkley, right? So Jack Barkley brought three [unintelligible]. In the meantime, Don had three daughters, and his wife and he were separated. Bob and Sheila were still together, and they had their three children. Now, we get together, and there'd be ten, fifteen of us, friend and a kid. And it would be two o'clock in the morning, and nobody'd want to go home! But we needed a place to sleep. So, "Can the kids spend the night at your house?" So it was like, we had three different, four different houses, but nobody wanted to leave each other's company, so we said, "Let's go find a place where we can all live together."

**SB:** So, I went out, [unintelligible] about this place, this whole valley, and it was just beautiful. It had 680 acres of land.

**NB:** So was it for rent then?

**SB:** Yeah. The Grateful Dead lived there. A year before we came. But Gene had brought --

**NB:** So when my mother found the place, she showed it to Don. Now Don, you have to remember, had all the money. Don had all the money, and he was miserable, uptight, businessman, dickhead. Just a total schmuck. But he had all this money. So Pat said, "C'mon listen up, brighten up!"

**SB:** He said, "You people don't have money. I have money, I'm very unhappy. I want to be as happy as you are." So he just let loose. And that was -- I found this place. We were going to buy it, but this time he was renting it. And he just loved it, and we had this mansion, a dormitory, we had a small little house.

**NB:** There were three outbuildings, two barns. With the Olympic size swimming pool.

**SB:** The swimming pool, it was gorgeous.

**NB:** So originally, there were three or four families, with their kids, that moved on there.

**Q:** Well there are a couple of whole houses, in addition to the main house, right?

**NB:** Right, there's the main house, the dormitory, then there's three smaller houses, as you went up to the big barn. There was also a little shed or something, people lived there, and there was a barn there.

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The dormitory people lived in there. And then there was the cow -- there was a deer camp, which was like, as you walk up the hill, following the creek to the headwaters, there's some, people went out hunting. There were little deer shacks up there, and Don and a couple of other people lived up there. And then people had their little tents pitched, and trucks propped up. But before that, before the first summer, after we first got there, I didn't even live there, I still lived in Mill Valley, in our house. And they all moved up there --

**Q:** Well you were sixteen or something living at home, right?

**NB:** I was 17. I had already been to Kansas City and back in a Volkswagen bus for four months, doing light shows. This is before Don bought the -- I'm talking how we got to Olompali, not once we got to Olompali, how we all got there. So now, because of Melkin and Pat getting together at one of the concerts, we became all friends, and we all decided about this place. We got the place, I still was living with my boyfriend who was doing light shows with the Bob Ellison band, the Garden of Delights. By the time they moved there for the first Christmas, of course everybody brings one friend. Now you've got 15, 20 people move on, everybody brings their friend --

**SB:** Since we had so much room, we could all have one person move onto the ranch, whoever we wanted.

**NB:** Yeah, so you bring your best buddy to share the fun, and then they bring a best buddy, and then they meet a girlfriend and bring her home, and before you know it, we have 60, 70 people living there full time! By first summer we had 60 people living there full time. I don't know how they all got there, but I started to do a family tree of who brought whom, you know, how did Carol get there, Carol brought Jim.

**SB:** Carol brought Val too.

**NB:** No, Val knew my dad. Val Sage?

**SB:** No, Val knew me.

**NB:** Yeah, but Val knew my dad, so that was way before Olompali.

**Q:** What year is this now, the first summer?

**NB:** The first summer was '68, because they started it just before Christmas of '67. They say if you were in the sixties, you were too stoned to remember what week it was! I go by concert posters now. And for a long time, you look at the concert poster, it's just a date, there's no year on it. So I finally got this rock concert book, because I'm trying to research all of the light shows that we did, what shows we did, so I'm starting to get things in perspective of what year it was and how old I was. So when we got busted in January of '69, I had just turned, like the week before, 18. So, the way I got to stay with the kids, because they separated the children from the grown-ups, the police came in, and they had all the kids in the schoolroom, so I would go in and say, "I'm just a kid," and then, "Well, I just turned 18." So I was running information back and forth, so nobody was too scared.

**SB:** We had a nun come visit us. When we got busted, I went to jail, and she went to jail.

**NB:** Quite a show.

**SB:** But she stayed with us.

**NB:** She came to visit and wound up staying.

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**SB:** She just loved it.

**NB:** And you know, the Jesuit priests used to live at Olompali. That was their property, we were renting it from, I don't know how it worked out, but the Jesuit priests were still the owners of the property. The mansion was built around the original adobe building.

**Q:** Right, I've seen what's left there now.

**NB:** Have you read any of June Gardener's research that she's done on Olompali?

**Q:** No.

**NB:** I'll give you her phone number. She'll talk your ear off.

**SB:** She's writing.

**NB:** If I was really organized with my paper work I would have one of her order forms for her book. And here's a small world, how I met her, I was dancing in an dance company for 14 years with a man named Ginger Dawson [?] from India, [unintelligible] is the name of the dance form. I'm in a California arts council, where everybody that's got grants has to go and put up their little booth. And I look way down at the other end of the building, and I see something that says Olompali, so I go sauntering down there. And she's holding the Grateful Dead album cover that I'm on the back of that was taken at Olompali. And um, and I go, and so I'm reading this little bulletin board of the history, chronologically, of Olompali from the Indians, involved with that guy Black who came in and took over all of Nevado and Black Point, what we know as Southern Petaluma and Northern Nevado now. And at the same time, Vallejo was doing his Vallejo thing over there, right? And then it's just, the mansion gets built up, and these hippies moved in and burned down the mansion with a candle! I said, "Your facts are all wrong." She said, "Well how would you know?" I said, "Well, that's my picture, and I lived here, and we didn't burn it down with a candle." So, we became close friends.

**SB:** It was bad wiring.

**NB:** It was wiring from the '30's, '40's, and now we've got three people in every room, it's the coldest, wettest winter that we've had in ever, I'm talking 30, 40 days of solid rain. Everywhere. And everybody has their music on, and we've got to have the lights on, electric heaters on, electric blankets on, and everything over where the big box was with the electrical things was always heating up. We were always changing the fuses and stuff, and we came home one night stoned on acid from doing a light show at Long Shoreman's Hall. And we were driving through Nevado to where there's a freeway stoplight at Nevado, and we're like, "Gotta go home," and all of a sudden there's sirens behind us. "Okay, let's get home!" So we're like busting up the freeway.

**SB:** We thought they were chasing us.

**NB:** Yeah, so we thought we would get to our house and then lose them, right? So as we're driving just before the driveway that goes into it, which is now not there, they've moved the driveway down, um, you could look up and see the mansion, and it was like an Edgar Allan Poe movie, with the flames leaping out the window. And we're stoned, so we're like, "This isn't really happening." In the meantime, the lights, the siren had stopped, and it was the police chief had had a heart attack on his way to fight the fire, and landed in the ditch. Now, all the fire trucks had arrived, and they can't do anything until

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they have their fire chief there. So the mansion is being gutted, and we're all standing out there, stoned, watching everything we know going up in flames!

**SB:** I lost everything.

**NB:** I mean, my father got double-cremated. He's there. I'm sure he's quite happy with the Indians there. And if you drive up and down the highway a lot, I used to do the 101 commute, day in and day out for 15, 20 years, there is more stranded vehicles in that frontage area, where Olompali original land is. It goes past where Olompali is now. If you see, there's the dotted trees, and the dotted trees go all the way up to that cow farm, well anyway, the dotted trees go further than the Olompali boundaries now --

**Q:** Up North?

**NB:** Yeah. There's always dead carps [?] there. The Indians just cut them. I mean, there's so many accidents, I mean a car just dies, that's the space.

**SB:** It's surprising that nobody was hurt . Nobody.

**Q:** Well, you were all gone, right?

**NB:** Some of the people had already gone to bed.

**Q:** Oh! But they got out?

**NB:** Walter smelled the smoke and everything, and . . . he ran through the house and got everybody out. We had one visiting kid that didn't live there, and luckily, he got out. But uh, basically, --

**Q:** What Lou told me, Lou or Ramon, one or the other, was that there was a big core group from Hollywood came up --

**NB:** Well, Jo-Jo came up from Beverly Hills, my mom was from Hollywood. Jack Markly wasn't from Hollywood, was he?

**SB:** He was from San Francisco. And Sally came up.

**NB:** Well, Sally came up to visit, but not to live there.

**SB:** Oh, Jo-Jo lived there, yeah.

**NB:** Who else would've come up from Hollywood?

**Q:** They made it sound like a group had come up . . . a group from the film industry or something had kind of en masse moved up.

**NB:** What, to live there?

**Q:** Yeah, that they were some of Don's friends somehow.

**NB:** No. Unless they're just talking about Jo-Jo and my mother, because basically, I don't think there was any other entertainers there.

**Q:** Oh, you know who told me that was Vivian Gotters. She said she came later.

**NB:** Did you meet Vivian? How nice.

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**Q:** She said that when she got there, there were already people there, and she kind of characterized it as a Hollywood colony.

**NB:** Well we had money. That's what made us different from most of the other communes. We were in an utopian fantasy world like none other. We were going to succeed from America. We were going to have our own country -- not our own town, our own country, right here on this side of the freeway, outside of the grotto -- and they were going to leave us alone. And we were going to have -- you couldn't work, that was one of Don's rules. Anything you needed, you could have. If you needed it -- now here's the key word: needed it.

**SB:** We would always say, "Wish out loud, and you'll get it." So he gave me like \$7,000 to pay off my bills. He paid for Sheila's going to Calcutta. Anything that you wanted, you got.

**NB:** So anyway, I'm sitting here, and I don't need anything, I had already denounced all that stuff before I left to go to Kansas City, I had two cardboard boxes full of belongings, one bag with clothes, and the other bag with my beads. I strung beads, and I did light shows. So I didn't need anything. I wanted things. And I knew the difference between want and need. And so I never asked him for anything until my boyfriend at the time, Bob Ellison, who I was doing light shows with, said, "Well, we need better projectors." So Don bought us \$5,000 worth of -- you're talking 1968. He bought us \$5,000 worth of German proto light show equipment, you know, slide projectors, the best, the finest there was the buy on the planet made at that time. We had them. But I didn't get it. My boyfriend got it, for his light show. Because I didn't need it. So some people got everything that they knew how to say, "Oh, I need to have a pottery shop," and they had a pottery shop. "I need a leather-working shop," we had a leather working shop. Somebody else needed a jewelry making shop. We had a complete jewelry making shop. You could come in here, make your bracelets, put your stones in, polisher, and sanders, and we had, the guys had motorcycles with their own motorcycle shop. The place perfect for having your own --

**SB:** It was utopia.

**Q:** It sounds like it. 'Cause the story of the communes, over and over, is they were broke. They struggled.

**NB:** This is the first year. We had parties, where 300 people come, and the bands would come, and Robbie Shankar [?] came, and Ali Afbarkan [?] came, and all of their group. Don gave Ali Afbarkan the money to start Ali Afbar College of Music, in San Rafael. It's like, you needed something, "Well, I have the money to give this to you." Now, here comes around Thanksgiving, he's been doing this a little over a year, being a little too generous. The kids are like, "I need a horse, I need to go to Baskin Robins to buy \$50 worth of ice cream!" You know, I mean, we would all pack 26 people --

**SB:** When he took us to the ice cream place, it cost about 50, 60 dollars.

**NB:** And this is in the sixties still. Everybody had to have double scoops, and it was 26 of us in a bus. So, we're having Baskin Robins now. But that was the first year.

**SB:** Like, he bought me a horse --

**NB:** And she doesn't even know how to ride. She can't even walk off pavement.

**SB:** But I got on the horse, and the horse would move a little bit, and oh! So I gave it to Jo-Jo. It was very funny. Micki Harp was there. He knew how to take care of the horses.

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**NB:** And we had some really great, great times the first year. Now, what put a damper on things, was all of a sudden, Don's in-laws, his children's grandparent's, decided that Don was giving away their grandchildren's future, and somebody should stop him, he's out of his mind. So they had him put away for mental observation. How long was he there, two or three weeks, or a month or something. So he goes away, this is around November, or maybe October, something like that, for observation, and he gets out, and they put a stop on all his money. Okay, now, circus is Bob McKendrick, and his royal mental twit. Bob McKendrick has got . . . PCP, which we called "devil's do-do."

**SB:** Don bought PCP and gave it to Bob McKendrick, to get rid of it, which ever way he could. So Bob McKendrick got rid of it.

**NB:** And turned into a genuine asshole! And, but he was king of the roost, and he was going to, you know, he was on one of those psychotic drug numbers, you know, where you are king. Invincible, all-powerful one, here I am, everybody must respect and know that I am so great. So we went through that, and the money started running out. So this is like, Christmas time, we all sort of divided. Lou Gottway had a bit to play in the division. In the meantime, Morningstar is going big and strong. "Open up your land to the people, this is God's land," you know. And I'm a territorial person. I like my little square lot very much. I love you over there, hi, just don't come too close to my space.

**SB:** Lou wanted things to be open to everybody.

**NB:** Everybody. So now comes these things out of God know's where, who are camping and pissing -- and I've already gone to visit Morningstar, and gone through one of my drug-induced walks through the woods and stepped in people shit, which is worse than dog shit. And I said, "No, we're not having this at our ranch." So now we start dividing. And there's the "We are all one, let everybody come live with us," and then there's the ones of us, "Yeah, but who's footing the bill here, and who's eating the food, and who's going to do the work, and who are these people anyway? Get out of my living room, get off my couch, no, don't use my hairbrush." And so, there was this dividing thing. And then Don and Buzz and Sheila, and Sylvia, and Hari --

**SB:** Sylvia called me today. She came in from Hawaii.

**NB:** Oh, she's on the mainland? So anyway, they all went off to Calcutta, on their Indian quest for God know's what. Where they found "Father." Now I've got another small story about that man. My dance teacher, we're talking now, jumping to 1982, I go off with my Indian dance teacher to India, to Calcutta, to perform in this dance company. It's the first American women dancing Indian classical dance in India. And I'm standing on the street corner, and there's this girl Amrit who's come with us -- we're in downtown Calcutta, it's like New York City in a subway station! And you see somebody you know? Amrit says, "Come here, I'll take you over to where I grew up, my mom and dad's house." So I go to her mom and dad's house. I've met her mother and father here in San Francisco. Okay, we go to where her mommy and daddy and grandma and all those people lived. And there was Don, and Sheila, and Sylvia, and Hari's picture on the wall! And I go, "How do you know these people?" And I know the picture, because I've seen the picture here in America, they brought it back with them. Amrit's parents are friends with Father, Father was the janitor in the Bierla [?] academy, where my dance teacher's father was the professor, and my dance teacher knows Father. Really strange. And this happens all the time, where you know, 20 years later you run into somebody, "How did I miss you? We were this close, and we know all the same people, we were at all the same concerts, but I guess there was two people

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standing in between us, and we didn't see each other." So. We all thought that, this makes sense when you are in your early 20's and induced with fantasies, well, 1969 was going to be our year! So, '69 starts out with, we're busted, and then a week later we're busted again, and on February 2nd the mansion burned down, and on March 3rd, Jenó died. Then shortly after we've got the public safety health officials showing up, telling us our water isn't any good. Then the little kids, the two little girls drowned in the swimming pool, and then we were out of there! We were served our papers, our eviction notices. Oh, also, we didn't have the money on February 1st to pay our rent. February 1st was the first time we didn't have the money to pay our rent. And the next day, the mansion burned down. And it was the downfall of Olompali. I mean, I see it as just like the rise and fall of Greece, the rise and fall of Babylon. We were the rise and fall of Olompali. We had one hell of a good year, and eight months of crashing!

**Q:** A year and a half. And then, so, by what, March or April, you were gone?

**NB:** No, August 1st, they ran us out. Some of us naked and opposing them on horseback. But we forgot one key important character. When we first moved to Olompali, there was already a family taking care of the ranch. I guess as caretakers until they found renters or leasers or something, and that was Gene Jensen, and her three daughters. Who were supposed to move out at the time we started leasing the place, but we loved them, and the kids loved their kids so much, they wound up becoming instantly part of the family. So we said, "You don't have to move." And of course, I wasn't there then, but that was the dialogue amongst them, "You don't have to move, you can stay here, there's plenty of room." And so, my mom just went to Sherry's 40th birthday. Sherry was like ten years old when we moved to the ranch. Okay, now it's picture showing time.

**SB:** I wanted to show you a picture that was taken.

**NB:** This is Sherry, in the dress that my mother's mother made.

**SB:** My mother made this costume for me when I was her age.

**NB:** Okay, this is little Mary. She lives in New York City, she just had her first child. She's probably 38ish, or, 35, 36.

**Q:** Well, she's grown up a little!

**SB:** And that's Buzz over there.

**NB:** Now Buzz and Ed and Chris Stens [?] were all in Vietnam together. And that's -- how did --?

**SB:** Not Vietnam.

**NB:** Yes, Vietnam. Ed and Buzz were on the front lines together. That's how they know each other. And Buzz knows us because Buzz's sister took care of me after my father died. My mom needed somebody to babysit the monster. So I knew Buzz before he went Vietnam, and then he went to Vietnam and came back with his two buddies, and they moved to the Ranch with them.

**SB:** There's Pat.

**NB:** This is Pat Stone. This is Jenó, he died in a motorcycle accident just down the road, buzzing out on a brand new five speeder. My boyfriend did light shows with him. And this is now, he just turned 50 years old, this Jim Barty [?], and I am the godmother of his three kids. This is Eileen Maw [?], who works for the Grateful Dead. This is Jack Markly [?], who's, what's the name of his cartoon character that . . . ?

**SB:** Frank --

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**NB:** Oh, Boba Rebook, that's the name of the cartoon character, he's in some newspapers.

**SB:** So we still keep in touch with a lot of people. Very close touch.

**NB:** And this is Gene that I was telling you about. This is Jo-Jo, my mom's friend, and also Lenny Bruce's friend. And, this is Don's wife, and their children.

**Q:** Was she there?

**NB:** No, she wound up staying in San Francisco, hanging out with Hell's Angels people, and a few years, about a year or two after Olompali, or while we were still at Olompali, she committed suicide at the Clairmont Hotel. She was on drugs, she was just a little creepy. And then he just died recently, Bob McKendrick, Sheila's husband at the time that we first met them. Now she lives with Don. He died mysteriously, Phil Higgins. Phil, he moved to Hawaii shortly after Olompali, and came to visit us after like 20 years, went back to Hawaii, was riding his bicycle, and died of a heart attack. He was like perfect health. But this is how tiny our kids were when they hung out with each other. And these kids now are, Sherry's turned 40, Evan's like 37, I think. Mary's 37. Peter Risely came up, he was working for Pacific Sun, writing newspaper articles, he came up to do an interview, and never moved out. He became our gardener.

**Q:** Were you in the hospital then?

**NB:** Yeah, they thought I had Hodgkin's disease, but it was just some sort of a tumor. "If you take me out of my body, I won't come back to my body, I'll be levitating above me, I'll see this hospital, but I won't come back in my body!" "Okay, just take the drugs and shut up, go to sleep!" So this was Marian, who became a [unintelligible]. She, that's how Walter came. She was the babysitter that Don hired to take care of his daughters, back before Olompali, when we were at the houseboat. So she came along to the Ranch, and then she brought her brother Walter. I haven't gotten to Walter yet. This is Claude. We had very few boys, we had mostly girls at the Ranch. He was maybe 42, this was two or three years ago. Just cleaned up his act from being an addict and everything for so long. He got all healthy, and he was doing wonderful. He went to a counselor at his drug rehab, they gave him Prozac, and he died two days later. His mother was really upset about that. This is Sister Mary.

**Q:** That's the nun?

**NB:** Yeah.

**Q:** She decided this was the better communal life than the religious order?

**NB:** This is Bob McKendrick's mother, she's still alive, she's like in her nineties now. She's still alive, a crodgy little Irish woman. Here's Walter. Beautiful kitchen. The inside of the mansion was just aghast. It was one of those ones where you go up the staircase and down that staircase over there, and another staircase led out to this wing. And then there were rooftops where you could go out different rooms, these French doors, right out onto the rooftop. It was a really magical place to live. The kids would do -- this is the landing that came down into the library from one of the wings. The kids would get all dressed up and do these little plays on the landing. This is Shevon.

**SB:** She's got a little baby now.



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**NB:** And this is Julie. Jack Markly brought his girlfriend, Renie, and Renie had two daughters, and Jack had two daughters. And, Julie, this was a bad shot of them, he has poison oak here, but this is the father of my son, and then about seven years later, she started dating him, and she had a son. So my kids have a brother. She and I didn't talk all the time she was his wife, because --

**SB:** We were a very rounded family!

**NB:** This is my dad back then. So the kids they all grew up feeling like they were all extended family, or more like real close cousins, or half-brothers and sisters, toward each other.

**Q:** When I was up there a year or so ago, I couldn't find the pool.

**NB:** Well, okay, here's the pool. The pool, if you're standing with your back to the freeway, and . . . the mansion, burned out mansion's at the right hand side, and you're looking at the dormitory, you're standing on the pool.

**Q:** So it's long since filled in, you're saying?

**NB:** Yeah, they filled it in probably a year after we moved off. This is the pool house down here, and the mansion's here. This is the kitchen wing right here, which is still standing. The kitchen, and then going this way toward what is the driveway that you drive in now, is where the pool used to be. This is up on the roof. And then we had tons of newspaper articles written about us, because they were so curious, and we were preaching all this, "Don't work anymore, move in with your best friends and share responsibilities and the joy" and all that. The kids had their own schoolroom. This was the night before Sheila left for India. Here's looking back at the house, and this is the window that you'd be looking at. If you drove up now, I don't know exactly where they have you park, but you walk toward the mansion, the pool's right here. This is the kids and the trees.

**SB:** That's Sheila's children.

**NB:** And these are his children, but he actually has one more after this. This is his children, six years ago. He's 11 now. And this was Garnet. Now Garnet came to us because she was a friend of Melkon's . Garnet Brennon [?]. She was a long time teacher at Ignacio, a little tiny school. She was a friend of Melkon's, and Melkon had been busted for selling pot. And so she and about 2,000 other people signed petitions, saying that they were responsible, you know, people in society that carried this title, and they smoked pot too, in his favor. And instead, she got fired from her position as a teacher, after 20 years, and so we hired her on as a teacher for our kids, at the school at Olompali. And part of the school was PE, riding your horse.

**Q:** So all the kids had horses?

**NB:** A lot of the kids had horses, yeah. These are actually later. This is like Sherry, this is in the eighties. Sherry, Sherry, . . . this is Shevan, and that's Shevan. And here is Shevan's sister, Jolene. And she's a Jehovah's Witness. Straight as straight . Doesn't come to birthday parties, doesn't come to Christmas parties. Barely talks to me because of my past. She's still sisterly with her sister and all that stuff. She's still very close with her mom. But she doesn't come to our functions if they revolve around birthday parties or holidays. They're against that stuff. It's kind of sad.

**SB:** The last job I had was at the Fairmont, and it's in the back. That's Luke.

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**NB:** This is when she first met him. And this is Sally Mar's mother. This is a more recent picture of Katy there, but that's still at least fifteen years old. This lady built her own house, by herself, in Beverly Hills, back in the seventies. She was quite a dancer in her twenties and thirties, I think. It's not here, the Fairmont.

**SB:** There it is. It's the last job I had.

**NB:** Read that, I'll get you some more pictures.

**Q:** Now this has a name, it says, the people at Olompali had a group name, the "chosen family." Is that a name you created for yourselves?

**NB:** Yeah.

**SB:** That's the name I chose.

**NB:** We were the chosen family, because we chose to live with each other.

**Q:** Okay, I was going to ask what that meant.

**NB:** We chose to live with each other. So anyway, this was taken, actually, just as you're driving into the driveway they have built now, you look up on that first slope, this is where the picture was taken. And this was . . . you see me rolling joints with my buddy. There's little Mary with Shevan. Nikki Hart. Now these pictures are in the book, they're mistaken, because I remember this, well, maybe not this particular shot, but some of the shots were when the Dead were there, but other shots, like this one, I know was at our party, because that's Buzz's truck. So, that means that they've mixed some of the pictures up, and figured that, see, this is a Grateful Dead book, and Gerald and Ricki Hart's ex-wife did this book about eight or ten years ago. And she just got some of the shots mixed up as to which party it was at Olompali, because they were having big parties there too. All kinds of bands would come up and play for two or three days, and we'd have 2 or 3 hundred people hanging out there, with tons of food. And then, I would drag everybody to the gigs, because I knew -- okay, here's a picture of Barney, he's also named Laird. He was there . . . there's sort of a shot of him here. He lives on Jerry's property up north of Claytonville. But he's the reason that I kind of got mixed up with the Grateful Dead, or got in with the Grateful Dead family, and then, uh, I would bring the kids with me to go to gigs, and this is back when [tape ends] . . . I mean, sold out, one time it was sold out, a New Year's Eve concert, at Witterland, was sold out like a month in advance. And I'd bring about 14 people down with me from Long Reach [?]. And we'd go driving down, and I'd bang on the back door, and all the Hell's Angels were like guarding it, and I go, "Hi, uh, I want in." "Well, you've got to have passes!" "Well, I don't have passes." "Well, then you can't get in." "Well, get me Rock Spelly." "Well, Rock's busy right now." "Well, then get me Bill Graham." "I can't get you Bill Graham!" And they'd slam the door in my face, I'd stand there banging on the door, they'd open it up, "C'mon man, get me Bill Graham." So they'd finally find somebody, and somebody finds somebody, and finally Bill Graham shows at the door and says, "What do you want?" I said, "Well I brought my 14 friends down here and I want to come in to the gig." He goes, "Well why didn't you get passes?" I said, "Well, I don't have a phone." He says, "Okay, come on in." And then just before he died, I went down, and I had passes this time, but they didn't have them waiting for me at Wilcall [?]. And he just had me walk, and this is like at Oakland Coliseum. You don't loiter unless you have a ticket in your hand. The guards will rush you. "You just go on down there now." And I said, "No,

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no, I'm a backstage person, I don't go on down there. I'm getting in, and you're going to find me Bill Graham." And he shows up out in the whole crowd, and he goes, "Noelle, you having trouble getting in? Come on, why don't have you pass?" "It's not here." "Come on in!" I'm in a Fillmore movie, because he said, "Why are you hanging out here, you're always up on stage!" I said, "Well, the camera crew, I want to be out of the way." "No, this is the time you're supposed to be in the way! We're recording this! Get out there and dance." They have a picture of me dancing at the last days of the Fillmore, which was shot at the Carousel Ballroom, where everyone took off their clothes at the end of the concert and all hugged each other. And I'm like this much pregnant right? Dancing. And then I've got another picture of me in the Grateful Dead first movie, of me dancing behind Garcia, on stage. Those were the good old days. Those were the days where you didn't have to impress people who you were, who you knew, and how much money you had, what you were driving. It was just a different, there either was a connection or there wasn't a connection. And most of the time there was a connection. So, it was easy. There wasn't as many rules. I hate the nineties. I'm really having a hard time. I'm taking computer classes and I hate the nineties. I hate computers, but I'm liking it, but I hate it. I'm taking computer art.

**Q:** Tell me a little about Long Reach.

**NB:** Long Reach! What a story. Here's how small the world is. I showed you -- Long Reach was a group of guys with their wives, who had some kids about the same age as our kids. And they . . . we got introduced to them through La Val. La Val took us up to Long Reach right after we lost Olompali. And uh, ... we just went up to visit, and it was beautiful, and then Walter and my baby, and my baby's father, Olake, and --

**SB:** Ed?

**NB:** And Ed, all decided they were going to move up there, because now the guys were just shot down all trying to smuggle hash out of Turkey. So they were in the midst of first of all, trying to get out of Turkey jails, and second of all, trying to get out of going to court and going to jail here in America.

**SB:** Who was that?

**NB:** Nikki, and uh, Dave Mantel, and Bob Black, and Goldfinger, which was Nick Sculleys [?], the father of um, Nick Sculley is Rock Sculley's wife, from the Grateful Dead? Before she was with Rock, she was with a guy named Goldfinger. And she had her first child with him. So they were all big time, you know, you needed drugs, they were either the chemists that made it, or the people who made sure that it got distributed. And they were friends with the Grateful Dead, and friends with the Hell's Angels, and just, different distributors. But they wound up -- now they've got this big ranch, 300 and something acres up on the top of this gorgeous mountain, with redwood trees all over it. And they're in the middle of laying low and trying to keep their butts from going to jail, so now the wives are there, we've got cows and goats and gardens and chores to be done on this big ranch, and there's this the three wives with their kids. So we moved up there to help them out. They already had had their family scene. There's people that I don't even know, but I know of them. They all come from the Melon family, they come from upper New York state --

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**Q:** Tim Leary's friends?

**NB:** Tim Leary's friends. That's where that all comes from, pre-Haight-Ashbury. They're the New York intellectual chemist people. They're those people that came out here. So that was where they were. So we got connected through La Val to them, and now my kid grew up with that circle of kids. And they all feel like they're brothers and sisters, there was about 14 children there that were raised together from diaper-hood. Where they stole each other's baby bottles. We had cows and goats, and the land was for the kids. They had a hard adjustment going to school when they became six years old, in Cloverdale, the straightest Midwestern, middle-class America. They didn't understand when our kids showed up and their shoes didn't match, with one sock on, and a tie dyed t-shirt, hair hadn't been brushed, probably the face hadn't been washed, but they were there.

**Q:** I guess Cloverdale didn't remember its own history. I mean, there were a couple of communes up there a long time ago. There were the Icarians I think back in the 1880's out there.

**NB:** Oh really? Well you know Black Bart used to frequent that area too. This is Sly Stone's little boy. And this is La Val who brought us up to Long Reach. And uh, . . . this is another, Tony Tyler's the father of Mink, who's one of the kids who lived at the Ranch. However, he didn't live at the Ranch. We had, there was , what was the policeman's name?

**SB:** Sunshine?

**NB:** Sergeant Sunshine's two kids came and lived at the Ranch at Olompali with us, but he never lived at the Ranch. Lydia and Ron Rackhow [?], Ron Rackhow who took over managing the Grateful Dead for a little while before he wrote himself a check and took off. Lydia's three kids, who I showed you little Claude, who I said was dead, and his brother Jerry, and his sister Leslie, who's also dead. So these are like right after Olompali pictures, when we all moved back to the Valley House. And this is up at Long Reach. This is the babies. This is my son, and this is Nick and Jill's daughter, and this is Mary and Dave's Mantel's . And this is the view. I say today, "You know, I would trade in everything I have right now to be able to move back to Long Reach." If I only knew then what I know now, I would have never left. Even though I have been around the planet several times, and had some cool experiences. And there was Big Lake up there, which is still up there. Everybody went skinny dipping in the lake. I mean, this is paradise, right? This is Lenny Bruce's mother, and this is Lenny Bruce's daughter, Kitty. This is Mary, who lived up on Long Reach. So basically they were a group of people, I have some pictures [unintelligible]. This wound up being given to Melvin Belie [?], for uh, helping them with their case.

**Q:** Is that Lou?

**NB:** That's Lou. This is back, when we were still -- Lou and Rena. There's Vishnu. This is, now, like they preserved Olompali to be a historical state park, because the Indians lived there. Now, what they have done is, see all these flowers here? These grew in a creek that is directly underneath the asphalt you drove up to get to the ranch. Now, when you get up to where you park, the parking lot is right on top of their Indian burial cemetery. We used to go out there, and we would wait until after the rains, and we would find big mortar and pestles, and carving stones and stuff like that, and now it's all under asphalt. So that makes a lot of sense. They lived at the Ranch, and I don't remember how Larry Otis got to the Ranch. But he went on to play with Ike and Tina Turner. This is the view from at the Ranch. We'd take

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turns, we'd go up to the barn, it was about a three hour chore. Now the only thing is, when you're a hippie and you're stoned out and spaced out, and you already got a kid, which is too much for me to handle, you need all these friends, and now you got these cows and goats. Twenty six goats, and three cows, that have to be dressed twice a day. And then you've got to do something with all this milk and butter, and shoveling the shit. It was more work than we ever could have imagined. And we'd do it begrudgingly, because somebody had to do it, you couldn't just ignore them. We were all nursing mothers, we understood, you know. So we did it.

**Q:** How long did you stay there?

**NB:** I lived there . . . from 1970, I moved up around Christmas time. And moved off when my son was about three, and I moved further up highway 128, toward the coast to Yorkville, to Pomoterra [?]. That's where I lived in a tepee, carrying my kid up a tepee trail. And their commune was a group of people from Chicago who had gone to college together. Decided to come out here in California, got themselves a place. Now we're talking, there's a model, who's like gorgeous. And there was an architect who was famous enough to have a penthouse apartment in the sixties. Who, by the time my girlfriend Ibby found him, had been sleeping for two years in a sleeping bag at the base of an apple tree and had dead lizards on the bottom of his bag. And her quest was she was going to make a [unintelligible] out of him, because he was so intelligent, and he still is very intelligent, but he's an alcoholic now. Tom Burke, Hannah's dad. So all of the people there come from like, real dedicated, university trained to become a social worker or become a this or that. One guy, Ted, lived there awhile, he did all the Quaker Oats commercials, "Here I am at the top of Mt. Everest, and blah blah blah." They were out in the mid-, late seventies. "Here we are at the top of Mt. Everest," and they really did, they trekked to the top of Mt. Everest to do these commercials. And he was the camera man. They really did these commercials. So he had lots of money, and he was basically stationed in Chicago but had his little trailer parked. So they were all part owners of the place. As things evolved, some of the people have actually been ousted as part owners of the place, and some of the people opted to leave a part owners and sell out their piece. But now, when we were living at Long Reach, we had about eight or ten women, about 15 kids, give or take a few visitors, and three men, who were residents there. And, just up the road seven miles was Pomotierra. And they had about a dozen single men, two or three women, and no kids! So when we needed to dig ditches, to put in water lines, they would come. When they needed people to come pick all their orchards for them, we'd go over there, and we'd trade milk back and forth. Eventually I migrated over there, and some of the guys migrated to Long Reach but didn't stay very long.

**SB:** I heard you used to bring goat milk to --

**NB:** I used to bring goats milk down to -- my mom has a new friend since we've moved here, through my kid being friends with these kids, she meets their mother, finally. Now, back when my kid was this big, and he doesn't even remember, Mary and I used to go down into Cloverdale, and drop off gallons of goatmilk, because we couldn't use it all, to this lady who was straight and perfect and Christian, you know, with her seven children, mostly boys, and her husband was as Catholic as could be. And they lived in suburban downtown Cloverdale, and we'd bring them goat's milk. And now she's my mom's best friend! Twenty five years later. My mom never knew her back then.

**SB:** And she says, "Oh, the one who used to bring me lots of goats milk!"

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**Q:** Just for their family to use?

**NB:** Well, they bought it from us. We sold it to them, a buck a gallon or something.

**Q:** What happened day to day at Olompali in the sense of, if everyone was off living the luxurious life, who did the cooking and cleaning and all that stuff?

**NB:** We had, and most of the communes tried to have this, we would have your calendar up, and then your names would rotate. You were either on a cleaning up after the dishes, or setting up the tables, or cooking assistants. Now I took on, I wanted to be the main cook. I threw out people's cigarettes, I threw out people coffee. I threw out people's white sugar. I threw out their white bread. I threw out their meat. I tried to make them eat health foods. I made them read the ingredients on the labels of the foods. Some people are more organic now than I am because of me. Now you'd never know I was as organic, comparing my diet now to what it used to, you'd never know it was the same person. My kid never even tasted chocolate until he was like three or four years old and that was by accident. Swore carob was chocolate, because he never tasted anything else. And I'd make the best lentil loaves. I cooked some meat. I remember cooking liver and onions for people, meatloaf.

**SB:** She was a good cook.

**NB:** So I used to cook for 60, 70, 80 people. And I'd get up at dawn, or I'd have stayed up all night and was still up at dawn, and I'd go out and I'd pick blackberries, and I'd come in and make blackberry muffins for a hundred, by scratch. And then we'd come down here to Petaluma, and we would buy whole cases of eggs. And we'd use like five slats for scrambled eggs, or I'd make french toast for everybody. So then we had the helpers that were either clearing the tables, washing the dishes.

**SB:** We had a beautiful long table.

**NB:** In the mansion, what would normally be known as a indoor-outdoor kind of ceramic court, with french, glassed in doors, that we put five picnic tables down, so we all had one long table. And it was cool. And the living room was at one end and the library was off this way. The whole yard and the pool was your view, and then the kitchen was up the stairs where the school room was. It was the perfect layout for what we were doing. That was really as asset for what we were trying to do, because everybody had enough room. Our first bust was wonderful. It was definitely a classic. This was when we had plenty of everything, dope money. And we, Gene, we were just about to be set up, and Gene was dating the informant! She didn't know. So the informant had brought this kilo, and made sure everybody had their own little stash. Everybody got a baggy with a quarter ounce, half ounce, some amount. And so, for some reason, we were having one of our nights, and we were sitting up in my mother's room. This is where I was, my mom was there. Walter was there. Vicki and Jelane was there. No, Vicki wasn't there. Vicki's one that opened up the door. There was somebody else there. We were all sitting there, we have, I think Brandon or Jerry or Claude was there. One of the boys. And we had these newspapers out on the floor, with the pot out, and we were rolling thousands of joints. We'd roll up joints so we could like fill up canisters of them and have them around the house. So we'd sit there and we'd just roll thousands of joints and listening to music, Number Nine, and Helter Skelter. And uh, all of a sudden, the door bursts open, and Vicki pops her head in and says, "We're being busted!" And we go, "What?" "We're being busted!" "Okay!" So now half of us are grabbing the joints that are already rolled and stuffing them down our pants, and the other half are going, "Well what are we going to do with this?"

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And we're like running around in this room, we don't know where to go, and then all of a sudden the french doors are there, so we burst out onto this rooftop thing, and we go running off to the edge, where I showed you the guy sitting there, and we run off to the edge, and we all were throwing all this pot and these joints off the edge, and it was landing on the cop cars down below, with the cops standing out there. They haven't even come in yet. They were just outside saying, "Well, which door do you want to go through?" And all of a sudden, all of these joints are bombing them. Then, when they finally decided where they were coming through, we'd already run back into the room, and now we're sitting there, looking cool, like nothing's happening. And we're sitting there, and we're like, "Nothing's happening." We were still sitting there, and then finally, it's like, "God, are they going to bust us or not?" So we open up the door, "Hey, is there anybody out there to bust us? What's going on?" And, they finally come up the stairs and bring us all downstairs, "Okay, we're going to bust you, you come over here, you kids go over there."

**SB:** That was the happiest bust.

**NB:** So we ask them if we can have some music. We put music on. And everybody gets up and starts being all friendly to the policemen, and tell them to lighten up, and relax, and want to dance? And girls are like half-naked, going, "You want to dance with me?" And it's like they didn't know what to do with us. We were not resisting arrest. And there was enough of us to have a party no matter what was going on, because everybody was in that kind of mood. We were in a "let's have fun with life" kind of mood. In the meantime, over at the dormitory, Jim Bartie is making it with Renie, and they're in their little -- the dormitory had twelve or fourteen little bedrooms, and some of them had bathrooms in it and some of them had bathrooms in the hall.

**SB:** We had lots of sinks there.

**NB:** All in a row, with lavatories. So anyway, the cops bang on the door, and he thinks, this is one of our little things, because we were part of the merry pranksters, "Hey, we're the cops, open up!" "Yeah, yeah, yeah, ha, ha ha." So he thinks it's one of us messing around. And he goes, "Yeah, well grease your belly and slide under the door." And they break the door down and come in and grab him. So they took off about ten guys, and my mom and Sister Mary, and a few of the kids whose parents weren't there at the time, whoever's parents they couldn't account for, they had to take the kids to juvenile hall. Of which we went back to pick them up, and then hid them out, because we didn't want them to come back. I don't really remember the second bust, it's so weird. The second bust I was in the kitchen. And it was like five days later, and we hadn't even regrouped anything yet. And it was like, and it's during rain and stuff, and they came in, and we went, "Oh no, not again! Aren't you done yet?" I don't even remember who they took on the second bust. I don't even remember much about it. I remember they came in and I was in the kitchen listening to Joy of Cooking, that's all I remember. It was about 7 o'clock at night.

**Q:** And it was pretty soon after the first one?

**NB:** Yeah, less than a week.

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**Q:** So like a mop up, almost?

**NB:** Yeah. Something. They were still looking for the kids. Because some of the kids' parents didn't actually live there, like Sergeant Sunshine.

**SB:** We got off rather easily.

**NB:** You want to know how we got off? Actually, that picture, there's a picture of us holding up all of these photographs right here, all happy and laughter. It's because we just got the photos back from the DEA, oh no, from the court. What happened was, the informant died. So now they only had a case. In the meantime, they're still trying to pursue it, but Angela Davis was at the Marin Civic Center. Judge Haley's head got shot off. He was our judge. The case was dropped. That's how it happened. The informant died, and Judge Haley got his head shot off within a month of each other, and the case was dropped. They didn't know what to do with us. In the meantime, people had paid lawyers, and we'd gone through our preliminary hearings, "Are you guilty or not guilty?" "I don't know, I'm not guilty." So, it just got dropped. And we got all of our photographs back, which is why we have any of these photographs at all. Because they took these as evidence that the children were naked, people were smoking dope, and look at how much fun they were having! Put them in jail! They're having way too much fun, and they're not going to work! They're not paying taxes.

**SB:** I forgot about the judge.

**NB:** That's why the case never went any further.

**Q:** Tell me about when the kids died. What happened then?

**NB:** That was so sad.

**Q:** They drowned in the swimming pool, right?

**NB:** Yeah. Punonny [?], how did she get there? I'll have to ask her sometime. Punonny is in Hawaii now, which is where she came from. And she's, she was the mother of the little baby, Nina. She was about two and a half. And then there was this other couple who was living there that had come up to visit from the Haight Ashbury. And they were living in their truck, and they had this one little girl. And two of the little kids, it was a stormy, it wasn't stormy, it was a windy cold kind of day.

**SB:** And the kids weren't supposed to be bike-riding around there. But they were.

**NB:** And they were riding their little tricycles.

**SB:** And there were two people sitting at the pool, but with their backs turned.

**NB:** No, there was that one girl sitting there, with her back turned, doing her little out to lunch thing. And the kids, riding their tricycle, around the thing, and probably missed a corner, and fell in. Now, the pool, we hadn't had any money for four or five months. The pool had not been cleaned. It was like a green, murky lake. So she didn't even hear, or notice.

**Q:** She didn't hear? That would make a pretty good splash!

**NB:** This is Puononny, and this is after Olompali, and this is her new baby, Josh. She got pregnant right afterwards, and so did the other mother. And this was Jo-Jo's son with Puononny. Joshua, he's the same age as my son. I just saw Puononny a year and a half, two years ago, because he just got married and has a little girl. And I haven't seen her in like 20 years probably. And she went on to be a female prison



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guard on Honolulu, on Hilo. A prison warden. She's like a little person, my size, with these big guys that she yells at. Then one of them decided to kick her butt, so now she's retired. Now you realize you're getting a lot of material that's going in my autobiography.

**Q:** Is that an active project?

**NB:** I have two movies in the working. One autobiography about my life, an autobiography about her life, and me as a child watching my parents. But I started writing that when I was 26, and I had to start writing it, because I hadn't reached the age that they were. So how can you be twenty six and write about being 40? You can't. So you have to get to over 40 to be able to figure out, "Oh, this is what they were going through. This is what they were experiencing. Oh, and they had this brat child that they didn't know what to do with." And so you have to be able to see it from a perspective. And I started writing then. I've been busy experiencing life, or being in dance companies, or now working too much. So it's like way on the back burner. But I just quit my job yesterday.

**Q:** Congratulations.

**NB:** Thank you. So hopefully I can find some time, and if I talk fast enough, and write circles, maybe I can find some backing, so I actually could not work at all, so I could finish writing these things before I die or lose my mind. Whichever comes first. And I don't want either of those to happen before I get the stories out, because like you see, there's a lot of -- and what you're getting right here is the tip of the iceberg! I have stories I'm afraid to tell because I'm afraid they'll come lock me up and drag me away!

**Q:** There is such a thing as statute of limitations, they can't do much to you for what you did 20 years ago.

**NB:** Well, I see articles where people say, "Yeah, I've taken heroin." I'm going, "How can you just stand there and say that and they don't come cart you away?"

**Q:** Because for most drug things, it's ten years I think. Beyond that, it's not actionable. So as long as you have that distance, you're fine.

**SB:** But she should be writing. She's very good at writing.

**NB:** But then we have some of our own shared experiences. Some of the Olompali family did out own little events, and that's a movie in itself that will top Midnight Express. It will top Thelma and Louise. Makes them look tame! I'm talking tame! Gene Jensen, I can't even imagine -- I used to think Shirley McLane could play her. But, to find the people that could play her character -- she's like Calamity Jane and Mob Barker rolled into one. And she's my size. Mean little bitch, but boy she had you moving. And she died. And that's the lady that was already living at the Ranch when we moved there. She became my mom's best friend. So I've got stories to tell and movies to write. And then I want to do a research book, where I'd like to get backing for it. My friends just told me about, they have a, grants for women who want to write.

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**Q:** What kind of research?

**NB:** I want to do a research book on our kids, you know, Grateful Dead kids, communal kids, kids that lived with doper parents, heavy doper parents. We're not talking about two joints a week parents, we're talking like people who lived their life, through either growing or manufacturing or distributing drugs, and also raised a family. And where these kids came to. 'Cause, you know, there's dysfunctional families where you get, "dysfunctional" is a very strange word, because, show me a real functional family, first of all. I mean, my father was a female impersonator, okay? And my mother met him at a female club where she was the only woman working there! Now I was raised sitting on the laps of Lord Buckley, Lenny Bruce, Lou Gotley, I mean these are, not my peer group, but these are the people that I listened to in my subconscious before I even understood English! And so, did I have a normal upbringing? No. So what do I have to compare it to? I lived two or three with my aunt and uncle that were as straight as possible. Sears and Roebuck, Fresno. And that's my only ideal of what straight people must be like. Otherwise I wouldn't have a clue, if I hadn't lived with them. At the same time, our kids didn't have bedtimes, they didn't have discipline, they didn't have rules, they didn't have spankings. They didn't have anybody beating them, they didn't have drunken parents, but they did have druggies for parents, who maybe didn't give them enough guidance, but we also didn't like, "You're gonna be a this when you grow up!" We might have given them too much freedom.

**SB:** Every child that has been a part of my life has grown up to be beautiful people.

**NB:** But some of them are fucked up a little bit.

**SB:** Like who?

**NB:** They're tweaked: Shevon's tweaked, and she'll tell you she's tweaked. Ming has told me in person that she's a little tweaked. Sherry has told me she resents not having gone to high school with her peer group, not having had a prom dress, and gone to her prom.

**SB:** I never had a prom.

**NB:** Well neither did I! But I don't regret it. But she's raising her kids -- I love her, but she has gone straight. Not really straight, but suburban straight. Somewhat conservative compared to her upbringing. So it's just interesting to see, like the Grateful Dead kids, now there's a whole nother group, because they had money! And now some of them aren't doing that good, and some of them are just beautiful, intelligent -- and we're talking coming out of the same family. Nikki's two daughters are total opposites of each other, one has scholarships and is going on to be a something, and the other one's a drug abuser in Berkeley. So, and then, you look at straight people who raise their families -- their families, one brother goes off to be a doctor and the other one goes off to be a murderer! So, what are you going to say dysfunctional family is then? But I believe in communes. Now my new ideal commune is, you buy 40 acres of land and four to eight families place their houses in opposite corners around each other, and you have one community garden and meeting room. With a kitchen in it.

**Q:** I hate to tell you, but you're not the first person to think that up. There are a lot of --

**NB:** You know what it's called? It's called one of those old-folk retirement homes. Not the hostels, but like the senior centers, it's not a center -- a retirement village, that's what it's called. Ten thousand dollars a month for --

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**Q:** Hate to tell you, you're not the first one to think of it. You know Steven Gaskin, The Farm? That is what --

**NB:** Steven Gaskin and I had so many fights!

**Q:** Really? That is what Steven is doing now. He is building a retirement hippie commune. He's got the land, it's there, it's called Rosenante. It's under construction.

**NB:** Really? Well there was a bust at Harbinger Springs just before Steven Gaskin and all those guys took off. It was so much fun. It was like four or five hundred people there, and Goldfinger had gone and dosed most of the food. So one woman lost her child, she had a miscarriage. And there was this guy Gavin Archer, who was a great astrologer of his time. He died, probably in his late sixties, early seventies, in the late '60's. And he as a fantastic man -- he got dosed that night. Now most of the people are dancing around, that's where . . . that picture was, no, that's afterwards. There's a picture of me and Dana together, naked, remember that one of us, dancing together? Anyway, everyone was dancing around naked and enjoying the music, and Harbinger Springs was absolutely gorgeous. I haven't been there in 26 years, just before my baby was born. We went up there and it was the -- what is it that happens in January, the equinox, or the solstice?

**Q:** December is solstice.

**NB:** Yeah, okay, so we're up there, freezing cold, and four or five hundred people, and of course I'm in the kitchen helping cook. So we get busted now by the locals of that area. They don't know what to do with us. They're as redneck as can be and totally out of touch, and they walk in on what they think is going to be the people who live there, and they've got this party going on, this three day party going on with everybody stoned on something, and they walk in, and that's when Jenno was upstairs. Steve Gaskin's holding this conference, and we're all up there, and I'm having this spike, because we always used to go "Peace," like this, and we said, "That is unity divided! It should be like this!" And we're just like badgering this point, we're just making fun of it, we don't really care if we make a point, we're just trying to say, "Get off you're thing, whatever it is." So he's like, mumbling, and we're like, "Oh, shut up." So the cops all come in, they're trying to round up four hundreds loony toons into some order so that they can contain us. I don't know what they were planning to do with us when they contain us, because they've only got like 12 cars outside. And Steve Gaskin's over there dying, because he's had a drug overdose and doesn't know it, so he's leaving his body. And we're all upstairs naked, and there's this cop watching us, and so Jenno comes upstairs, and Jenno has just been released from San Quentin, he is probably just one of the sweetest men that was like right there. I mean he would take care of things, a real man. But he had been to San Quentin, he had his serial numbers on, and he had Levi's on, and cowboy boots, and he had a short haircut, and he was one of the few people that had a short haircut in those days, and a denim jean jacket. He pulled a flashlight out of his back pocket and said, "I'll watch this group, you go on downstairs." And we're all cracking up, we're being watched by one of our own people! And the guy goes, "Oh, okay." "Just go on downstairs, the sergeant will be with you." "Oh, okay." That one, I don't even remember how that ended, because we were just running from room to room, catch me if you can type stuff. I've been through some great busts. I've only been to jail for 12 hours, once. I've been through 8 busts. I've spent 12 hours -- the longest 12 hours of my life! I went

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through one bust up at Longreach where they were coming up to find David and Nick and all those people, and it was just -- Mary and Walter had just gone to the dump, and I was alone with one other woman, and a couple of kids, and I had to milk the goats and the cows. And the next thing I know, there's these guys who looked kind of like you, with these squeaky leather jackets and leather boots on, trying to look like hippies. And there's something too new about their clothes, and they're asking all these questions. Finally I got out of them that they were the police. So I took off all my clothes, and I said, "Well, if you don't have a matron, then you can't take me." And I stood there, and they said, "Well, put your clothes on." "No. Not going. You can't touch me." I just stood there for like an hour, and told them, oh, it was me and Jill, and Jill's like, she's all like real shy, and they finally left, because there were no guys, and they were looking for guys, they weren't looking for us, and we had children. What were they going to do with us. And I wouldn't put my clothes on, they couldn't touch me. So they split.

**Q:** Taking your clothes off is a great deal for law enforcement. Women and men, a mixed group will still do a good job. But cops really can't deal with that.

**NB:** Now they bring matrons along.

**Q:** They do more, but even so, it's real disconcerting, and changes the whole energy of the event. There was a whole group in Canada, you ever hear of the Duker Boys? That was one of their standard techniques back at the turn of the century. They were in Canada, and the Canadian government was always trying to crack down on their eccentric practices, and that was their standard deal -- they'd all get naked. And the cops couldn't deal with it.

**NB:** They come unloose. "Can't touch it! Don't know what to do!" That's funny.

**SB:** Do you want June's number?

**Q:** Yeah sure. I guess this is close to done . . . [tape continues] from what I recall, like when I was there I read the sign and all of that, it was like a family lived there for generations right?

**NB:** The family, the Blacks, I don't know about generations, but somebody got killed there, and I'm not sure if it was actually Steve Black, or his daughter's husband, I'm not sure.

**Q:** But in any event, they were wealthy, and it was a big --

**NB:** Oh, very wealthy. Well like Vallejo was who discovered the town of Vallejo. At the same time there was this guy Black. I keep wanting to say Bob, but I know it wasn't Bob Black. Somebody Black, and that's why it's called Black Point, out there, just north of Nevado, is considered Black Point. That was his whole turf. He stole it from the Indians. I think it was him who stole it from the Indians. I may have my facts wrong.

**SB:** Where'd you say you come from?

**Q:** I'm from Kansas.

**NB:** Kansas? Kansas City, Kansas?

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**Q:** Near. Lawrence.

**NB:** Yeah. I lived in Kansas City for a very short time. We had a Volkswagen bus outside of the Kansas City Art Institute, with those beautiful big old houses down the street. I had a great time there. And we started the first underground happening spot, and the first underground newspaper, and the first underground head shop, and we were written up in the Kansas City Star, as "The First Real Hippies from San Francisco Tell Us Why Our Children Are Going to the Haight-Ashbury." We were the spokespeople. We were the first hippies. This is pre-Olompali, this is 1967, summer of '67, we were there. Might have been '66. I had to have a note, that was before I was 16, I couldn't cross state lines without a note from my mom. I was running off with a 21 year old guy in a Volkswagen bus, across the country, we were going to Iowa to see his sister get married, and we got to Iowa, and his grandma insisted that I have a bra or I could not go to the wedding. So I didn't go. And he wouldn't cut his hair, so he didn't go! So we stayed home while everybody went to the wedding. Because we were not going to change our ways, we were who we are. Accept us for who we are.