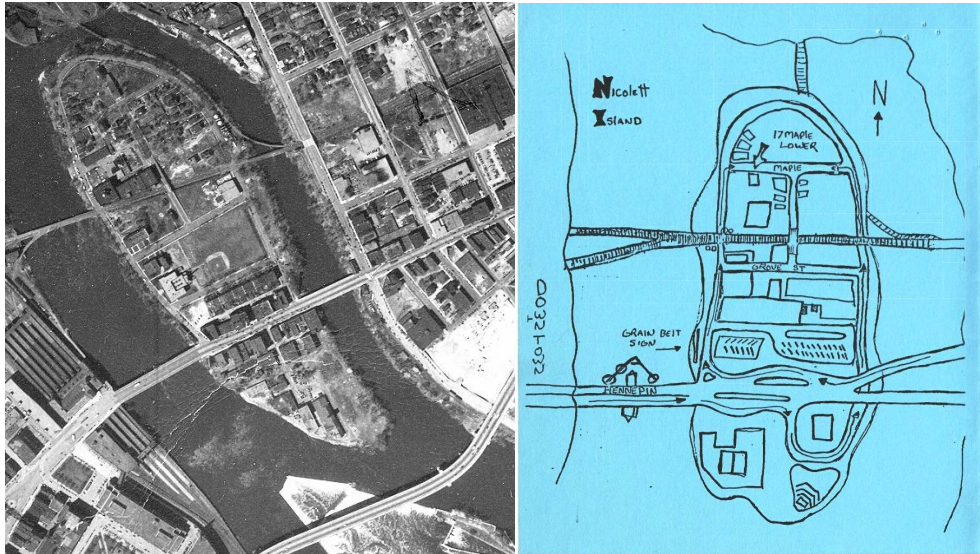


Times on Nicollet Island 1981-83

Memoirs of Dean Gustafson



an early aerial pic, circa 1955 -and- Jack's handmade map, 1983

Nicollet Island, on the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota, just a stones throw from downtown and the historic Main Street area, is a truly unique place. It is the only Island on the Mississippi River that has houses. I had heard legendary accounts from high school friends of a character who lived in one of those old houses — a dilapidated Victorian mansion. Sounds haunted — and it is! At least my thoughts are haunted by it, and that time and place where I spent many intriguing times. This is my collection of those memories...

My pre-Island influences in South Minneapolis

1981 — First introduced to the Island by **Joe Covert**, who as a fellow Beatle freak and rock & roll enthusiast, we'd been hanging out for the past year by then. Being high school teens with *fab four* inclinations, we set up playing music in his basement on 49th and Bryant that summer. Joe is a mighty fine musician, who can play one helluva great bass while singing well. (a professional to this day) and has a sense of humor.

Enter Jack — the Island dweller

It was Joe who introduced me to Jack Chaffee in the summer of '81, bringing him over to the Gustafson house on a rainy evening. While I was listening to *Revolver* they arrive at my psychedelic art room of drawings and rock 'n roll paraphernalia, the two long haired freaks surprised me at my upstairs door. Jack appeared amazed, listening to the perfection that is the *Revolver* album (UK version); looking through Beatles art books and commenting on how “*they had the whole world to work with*”.

Jack played our piano in the basement and really impressed my Mom. He had a cool, bluesy style of piano playing, sophisticated for his age. Later at Joe's basement playing the drums, he was also a highly skillful drummer who could lay down an accomplished, relaxed groove. His comment on my drumming ability in Joe's basement at one of our jam sessions was “*You've got potential.*” (we had a laff over this slight of condescension later on.)

Went swimming in Lake Harriett a lot that rainy summer of '81, residing regularly at The Malt Shop (where Jack sat in on piano with a blues guitarist once, impressively) , and played a lot of rock n roll in Joe's basement.

Bob Foster was on guitar and vocals, a fine guitarist and a soulful guy, who had a knack for how to serve the song. With a wide range of musical tastes who also had a huge appreciation for the Grateful Dead, and British blues rock guitarists. He lived near Joe, and we spent a lot of good times walking along the lakes and creek, hanging at The Malt Shop, and playing music in Joe's basement.

Good times for us Minneapolis youth. Joe has the rock 'n roll spirit, who had an unusual Orr bass, designed by local luthier Chuck Orr. Joe would proclaim to him that “*I'm going to make this bass as famous as the Hofner someday!*”

Darrell Fusaro is another good friend through high school, a highly creative original artist who could really sculpt figures depicted in barbaric fantasy realms, and karate figures in action. We spent a lot of time in the art room at Washburn, creating our

stuff. He nailed it when he called me a good *copy artist*—my developmental stage at the time.

We had good high times and smoked some good weed by the Minnehaha creek and Lake Harriet. With a unique cultural background, rooted in karate teachings of his father, their house was a museum of antique Japanese samurai swords and outfits. Once on a visit he laid a centuries old samurai sword blade resting on my wrist and said if he pulled it only by a mere fraction, my hand would be sliced off! He called this the “*cat test*”. Whew! I apparently passed.

With a propensity to play barbaric games of log-tossing while hysterically high in the forest, we somehow miraculously pulling it off without any damage. We had early Pink Floyd in common, he loaned me the *Barrett* album to tape, which was hard to find back then. It was art, rock and roll, getting stoned, comic books.... and Nicollet Island which he described to me with intense enthusiasm... “*it's entering the zone! when you get high on the Island, you get extra high*” (true, that). There is nothing like a good, animated description by Darrell! I was intrigued — with this mythological essence planted in my younger mind.

We loved the river. Back in September '81 he arranged for a small gang of us to go out for my birthday to the riverside Japanese restaurant, **The Fujiya** for dinner, near the 3rd Avenue bridge — where the skillful chefs chop up the food with remarkable precision, like a form of karate — Darrell would know! That was a great evening. Then again for his birthday a month later.

Grateful Dead songs by the creek

There was a time back then, wandering late at night along the Minnehaha creek with Bob and Jack, who near underneath the Lyndale bridge sang Grateful Dead songs from *American Beauty* and *Workingman's Dead*, some Dylan, and others that I don't presently recall. They sang with a calm depth and soul that I hadn't been exposed to much by that point, enhancing my appreciation for folk based songs well delivered,

and left an impression on me. Those guys were deadheads. Bob especially would rave about the GD , influencing me early. I was beginning a lifelong connection with Grateful Dead music.

Arriving at the Island

Walking onto Nicollet Island you can tell when you've entered "the zone" where the transformation of urban vibe changed drastically from the buzzing energy of downtown Minneapolis, to the quaint, laid back, unique neighborhood of crumbling Victorian mansions, a couple of grazing donkeys (owned by Jack's aunt **Doris** who lived upstairs, who also had a pig in the backyard named Gerta), folk musicians, cobblestones, old train bridges over the thick and slow winding river, all with a fascinating sense of old Minneapolis history. The area where this feeling kicked in was when crossing the railroad tracks just beyond De La Salle high school, past the old Grain Belt sign.

Darrell pointed out this "entering the zone" feeling quite enthusiastically, and I wholeheartedly agreed.

First seeing the Island from the old Hennepin Avenue bridge, the Grain Belt sign landmark ahead is usually the first feature to spot. Looking down after halfway across the bridge there was a permanent buoy of sorts (a breaker?) With a sign long since faded, probably once warning boats not to pass under the bridge if a certain height? Regardless of what it was, it had a spray painted message: *Deep Space* — and a peace sign with 69 inside of it. Jack did this graffiti from a boat!

When crossing the tracks that autumn, and the first visit for me, I saw a long-haired character off to the side along the tracks, walking calmly and cool, wearing a flannel or Pendleton shirt. Later when we were in Jack's house at his kitchen table with **Al** and **Bob**, in he walked — it was **Jim Capra**; a smiling, mellow, genteel character. He lived on the Island in a tent later in the summer of '82. He was one day different than me, born on September 5th or 7th (?) of 1963. And I sure wish he was still around to

answer that q. (hearing the tragic news that he died in the 90's in a car accident).
I recall how Jim would rave about how much I would love the drum solos at a Grateful Dead concert. He was right!



photo I took of the house, circa 1983

The house: 15-17 Maple Place

A massive old old Victorian mansion deep in the western half of the Island. With a plaque saying 1886. Old by Minnesota standards, this has history! I was fascinated.

Making a music studio

September-October '81, after Jack decided he wanted a band with me on drums, a few

of us pitched in by clearing the basement of 15-17 Maple Place — the fantastic, aged, dis-repaired Victorian mansion where Jack lived in the lower left hand flat (#15) — for a music studio space. Hauling seemingly endless buckets and garbage cans of dirt out of that long neglected antique stone walled basement, with then Island dweller Bob Foster (who soon left the scene to get away from the drug use), Jim Capra, Al Geer, Jack and Joe. A spirit of comradery with creativity and getting high was the goal. This was autumn and we were young and in search of our psychedelic rock muses; the buzz of those youthful autumn seasons can haunt you forever — this was exceptional.

That studio was being built continuously afterwards by Jack and Al. They made a wooden platform floor, a separate sound mixing room with a plexiglass window, and fixed the dangerous crumbling wooden stairs. It was like a cavern dungeon down there. Cool!

Jack and Al's loft room

I recall toking up a storm with those guys in Jack and Al's psychedelic loft bedroom, listening to Neil Young's '*Harvest*' as the autumn sun shone in... With wild drawings and writings on the walls, it was a hippie freak haven. Unusual curios, like "Head" the psychedelically painted head model. Obscure books, endless details of colorful wall graffiti art (that we all eventually contributed to).

They made an 8-foot bong made from a clear tube with a tennis ball duct taped to its bottom end. It took one person to light it at one end while the other took the hit. One time I amazed them by inhaling a full hit and not coughing once (it gave quite an alarming shotgun effect to the lungs, and I had a rep for taking wimpy toks.)

The Halloween parties: 1981

I had heard about the previous years Halloween party, with legendary status among "The Cats" (Joe's neighborhood gang of creative friends) The '81 Halloween party at

Jack's house — being the perfect atmosphere for a Halloween party, totally holding up to that status as the best Halloween house and setting imaginable — yet genuinely, not in a kitschy fake way. I dug it, meeting many friends for the first time.

Approaching Jacks house in the cool Minnesota October night was perfect. That was the night when outside of the antique dilapidated Victorian mansion, a mysterious cloaked figure wearing an actual carved pumpkin over his head approaches me on the way in. Pauses to face me close up in the dim dark, saying nothing to great effect, then proceeded in to the party. A bit later after I went in, I find that it's Darrell ! A master of creating a freaky moment! And he knew it, saying *You were freaked out!*" after removing what must have been hot pumpkin head over a winter face mask.

Joe Ryan was a self-proclaimed *extraterrestrial fisherman*, dressed in nets. I first met him that night, and immediately likeable. Jack was kind of a skinny hippy Tarzan wearing a loincloth, who probably had to have the heat cranked! I don't remember more costumes, but it was a Halloween party with costumes in a fairly full house. I met more people that night, maybe Jon White, Jason Englehardt, Scott Soule, Pat, Denise? Several I didn't know from Southeast Free School, where Jack went.

I forget what my costume was, obviously something forgettable. Vaguely recalling my Italian wraparound sunglasses that didn't work in that lighting, with army clothes. My stereo system was used for the music. The day before, they got a ride to pick it up. (I'm glad its still intact!) Grateful Dead mixed with XTC and The Police, and using my class built wave organ (lights responded to music through the amp).

Joe Covert got looped on booze and got some of the party singing "*Hey Jude*" at the top of the lungs, demanding everyone join in — he was hanging on peoples shoulders or he'd probably fall over. These were legendary Halloween party times in a full, truly haunted old house. A few other "cats" made it, like Greg Robinson, and I think Rob Winkels, and maybe Jason Hoyer. The party was cooking!

Taking a break from the party late, Al, Bryan, Jack and I climbed through the fence barrier to Boom Island at the end of the old train trestle bridge. There was a huge gravel pile on the other side that Jack, Bryan and I climbed in the dark amid the hazardous industrial zone. High (of course) we tossed gravel pieces into an imagined portal that transported anything that fell into it to another dimension. (possibly Bryans idea?) It could have been sent to another time or place. Fun flights of sci-fi fantasy by stoned teenagers. It was all so free, with no surveillance, making for a long fun crazy night! I might have got a ride back from someone.

More Island personnel

Al Geer was Jack's roommate, band soundman, all-around tech guy, and tarot reader with Crowleyesque leanings. A regularly toking acidhead interested in things psychic, with a workingman's integrity that helped keep things together. He thrived on arranging the sound, stage setup, lighting and recording. He was kind of our Owsley. (not suggesting he was as effective as that legend, yet this was kind of his role.)

Bryan Geer was his younger brother (my age), a psychedelics, occult and science enthusiast, on a graphic arts direction and technically curious and intelligent about it. He made some amazing rapidograph drawings for the bands and provided a good dose of intelligentsia surrounding pyramid crystals, Leary writings and wind generated electricity to name a mere few of his interests. (living elsewhere, maybe in north Minneapolis?)

John Chaffee — without whom

Jack's father, who made our access possible. Who was probably tired of us teens always around, making a racket, getting stoned, etc. He's a generally quiet fellow, with a solid character, who I must have met that autumn. Eventually I discovered how much of a musician he is, playing mandolin and singing excellently — where Jack got his musical roots from. An old upright piano in the living room. His room was in the

front of the house. The right side of the building, separated into four flats, all with high Victorian ceilings. The next flat over was taken up by feral cats! Upstairs was Doris, who being quiet, I didn't have any conversations with but admired.

It's often the case where we don't yet understand our parents until we're older and gone to work all day. John would arrive after work to have a gang of teenagers in his home. He was generous and I guess tolerant for much of that time. Possibly appreciating our creative endeavors?

Hauling my drumset on the bus

One day that Fall, with the generous help of friend Joe Kernan, did the ambitious task of hauling my drums — cymbals, box of chrome stands, the drums placed inside one another like a wonky Matryoshka doll — on the MTC bus heading downtown. Half a block was a workout from my home to the Chicago Avenue bus stop. Around 7 miles to the Island, transferring once on Hennepin Avenue, where we had to carry them to Jack's house, a few grueling blocks more. Arms were tired after that!

Jam sessions began sketchily, before we had the basement setup and no band yet.

Jack, on guitar or piano, me drumming, Al the tech.

There was a gig that season somewhere downtown with Jack involved, not Deep Space, his usual band. I'm forgetting if I played drums or who with. It was not a music venue, but a studio space. My high school sweetheart was with, and I remember Jack and Al meeting her for the first time, later saying they lusted after her!

Frank Zappa

November '81, Zappa concert, Northrup Auditorium, 3rd row center. I bought those four tickets the morning they went on sale downtown on the second floor of the IDS tower. Good score! Jack got one, and my high school friend Joe Kernan and his cousin Pete Rife got the others. We met at Jack's first, then walked to the U of M — Northrup Auditorium in the cool November air. Jack was a cool freak, walking

through the steam rising from the manhole covers, he wore his Donald Duck glasses, we both had long hair (before my parents made me keep it short.)

In the third row center it was phenomenal to have such a close view of such fine musicianship, FZ was standing a mere few yards directly in front of us. I think they started with *Treacherous Cretins*, an instrumental from *Shut Up And Play Your Guitar*. Followed by a big favorite *Montana*. It was a night of serious guitar work and a new drummer with a tight style (Chad Wackerman — great name for a percussionist!) with intricate pieces I didn't yet know among a few familiar. Going strong until some moron in the audience threw a plunger on stage, pissing Frank off, threatening to stop the show that continued on but in a hardened mood. Thankfully near the end anyway. We loved the show! (I've since acquired a good complete audience recording of it!) Though Pete fell asleep halfway in (long day at work and perhaps too much pot). We walked back in the night, when Pete realized he'd lost his weed stash, so we backtracked to scan the path we walked to no avail. It was lost.

Around this time I went to Jack's with a copy of Zappa's latest album '*You are what you is*'. The song that stood out most was *Heavenly Bank Account*, we'd break out singing that one nearly anywhere, along with *Camarillo Brillo* (from the early 70s.) We had affection for Frank Zappa music in common. He had *Overnight Sensation* and *Chunga's Revenge* in the record collection. I had around a dozen Zappa LP's then, and growing.

Downtown Minneapolis

Other than going to get enchiladas at the corner of Hennepin at 5th (? It used to be a bank), Schinders bookstore, and Northern Lights record store. (in '81 I had a part-time job, so I could afford a few things I got there.) I walked through those places frequently, to the bus stop and back to the Island.

Getting high and walking back through downtown, Jack and I would stop into Butler Square and rode the amazing glass elevator repeatedly, purely for the dazzling,

futuristic spectacle. If someone was in the elevator and seemed to wonder why we were not getting out, we decided to reply in unison: “*Oops we’re sorry, we thought this was a recreational facility*”. Jack could pull it off with a straight face, while I’d usually collapse in a self-conscious wince.

1982: Heavy Wave is formed. Pivotal transformations.

January ’82 a new year, a new band formed: **Heavy Wave**. Dreamed up by Jack who invited us to play in the basement studio, that we helped clear of dirt and debris back in the autumn, but ever since was getting well worked on by him and Al, who put a lot of time and constructivity into making it workable.

Joe Ryan was on bass. One of the friendliest fellows around, a beginning bassist, he still was great to be in a band with. And a complete pothead if there ever was one.

Jason Englehart was on guitar, he lived in the Kenwood district, a ponytailed deadhead with new wave leanings, a totally nice fellow, and yes, another one of us rock music stoners.

Jack was just starting guitar in a band setting, before he’d been the drummer in the trio **Deep Space**. Having prodigious musical talent, he picked up quickly.

Jamming in the basement studio with water dripping down the large stone walls was a marvel! In the frozen Minnesota January outside, with colored lights by Al reflecting in these waterfalls on the dungeon walls, using my handmade light organ (which soon became fried.)

Jack and Al really took that place to the edge. Creating haphazard constructions mostly out of found materials out of local dumpsters. Platforms, lights, boxes, wires, tape decks, speakers, weird junk, etc... by summer there was a plexiglass window separating the sound room from the music room.

The songs were mostly 2 chord vamps with no bridge (‘*Fire on the Mountain*’ inspired, no doubt) mostly developed by Jack and Jason. One early piece we didn’t have a name for yet, and we only had two during the first days, so we nicked the GD title ‘*The Other*

One' for awhile until I think it became 'Fields of Blue and Green', one of our first by Jason who developed its riff and title. 'Dream within a dream' begins with Jacks trademark bluesy "Woke up this morning..." lyrics. 'Sunny Days' was a light jaunty piece Jack wrote by Spring, and as a melodic song I think it worked the best (and actually had a beginning and an end). 'Sorry' was a straight ahead rocker. 'Split Membranes' was a blast, by Jack and we all seemed to contribute to that one, it had the potential of a cult hit and was a crowd favorite on our gigs by mid-summer.

"Split Membranes, in my biology lab, splitting little membranes, in my biology lab... it's so much fun, see the rabbit on the run"

This led to our favorite salutation that year of "Greetings Fellow Membranes!"

We practiced but most of the song structures were never were fully formed, maybe we could've started to sound accomplished as a band if we'd kept focused for a few more years. I guess one could say "we had potential". Think "teenage hippie garage jam band" (though "basement, rooftop, train bridge" is more apropos).

Caves !

Early winter '82, we went caving under the house with Jack, Jim, Al, and Bryan. Dress grungy and sturdy was the recommendation. It was the dead of cold freezing winter, but I was told it's warm down there. (Unbelievably true!) Equipped with flashlights, opening the manhole cover just in front of the house, climbing the ladder about a 60 feet down to find a brick, corbeled archway with a pipe on the ground that seemed to be it's purpose (water pipe?) along the pipe tunnel, low, but enough space for workers to bend down to walk through (maybe 4 feet high). Until a few yards ahead, to a hole in the side of the brick encasement, where into the sand walls we squirmed, enough for one at a time lying down (claustrophobics wouldn't last long.) This for about 12 feet, emerging into a wider warm humid cave of white sand walls, as high and wide as a typical single car garage. I didn't know how far it went, or how the

warm slight breeze was generated down there in the frozen winter time. When stopping still it gave you existentialist moments of sensory nihilism. Especially when flashlights are turned off. Pitch black and silent. Now this is a true adventure!

There was an old brick wall at one end of the cave, there was talk of how it sealed off access to further caves that reach underneath the river. Intriguing. Al and Jack had been digging previously to see if they could get through to the other side. I wonder if that got anywhere. We'd heard that a network of old caves went underneath the river, long ago once inhabited/explored by natives, but later were deemed too unsafe by the city, especially after the collapse of Saint Anthony falls in the 1800's. Fascinating. [now, researching those caves in the 21st century reveals atrocious graffiti covering once pristine sandstone walls. Ugh.]

Jim Capra told me of how he'd found some tunnels that led around through the Island, with one that popped out near the railroad tracks. I was amazed that he even braved that dark crawl solo.

Al told me about facing a rat face to face in one of the north Island side river caves while tripping his brains out...giving him moments of sheer horror, and a good acidhead caving story.

Microdot: A universe within a pinpoint

April '82 – aahhh, the first warm days after the long cold winter ... my first acid trip, on the Island, Joe Kernan was there. I think it was a Friday night. Jack called to invite me to a small Island gathering they were having.

The Geer bros were keen on annoying me for some reason that night, repeating the phrase, "*Don't be scared, Dean*". Funny really. After offering a small tiny hit of purple microdot, dosing at Jack's, we proceeded to have a bonfire on Hennepin Island, just a bit south of Nicollet Island, near Saint Anthony Falls roaring near the wild patch of forest that we set up at, for a bonfire and beer on LSD! Joe was good fun, occasionally

erupting in Zappa references, like "*add water makes its own sauce*", etc. This is where Al kept on jeering me with annoying criticisms, I had to get away., or punch his lights out! Not a good start to a trip. Until leaving with Joe...

Things became... amazing. Every second of detail represented a word in the sentences in a chapter in the book of my lifetime. Each line in the pavement was like a sentence of self-explanatory representation of something profound. It was epiphanies after epiphanies, illuminating my mind! Endless significance abounded. Meanwhile, Joe was having his insights! Saying, like a psychological hiccup mantra, "*orange light, my wife*" (I think there was an orange light along the way.) Curious random weirdness became more open!

Wandering back to Jack's house with Joe to fetch our stuff and use the phone, he became freaked out since he had to call his parents in that state. But the game of attempting to be serious was over once we saw the stuffed bear animal toy head on a plaque in Jack's room, leading to a manic laughing fit. To help gain his bearings, I suddenly put on a serious mood and walked out the door. I didn't think those insanely zany gears could be shifted any other way! While he called, I paged through Jack's hardcover book of *Cosmos* by Carl Sagan. Only for a few scant minutes, but entire universes seemed to reveal themselves. Intense!

Walking downtown, and everything was charged with energy — the psychedelic aspect of the trip made apparent — we came across the weather station on Nicollett mall, (about 7 feet tall information tower, four-sided, showing world time zones, weather reports, and more.) WOW. It was fascinating before, but now took on a new life with heady mythologies about this technological beacon of highly useful information being constructed by advanced alien intelligence. (young sci-fi minds running amok!)

Bidding farewells with Joe, we're on our own now. Slightly creeped out as I waited for the last bus home on a Friday night. Getting colder out. Characters wait at the bus stop as usual, but I wanted no interactions at all. This guy started small talk with me. *No! Not now!* My tripping mind said to itself. I said little back, in stiff awkward responses. He kept rattling on. We got on the bus. He gets off around Franklin, and leaving pats me on the leg. *What was that about?* Relieved that he left.

A couple behind me were talking, nothing bad or unusual, just sounded weird, like his voice was of a high pitch duck. Exaggerated in my mind, trying to block it out or go crazy. Then they asked me something. I don't remember what exactly, must have been directions for the next stop, Lake Street. They were cool, dressed in funky nightclub apparel but eccentric. He had a bowler hat and purple suitcoat.

That was one strange MTC ride home., but relieved to get home and once in my room the headphones went on with *Sgt Peppers*, the kaleidoscope eyes looked within for hours of endless amazement and intriguing illumination. I went to the mirror in the upstairs hallway. My eyes were vivid and clear — and like anything you look at directly, whatever is in your peripheral vision is unclear. This time I interpreted the rest of my face to be made of distorted television lines, as the eyes were extra vivid amidst that distortion. Mind blowing — this is a *trip!*

I also looked through an MC Escher book, taking to reading pages of its text — often forsaking in favor of just the visuals — I was struck by a quotes he made about music. I was intellectually curious, all night long. *Sold!* LSD is a good curiosity advancing influence! With relatively low toxicity.

I returned to more that summer, all from the Island — and never had a bad trip.



invitation by Bryan Geer

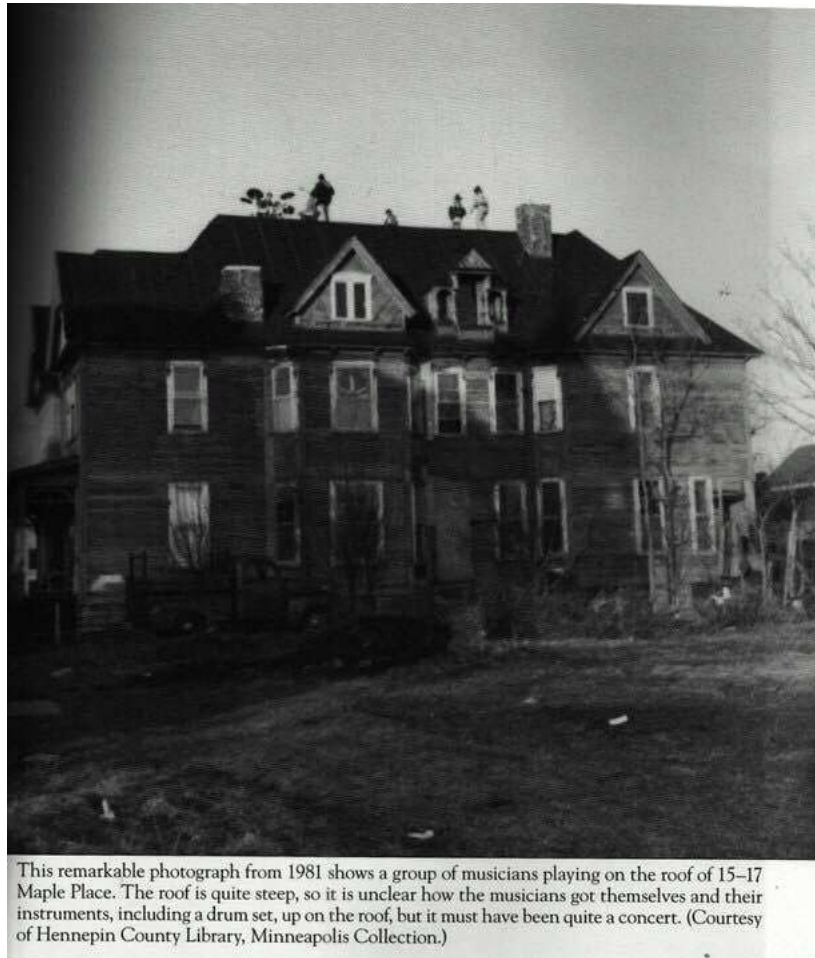
Jack's Renaissance Birthday Party, April 23rd, 1982

Jack's medieval-renaissance themed birthday party, beginning in the early evening dusk, on the lot next to the house with a community fire pit. (still there and active for the neighborhood.) Jack was dressed as the king, Bryan was a necromancer with impressive "necronomicon" style emblems on his black outfit. Most of us were peasants. Darrel, Jim and I were mad peasants with scarves on our heads (not up to invest much in costuming, it's easy to wrap a scarf on your head for effect), playing that role at the campfire to our crazed delight. Bob showed up with Sue (attractive) from Washburn high school. At dusk Jack and Bryan had a dramatically staged sword fight out there on the lawn, tarot readings were made by Al, we had a ridiculously *medieval* loaf of tough homemade bread baking on the bonfire. Got way way far off stoned that night, passing several skunky bowls around. I had my high school girlfriend with that night, we didn't last long afterwards.

Among other guests I recognized from Halloween and other times, and some I hadn't met yet, was the attractive, buxom blonde with an intellectual aura — in eyeglasses

(not many had them in our teens), with a distinctive tonal voice... somewhat moody to me, but comfortable hanging with the Island gang from Southeast Free School. This was Lenore. (who plays a major role later on)

The peasant friends I was hanging with stayed around the fire pit, having a blast! My gf kind of enjoying it, but seemed indifferent and too stoned. We had to leave for the bus early, because she had a curfew. Bummed to depart, it was a fun party!



actually April 1982

April Rooftop jam – It was a beautiful spring day. Arriving early we scoped out the roof and worked on getting the equipment up there, successfully, up through the attic is a ladder to a hatchway to the roof. We teamed up to pass the equipment between our hands to get set up. Jack, Al, Jim, Jason, Joe. Jon Selin from Washburn showed

up on a whim invited by me, who really enjoyed this.

This was another good adventure! We played our set of songs and improvised for a good few hours that afternoon. 'Sunny Days', freshly coined by Jack, was easily the song exemplifying that day. With its jaunty old fashioned shuffle, seeming as if it was made around the 1910's, was perfect in this historical setting. The Island was about a distant past, of all old buildings and bridges and Minneapolis history. The town was formed around this area originally. Old, yet contrasting the very new — the modern IDS tower — 57 stories tall. The tallest building in the Twin Cities. Looming ahead of us like a dark glass sentinal monolith. (Jack once referred to it as "*the cities middle finger*" — ha!)

I never played drums outdoors before, let alone on a rooftop before, and with such a wide view! Of downtown, the riverscape, north to the old Grain Belt brewery, and — tripping on acid! Jon was present on 4 hits of acid, seeing shapes; alphabets in the patterns of my cymbal playing. I was thrilled to be there, taking it all in, the ride cymbal never sounded better, the sound matching the flowing river, with very sparse few clouds passing through clear, warm skies. The sun warming everything, with the modern downtown skyscrapers looming in front of us across the river. An amazing day for the ages! We had to wrap up before dark. John arrived after work, later said he could hear us from the bridge! After laboring the equipment back down, ended with me eating dinner over with Jack, Al and Jacks dad John, it became a very psychedelic salad as the acid trip racing through my untrained young mind, and I almost lost myself in a cosmic laughing fit at the kitchen table (a near miss of self-control saved me from humiliation! The guys understood.)

All of these Island activities was helping my teenage angst after breaking up with my high school sweetheart, which was overdue anyway. But still hard for a few weeks.

Video taped

There was an April video made of us sitting in the road in front of Jack's house, by an

acquaintance of his who went to the U of M. We were simply sitting in a row in the road out front (no traffic danger), and when videotaping, interviewed us about why we're sitting in the road, Jack made up an instant story: "*It's for bunnies.*" We were apparently protesting the ubiquitous-ness of pavement on behalf of vulnerable bunnies everywhere. We kept on with straight faces. When he got to me, I made a deadpan comment about how "*the Island dog Boomer* is definitely involved.*" [*probably the incorrect name. Just don't remember.] I think the guy filming knew he stumbled upon a unique enclave subculture! That was fun. Jack wore a cymbal on his head at one point. We watched this on a neighbors VCR afterwards, having a laugh over this! This may have been the same day as the rooftop jam, since I remember he videotaped a bit of setting up, with Jack jamming on my drumset. We watched that another time.

The band playing outdoors

After that euphoric rooftop experience, on a few really nice weather days that spring, we ventured out for a series of outdoor music sessions along the river. What could be better! Such a good feeling, free and easy musicmaking outdoors, friends, guitars, drums, cymbals riding in the sunshine, youthfulness, good times made possible by our youthful physical abilities to carry equipment a few hundred yards. Plus the setting, with nobody telling us no!

One day we played acoustic on the small abandoned railroad bridge on the north side, on a patch of curved tracks, giving a unique perspective. That was idyllic.

River swimming off the old train trestle

Starting when the weather warmed up enough by June. A fave spot for a swim was the abandoned railroad bridge, down below on the Northern-most side of the Island.

Hard to see if you don't know about it. With a diving board attached in the center, it proved to be a good climbing bridge too. We swam there every day that hot summer. It used to be gated off before reaching Boom Island, near an industrial area full of

gravel piles and cranes. [now it's a manicured park with that bridge used as a commonly used biking and walking path. No more diving board, and the sides are fenced for safety.]

Grove Street

A restoration project was underway on an old stone block building on Grove, just south of the railroad tracks. Some of the gang pitched in for spare income, doing grunt work, helping to clear debris. I never did, but it was great to see it eventually transform into fancy homes.

Playing a party at Jason's

Spring '82, probably that May. We play a party at Jason's in the Kenwood area (southwest of downtown) that went all night long. We warmed up for Michael Baker's band 'The Mutants'. Met Grant Young that night who played my drum kit, he ended up bending the snare trap engager, but denied it later. (it's still bent decades later!) It doesn't affect it's functions, but still annoying to have this denied. Still a good time.

It was a late night fun time, with skinny dipping in Cedar Lake in the wee small hours afterwards, walking around a half mile to 'hidden beach'. Great swimming spot!

Many of us ended up crashing at Jason's, I recall in Jason's room upstairs at sunrise a few of us trying to catch some shut-eye, but right outside of his window were an early rising flock of spring birds, chirping away like loud tiny squeaking wheels, we gave up trying to nod off, being in a helpless laughing fit over the surreal, loud bird sounds!

Went downstairs to see Jon Selin sleeping on the sofa, straight as a board, pale and in a coffin pose, he actually looked dead! We laughed, then it was time for some breakfast.

Parties on the Island

It was a good place and time for spontaneous gatherings. Before or after a jam session down in the dungeon studio, sometimes turned into a party space. Lenore would be present with the gang. The indifferent one I was convinced didn't like me much, and probably increased when I played my drums during that little gathering in the basement.

Venturing off...

A memory of dropping railroad ties off of the old stone arch bridge and into the river, I think with Jon Selin and Jason. Probably on one of our acid trips late at night that Spring, and wandering off the Island. The historic stone arch bridge had forbidden access, gated off from entry. It was a fun adventure to climb over the barricade, to find a scattered row of old tar-soaked railroad ties, evidently to be removed by city workers. So we took a few to topple in the river waters below, making a mighty splash in the fairly quiet night. Just a juvenile thrill. (actually fun at any age! If responsibly /consciously done.)

The annual Blind Lizard rally

An event for showcasing motorcycles, held annually every late spring for a day. Popular amongst motorcycle enthusiasts. Many quality motor bikes, barbecues and a cool crowd, a good Island tradition. Invited by Jack, I was detached as a non-biker kid, but enjoyed the event and as a spectator.

These are still happening every year! I went in '82 and '83, returning in 2008. Even bigger yet, it's a popular tradition!



A rare pic! Me, Jamie, Jon Selin, Jason -around the firepit

Memorial Day weekend, cabin trip with friends

Not an acid trip, but a trip to our family cabin with friends. Jason from the band, longtime friend Jamie, and Jon Selin. The whole story is here, starting on page #24:

https://dean-gustafson.com/autobiographical/The_Cabin.pdf

Long story short. I led those guys into trouble, and I owe them something! Hopefully they enjoyed our time to a degree. Jason still was in the band with me. Jamie has remained close ever since. Jon disappeared completely after that — getting in worse trouble already on parole. Apologies — I was being irresponsible !

Summer of '82

Active and creative, with many band practice sessions at Jack's basement, that happened almost every day, all summer long. Add in some particularly heavy psychedelic journeys — somehow were all for free — never paid a dime!

No one had any money in '82, it being recession time in Reagan's trickle-down

America. We would answer ads in the paper for dishwasher jobs, only to find around 70 people applying in a line out the door. Most of them twice our age! So we scrounged for cheap beer and White Castle burgers and enchiladas (from that Hennepin Avenue ex-bank corner Mexican fast-food place). Otherwise, Jack made excellent omelets and burgers for us, generously!

I stayed at my parent's house most nights and bicycled to the Island and back, hardly spending a moment there except to sleep and eat. Staying at the Island many a day and night. Band practice was important, and we had our first real gig coming up!



The flyer I drew, styled very San Francisco 60s Rick Griffin

June 25, Heavy Wave was tentatively the guest warm-up band. At the Cedar Riverside café — a gig that Bryan and I both drew trippy posters for, we were rather fanciful with rapidographs at that time. I drew a psychedelic 60's San Francisco style flyer for the event, and Bryan Geer drew a high tech one with the band Deep Space on futuristic motorcycles. (I have photocopies of both of these still)



Bryan's excellent drawing. More up-to-date 80s and sci-fi styled.

Billed as a Deep Space gig, Jack on drums, Scott Soule on bass & vocals, and Pat on guitar & vocals. A blues-rock trio who had a few years experience before Heavy Wave. As the guest warm-up, it went pretty well for our first real gig in a public venue. Jim Capra helped as roadie, hauling equipment, and made some nice comments on my drumming style. My brothers Craig and Brian showed up! It went well, and so near the summer solstice that it was still light outside as we played. A party went on all night afterwards at Jason's in Kenwood. After becoming recently single I was more open to flirting, met some beauties there (including Mina) giving

me more energy that I walked all the way home around the lakes after that.

Fourth of July on the Island

Big party on the Island at Jacks — as popular as the Halloween party. On a memorably hot day, burning my bare feet on the pavement, I wore my tattered tophat. It was a day of music, beer and reefer, nice girls, swimming in the river, occasionally mixed jams in the basement studio with Deep Space and Heavy Wave members, etc.. Very memorably hot! Swimming off the old train bridge to cool down.

After playing drums downstairs, at one point Kelly Simpson (from a high school connection) was giving me a back massage on the front steps. Walking up the stairs was Lenore, who was at most Island gatherings large and small. I figured she didn't like me very much, passing us in a fairly dismissive manner. I shrugged it off, and went on enjoying the company I was in, with Kelly and another cool new friend Leslie.

Dhaivyd Hilgendorf was there, (A great friend, and has been all along beyond those days, out to California and back) who I met through Mina Wood. He was at the Island all summer long, the 4th of July may have been his first time there. With a sunny personality that beams good vibes, rhythm and sensitivity, he brings an essential high quality spirit. In that summer of '82 he was affectionately nicknamed "*Daisy Mae*" by Jack, and as the *official mascot* of Heavy Wave. He'd dance wilder than anyone else and would get the crowd on their feet and into a dancing frenzy. He was a band member that way.

The party went on all night long, dwindling down to maybe a dozen of us by 2am. The heat lasting all night, as typically happens in Minnesota on scorchers. River swims would occur late in the dark. Later with some of the remaining partygoers, some I didn't know, found ourselves relaxing on the southern side lot, trying to cool down and looking at the stars around 3am. I don't think I was on acid that time, but those were some real hippie moments.

By around 5am, the few of us stragglers ended up crashing inside, after mosquitoes ruined our lawn time. On sofa's, and other guest spaces. (John might have been away?) I was on the lower part of Jacks room below the loft. Around sunrise I recall feeling a presence nearby — a female presence lingering*. I was too shy (and zonked) to open my eyes, and it passed, dreamlike yet a real memory.

Excellent party! Followed by generous homemade breakfast by Jack and Al for only a few of us after more left that morning.

Our psychedelic "summer of love" (or something like that)

--Acid trips... there were a good bunch of those — relatively, around eight times that year (beginning in April '82 to June '83.) It lengthened the psychological labyrinths that we were lost in and fueled the endless jam muse. It opened *doors of perception*, an apt title for Huxleys book (I read in San Francisco years later, sober yet absorbed.) I totally grok'd the eloquence of "labyrinths of endless significance" everywhere. I would be tripping on the Island, having thoughts about entropy, and evolution, focusing on the phenomena of physics surrounding... thinking about the scrambledness of things in the world. Of quanta — micro-paint bits from Japan, to chemicals from Europe, in the river water... to the genetic mixtures that combine to make us over eons of slow evolutionary time, etc. Fascinating stuff! There were moments when I felt like the first human ever on Earth — a modern day Prometheus, enjoying an orange for the first time in history, as a pure flight of acidhead fancy. LSD can lead to delusional thinking, and potentially psychotic thoughts, but also can be quite connecting to developmental ideas that may be otherwise dormant. I was lucky — fortunate enough to not overdo it, and like an acquaintance said back then "you put your buzzes into use!" A compliment about my artistic exploring ways. It was not just about fun partying, or pleasure. It was opportunities for finding something interesting — particularly about consciousness itself. The greatest quality in humans!

On one of the psychedelic evenings tripping that summer, Jack, Bryan and I walked to the north end platform of the Island for sunset. It was visually breathtaking, seeming infinite. We were awestruck, it started the trip out dazzlingly, and the effect lasted all through the night of woken dreamscapes. Of vivid, almost tropical underwater visions, where everything was perfect.

As the trip peaked, after several internal universes coalesced, and jam sessions in the basement, late wee small hours, the band, friends and girlfriends swimming in the river by the bridge where we'd jump off. Jack proclaiming "*I Am!*" with his arms outstretched in a moment of psychedelic awareness.

Another time, the acid kicking in by around 6pm. Jack and I collapse into laughing while finding a strip of hard plastic around 16" long, placed between our toes to see how long we can circle in a type of Russian dance! Wacky! Then he points out my good smiling energy, and I immediately retreat into a self-conscious contrarian mode, forcing the smile down to a phony frown.

Then, visiting the genuine hobo encampment on the field nearby the north train trestle. They were cool, even if homeless, not threatening, and even generous to share their chili on the fire they had. I remember when a woman in that little tribe pointed out how young I was. I then quoted Hunter S. Thompson "*He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man.*" She exclaimed "*how do you know this? You're not supposed to, you're too young!*" Easily, it's on one of my Ralph Steadman t-shirts! Jim Capra was living in a tent there that summer. It wasn't overrun with others, but with only a few living that way (unlike years later in income disparity San Francisco I witnessed, where messy scenes abound.)

Someone was living in a small boat anchored on the downtown side of the Island, but inconspicuously and innocuously.

Island residents

There were some unique characters on the Island. Among musicians, were: A vintage

bicycle collector who rode around on a big penny farthing bike with the big wheel in front. A refined hippie with a long braided ponytail. Cool guy.

One fellow was a hobo-ish character who drew an arcane, ragged cartoon about connecting a car battery to a cup of coffee or something like that. He'd serve you a cup of lemonade and tell you it'll ferment into wine in your stomach.

Places

Some favorite physical features I enjoyed : Walking on railroad tracks, staying balanced without falling off the single track. When a train was approaching, I could feel it rumbling through the tracks from blocks away. Occasionally for kicks we'd hop on for a block. Not difficult, the trains pass slowly through that patch.

The trails on the northern side, along the river: There was an old wood observation deck at the northernmost tip of the Island in disrepair, just beyond a tall electrical tower. From there, a narrow foot trail snaked through the woods near the water.

There was a small cave-like patch in the limestone. It wasn't a true cave, but an old cavity, enough for a couple people to sit in, sheltered from rain, with a view of the passing river slowly tugging by. I liked to imagine this had been appreciated for centuries before settlers from Europe.

This trail came out at the abandoned train bridge — our summertime swimming hole. With steps up from there to the road. These were well trodden paths for most of the year except winter. The swimming was kind of risky. Fortunately nobody I know of accidentally plunged on a floating log! It could have happened, especially at night. Jumping off the diving board was a thrill, splashing down with hearty howls and yelps! to then float around a few yards to a tiny beach, walk up on the bridge and do it again! On rare occasions someone would be daring enough to jump off the very top of the bridge. (a 70 foot drop?) I did once, and it was a bit too frightening!

During the band practice of our band Heavy Wave, we'd take breaks, conjuring up fun

ideas to mythologize ourselves. One was the album cover. We sometimes sat to have a tok and brainstorm crazy ideas near an old abandoned warehouse lot near the house. We thought of an image of us passing the joints around which would be one photo, followed by another pic of skeletons in the exact same positions as if a great amount of time had passed after a nuclear holocaust. We never did anything about it, of course, but the ideas were fun.

We played many various parties that occurred around us on the Island. There was a lot of weirdness with snippets of creativity in the music and discussions that I can only vaguely recall. It was always an interesting conversation with Bryan — a mindful fellow.

There was a crazy nude mushroom party that went on all night: with a late night jam in the basement after and before skinny dipping in the wee small hours; tripping hippie times. I was a prude, keeping dressed.

By now Jack had a steady sweetheart: Britty, who I'd seen around a few times. Fun, free-spirited and a natural fit. It was not too long until she moved in with Jack, I think by autumn? (Al must have moved back with parents in North Minneapolis?)

Cinema

We made it to a few essential movies but not often, we were too busy and could not afford much. Usually late night cult films at the Varsity and Uptown theatres. We soaked in the highly influential *Grateful Dead Movie* whenever showing.

'*The Wall*' was a bit too much to take that summer in new cinemas downtown, even though we are Floyd freaks. That film is too paranoia drenched. Not a psychedelic groovy movie. Glad I was not tripping! The only movie I went to on acid was *Poltergeist*, with Bryan. Amazing how I didn't break down with a bad trip during the self-mutilation of the guys face off in the mirror scene!

The best cinematic surprise came when on a Sunday morning I got a call from Jack. It

wasn't for band activities, but he said they have a bunch of tickets for a college preview of the new Harrison Ford movie called *Blade Runner*, and there's enough tickets to cover a number of us. I thought the title sounded like a sword and sorcery genre film. I was not all that interested, but I didn't have anything better going that day and appreciated the invitation. The deal was for anyone walking into a Musicland store telling the clerk the title and the radio station that broadcast the free tickets, would get a pair each. Jack, then Bryan, then Al did so, scoring 6 free movie tickets for the afternoon showing. So I met them on the Island. Jack, Bryan, Al, Jason, Joe and I. We probably bussed to the University, to a theater I didn't know. And - wow! - was that futuristic. Our sensibilities altered after that experience! The preview copy hadn't been shown yet, so we had a pristine viewing. It's a highly acclaimed film, ever since.

BTW, The front outdoor porch of Jack's was a great place to hang out. It can be seen in the feature length 60's period film "*Purple Haze*" (if the rare 1983 Minneapolis made film can be found)

The one tv show that could not be missed was Dr Who. Otherwise I was oblivious to most other television shows that year. September was all about the BBC series of *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, by Douglas Adams. Good high school friend Jamie and I were totally absorbed, watching PBS on my parents basement TV, and also read the books, and caught the radio broadcasts. Bryan and Jack were also gripped.

Everything was all 42 references after that.

There is nothing like a Dead concert

August 6 — a friday night Grateful Dead concert at the St Paul Civic Center. Worlds opened up. I treated Mina to the show, and got a ride from my ex bro-in-law Mitch. We enjoyed entering the arena and sat way in the back at first before the band came on. I was being an awkward flirt, and she resisted. At my age I chalk it up to youthful

folly. Later in the hallway I saw her holding hands with a guy from her school and made the connection, so I had to evade the awkwardness and enjoy the show, which I did immensely. Eventually finding many as-of-yet undiscovered synapses! I found Jason on the floor in the crowd and he had some very special orange windowpane from California which he offered a hit to me, but only on the condition that I really was truly interested, otherwise he'd save it for himself. I was very glad to have it and went on one of the best trips ever. Many worlds were passed through, led by Garcia and company. Dhaivyd would appear out of the crowd in a smiling dancing groove to disappear and reappear like an epitome of brightly free-spirited dancing deadheadness, He bought a most remarkable tie die that night, featuring an orange/pink colors in detailed waves, over a graphic of a tight spiral lines, and in the center was detailed drawing a of a bird skeleton. Its cosmic imagery blew my mind in that state, and years later after it was long gone left an impression. According to Dhaivyd it's almost un-recreatable.

Set one was good. *The Bird Song* pulled me in, memorably. Set two was a sparkling odyssey! The music was amazing. I was completely immersed. Jerry's guitar notes seemed to chime with diamonds in my spine. I was transformed! The drum solo into the space jam segments had me focused. Around then at the show I ran into Corey Lindquist, a stoner freak that I know from high school. We were on the floor and the band switched from a wild improv into *Truckin'* — a rousing version, with Phil's bass shaking our bones! I ended up in the hallway for the rock and roll rest of the night, dancing up a storm in a sea of colorful deadhead freaks in motion! Dhaivyd kept appealing suddenly with smiles, and disappearing just as suddenly. Dreamlike — and a technicolor dream at that!

It's All Over Now, *Baby Blue*, the Dylan encore in Dylans home state We watched from the back of the floor, ended the show. Mina finds me for the ride back. I forgot about her! What a twist from before the show. I just laughed, as she pushed my top

hat aggressively down my face! Perspective.

After the show, we were sitting on a small patch of lawn outside of the coliseum waiting for our ride back, tripping strongly and gasping in astonishment at the show we just had experienced, when a woman started talking to us, seriously asking us if we knew about Jesus. Cory instantly gets up and says “lets get out of here”, saving us from something we were not in a state of mind to deal with.

It was an excellent GD show, I love listening to recordings of 8/6/82 today.

I drew my psychedelic sun drawing all that night after, (shown just ahead) then brought it to the Island the next day. The band loved it — deciding this would be the next gig advertisement! For August 25th. We had a gig that day, August 7 for a party at Dhaivyd’s house in St Paul. His amazing Dad Ralph, who is visually blind, and a devout Quaker, confiscated the keg. We had a good gig, even after recovery from the incredible trip the night before! Ah, youthful energy rebounds so well.

For more in depth about this drawing, read here :

<https://dean-gustafson.com/artwork-essays/Psychedelic-Suns.pdf>

Summer continues

More band practice, fueled by the Dead concert experience! Plus we had a gig coming up in the West Bank/Riverside area at the People’s Center. Our first public gig as headliners. We were stoked!

Island musicians

It was a treat to hear the local bluegrass bands play in the field next to the house. Jacks dad John played a fine mandolin, and would group with other musicians and play outdoors. Mostly bluegrass.

That left a good impression on me, and one of the activities that gave the vibe its depth there. What a unique community!

Sunny Days recording

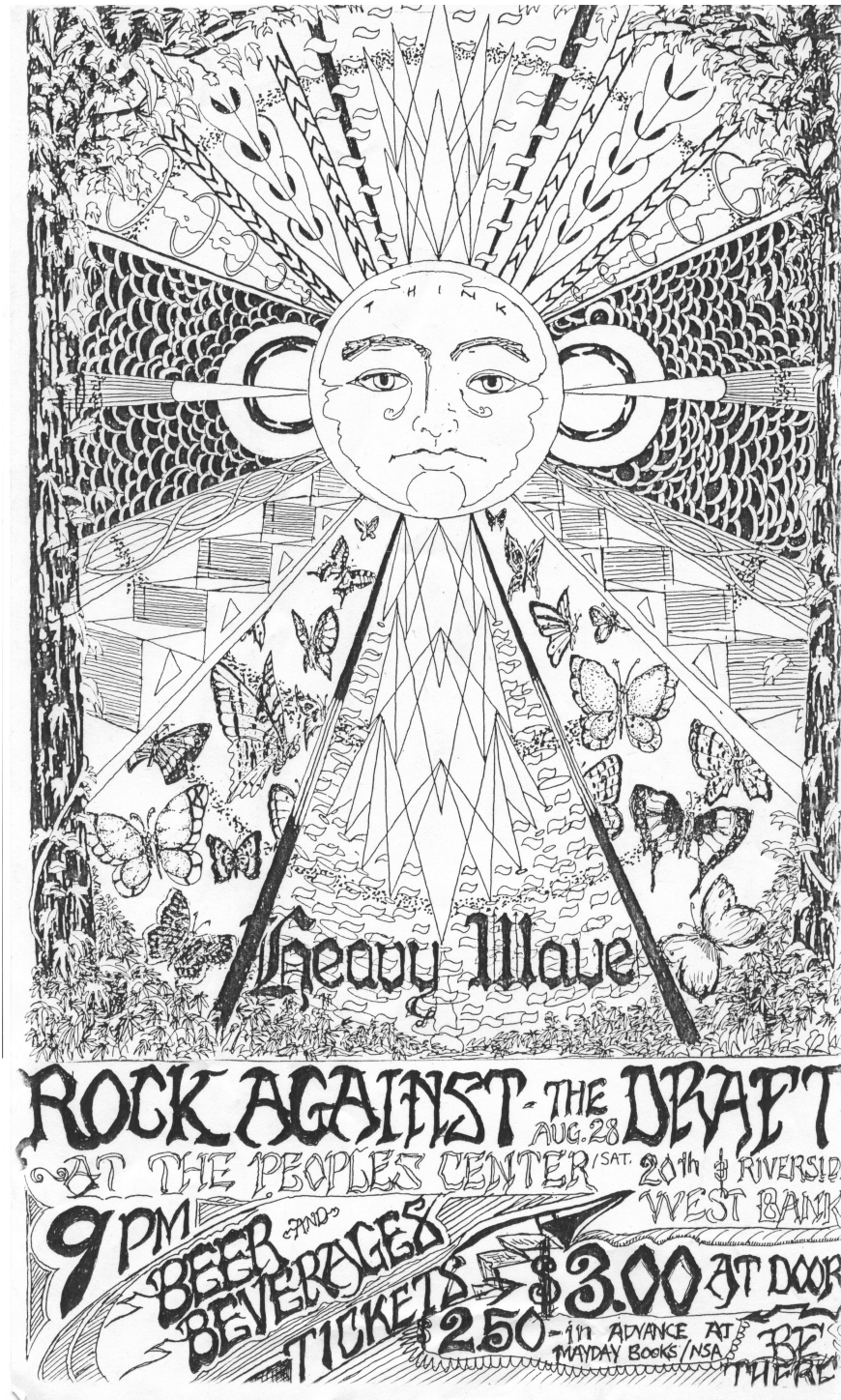
One day, Jack made a recording of *Sunny Days* independent from the band, but he asked me to play drums on it. This happened on a neighbors equipment. We carry my kit across the street and record my track. Jack said it was good, but I could tell my nerves made it sound awkward. That was a rare home studio recording of me. I wonder if it still exists.

The old Grain Belt Beer sign

Good memory of climbing the old Grain Belt sign with Jim Capra. The Grain Belt beer sign goes back many decades (perhaps the 1940's?) It was in disrepair at that time, the neon wasn't working and the sign was fading. [long since remodeled in the late 80s, with neon animated again!] Grain Belt beer was not in production anymore, but the sign is a good landmark of the area. It was an easy climb up the old maintenance ladder leading to a great view over the Hennepin Avenue bridge [completely redone as a suspension bridge around 1990] and looking over the river banks and downtown..

Mayflies

A day we didn't swim. Floating over the river one day in 1982. It might have been August. Were thousands of white mayflies, and I mean thousands! Like snowflakes floating upriver, both filled the air above the water and floating dead on the water. For their only single day to live. It must've been a spawning year of a cyclical span, since I've never seen anything like it.



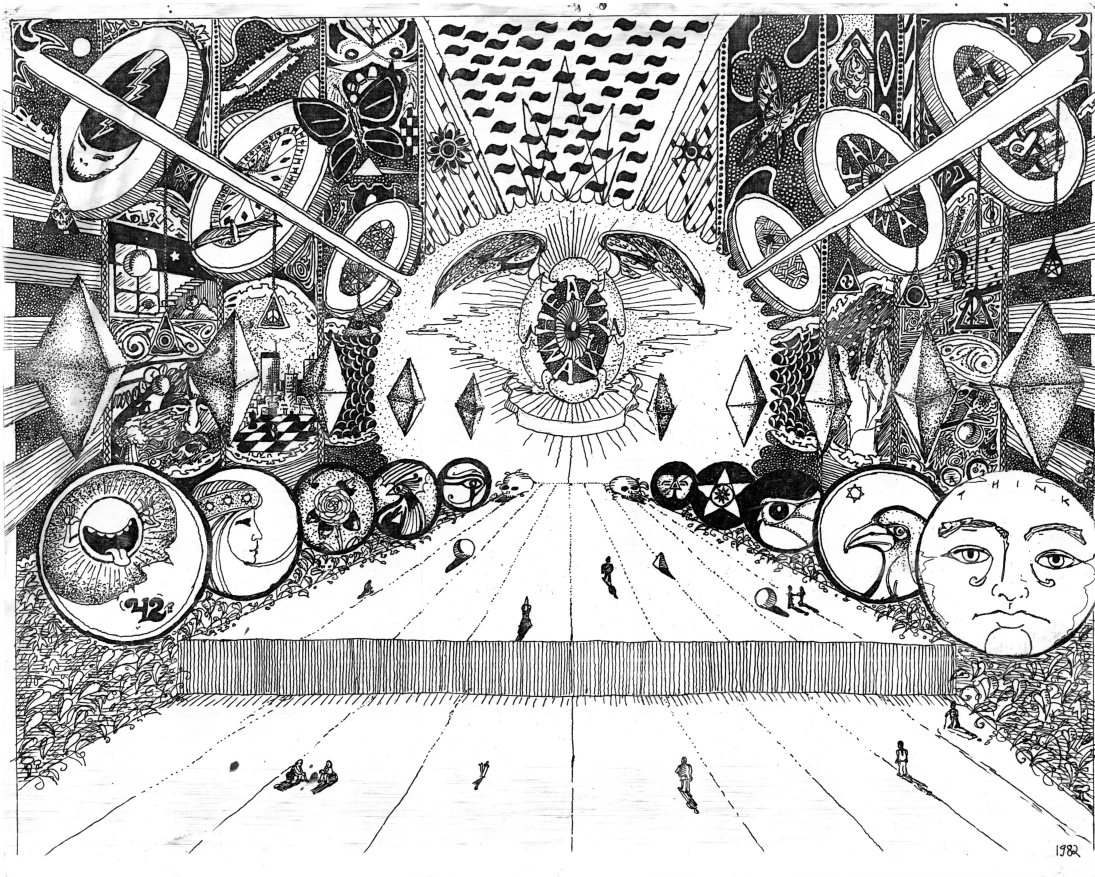
photocopies by my dad at his workplace

August 25th — Rock against the draft at Peoples Center. Probably our best gig, held in a spacious room with a good dance floor. Jack assembled a vacuum to sing through

(long before Phish!) and added a fishnet with shells on the stage for thematic embellishment. My psychedelic sun drawing was used as the poster.

Steve Schlossberg (one of "the Cats") gave a speech about problems with draft registration (he was one of a handful who was prosecuted by the government to not sign — and he was for moral religious reasons). A good crowd came and had a fun time dancing to our band. I recall Scott Soule was there and had a fun time jumping over the fishnet with the dancing crowd. It was an energetic time for the band!

September — a few band sessions and a hiatus



photocopy of a drawing made around my birthday, never was a gig flyer. gift to Joe Ryan.

We had a nice day playing on the Island on my birthday. With limited time jamming on the Island afterwards that year. I think when Britty moved in with Jack, and John and his sweetheart Judy probably needed a break from our constant activities.

Plus — I was soon starting MCAD for two evening classes! Paid for by dad, and with mom's support! Bless them. They didn't want me living at the house and not getting anywhere. They bought art supplies required by the college for my drawing class with Paul Olson (drawing board, pad, graphite, charcoal, eraser, chamois) and painting with Gabrielle Ellertson (acrylic paint set, brushes, canvases). I was ready to move up in the world, academically serious! The band didn't mean as much compared.

"The Cats" rent a house

During these times in another parallel social circle, the gang of friends known affectionately as "The Cats" rented a house in the Whittier neighborhood. It was Joe Covert, Bob Foster, Rob Winkels, Steve Schlossberg and Greg Robinson (not sure if any more lived there, or if this list is absolutely correct). They launched some big partys that autumn, with plenty of cheap beer (cases of Fox Deluxe and Cold Spring) and card games. It was the first time I'd seen many of them since I became an Island person. I recall Bob mocking me humorously sing- singing "*Deans got Island fever!*" (he'd had it before me, and knew).

The Blue Hills — Jason's *Opa*

Autumn, went to the Blue Hills in central Wisconsin for a few days with Jason and Joe. Jasons German Grandfather lived there, he was very old, hard of hearing, with a solid old world character with a difficult accent to discern at times. He had a fascinating network of waterways that rambled through his land, that we did some minor work on.

I marveled over hearing accounts of how he used to wander the Black Forest at night in pitch blackness for miles on a regular basis. A fascinating character indeed!

The small town (can't recall its name) had a set of railroad tracks running through, the water tower had the town name on it (?). I remember we were walking on the railroad tracks, and that memory really seems as a distant dream. We had a rare night of

outstanding Aurora Borealis that lasted for hours. We climbed a hill over a small canyon, and enjoyed it late into the night while around a small bonfire.

Jason's father drove us there and back. It was a great little getaway! Generous of the Engelhardts to include Joe and I.

Halloween '82 — Wow, and Wow...

A mighty fine costume party at Jack's once again. It was a full house, but our band didn't play. 1982 was very different in a few respects.

The band Deep Space played in the basement, where usually our band Heavy Wave played, but we were on hiatus. So I could relax at the party in an absurd yet cleverly weird costume that mom and Jill schemed up. An old classic tuxedo with tails that Mitch regrettably donated to me because it didn't fit him— and also his snakeskin boots — fitting me just fine. Mom sewed a stuffed pair of pants over my actual legs, giving the odd appearance of walking absurdly far forward, yet dapper. They were in stitches over this!

I may have been dropped off there by Mitch to avoid the bus in costume.

I didn't know what enchanting romance was to be soon revealed...

She was a goddess in a red toga, with golden blonde hair, clear blue eyes, with a look of being made alive from ivory...

I was stunned by this beauty ; it was Lenore. Remember the one who I was convinced didn't like me much? who I'd met through previous parties on the Island.

But not like this! ...



Lenore on the front porch that Halloween night

We chatted for a good stretch before the place filled up. I was mesmerized by her and it was clearly reciprocal. At some point we kissed, magnetized as we were oblivious to the party swirling around us. We hung out together on the sofa, seeming to be in our own bubble, holding hands and making out while the party raged around us. Deep Space rocked out in the basement. For once I was happier to not be behind the drum kit. I was intoxicated, but only by her.

Too late for the bus, I called my brother-in-law Mitch for a possible ride. He agreed! Lenore too! We were being total lovebirds in the back seat. Mitch and his friend Chris were up front, feeling good for us. Dropping her off, it was difficult to part. Exchanging numbers, the plan was to get together tomorrow. How could we not? Truly a Halloween for the ages!

Autumn '82

Good timing personally, to have a slowdown in band and Island activity. Occupied by night classes at MCAD to get into academic gear, and now Lenore — we couldn't have enough of each other! we had a lovely autumn into winter, even with no money.

Meanwhile, I think Jack was working with his Dad doing land surveying that autumn. We started band practice at Jason's in Kenwood by winter. Scott Soule joined, so we were now a 5-piece. We must have practiced before our gig on New Years Eve.

Flora

Lenore's mom was awesome! With music tastes like ours, so I gave her a Led Zeppelin album! Her birthday is on Christmas, and before then was a small dinner party at their place, with her brother too, for a nice evening there meeting them. I remember the photos taken that night, of Lenore and I on the sofa, and one specifically of me showing off my wandering eye, looking odd. (corrective lenses followed a half year later.)

This was a fine Christmas season. We went to help pick out a Christmas tree in earlier December on Lyndale... with Jill, Mitch, and Joni. Our constant kissing must have been too much at times for them. Around my parents too!

1983 ch~ch~ch~ch~changes

NYE '83, party at John Paul Mazzniks (sp?) house in NE Minneapolis. We did well with Scott joining the band, one of our better, solidly rocking party gigs. A wonderful time with Lenore. For Christmas gifts I gave t-shirts, after using them as acrylic paint rags, resulting in a patterned artsy look. Lenore got one with "I Love You" painted on the back. Others got a more static pattern.

Other bands warmed up for us ... amazed at how good we were?! (saying '*what a fantastic big band sound we had*'). It was a good gig...Scott brought some good standard cover tunes and his own songs to the repertoire.

After that gig, the gang didn't mind that I don't unload my kit going back. I trusted them with it.

After midnight on a beautiful winters night, Lenore and I had a really nice stroll in

light snowfall to her place, just down the hill passing the 'witches hat' tower, crossing the Franklin Avenue bridge. A perfect new years night. *Bellissimo!*

Kenwood and the Island

'83 jams were held at Jason's for the wintertime (which smelled of cat piss). We were a 5-piece now with Scott, we had some good jams in Jason's basement, though I was leaning towards not being in a band anymore, but thinking of being more of a serious artist. I had more night classes lined up for the winter/spring semester, warming up to the MCAD studio environment. Full time art school was on the horizon and a sense that I needed to move on. The pressure of having no job, 19 years old, after living at my parents house over a year after high school was off-kilter.

I attended less band practice sessions and that caused some conflicts. Things fragmented socially in the band during '83. Especially when petty accusations were made and I at one point infamously walked through the drumkit to physically confront (harmlessly, ultimately) the benign bassist and all-around lovely friend Joe Ryan. Some kind of misunderstood reputation stemmed out of that, I think I was just personally frustrated with my own development and the band was simply becoming argumentative. Plus I was getting frequent headaches. I didn't yet know why.

Otherwise, I was in love and having glorious times with Lenore! We spent some good times on the Island with Jack and Britty, who were gracious to invite us over for dining, and small gatherings beyond band interests. I was more of an artist than a drummer, sharing some of my creations rather than hoard. Jack had high regard for my artwork, giving him some artwork, and he gave me a super fine pointed rapidograph. It was the smallest hairline available, a 6x0 or something.

Some noteworthy times with her:

Going to the Island, Lenore and I enjoying each other at the expense of others ignored. One time Al wanted a band photo on the Island, but with her there we were just inseparable. Al said something to the effect of "*can't you two let us get a good band pictures?*" to which Jack replied "*ha, you can't separate those two.*"

Inviting Jack and Britty for dinner at my house with Lenore and I, when my parents were away for a week. This was a nice time, and a reciprocation, since Jack often hosted us generously on the Island.

Lenore would stay over with my folks away, but my sister Jill — who didn't live there anymore — would interfere being unnecessarily difficult. Clashes resulted, with my buttons pushed. Another reason to be more independent.

Meeting Lenore on the Island after getting her hair fancifully worked on at a salon in Dinkytown. Wow!! with ripples throughout her fine blonde hair. A goddess fair and beautiful I was enchanted by. Walking downtown to the bus stop took longer, I had to stop frequently to behold this beauty along the way!

Thawing snow in March, we walked from the Island to the Walker Art Museum. A fine day activity! People would admire us in the museum as a perfect looking couple. When the weather was warmer, we had some fabulous walks. Along River Road near her place. To the Varsity Theater and back for a few movies. Along Minnehaha Creek near me. One time we walked all the way from her place to mine!

Bus fare wasn't expensive, we were simply that poor that we scrounged to afford it. Plus walking is healthy!



Flyer I drew. DaVinci copy plus psychedelic embellishments

April 23, 1983 Jack's Birthday Extravaganza

On the day before, we set up a stage on the side of the house out of old barrels, found wood crates and signs. It was a festive scene, with banners posted around the lawn. Many showed up for a huge outdoor springtime party under sunny skies — with free acid! (“talk to the guy in the green chair”)

GREETINGS
FELLOW MEMBRANES!
ONCE AGAIN IT IS TIME TO
GET TOGETHER AND CELEBRATE
SPRING WITH THE COMING OF
SUMMER. SO GET OUT YOUR SUN vison
frisbee AND Self, AND BRING IT
ALL DOWN TO SCENIC NICOLLET island
On Saturday APRIL 29th What, You May
BE asking Yourself, Will BE going on. well,
THERE will be live music, fine food and
DRINK and other things?? fucn, fucn.

Just remember, it only happens
once and your invited.

Look forward To Seeing

YOU,

Jack and HEAVYwavy

A TECHNICAL NOTE
FESTIVITIES WILL BEGIN AT 3:00 PM
FOR MORE INFO PHONE
JACK AT 379-3384

Jack got carried away with curive Letraset typography! Difficult to read, in fact one of my good neighbor friends dad saw this, and didn't let him attend because he saw the words "fun fun" to say "fucn fucn", because of the exaggerated loop of the n!

Several old friends made it by that one party. We played for hours, a fabulous scene, perfect weather, the band playing outdoors for the first time that year. Think about a year previously up on the roof. Now we're playing to an audience, in a planned gig! After the band stopped and most of the crowd left, it became a late-night one-of-a-kind tripfest for a dozen of us or so remaining. I was animated on acid, feeling like

exclamation points could almost be visibly seen popping up out the top of my head!
"He's like a kid!" Lenore laughing, pointed out.

I didn't know Judy well, John's sweetheart, and I was always under the impression that us teenagers were simply annoying to her. She was really nice to chat with that evening — prompted by interest in the DaVinci copy I drew. [years later also great to talk with during a visit I made back]

That was a peak day and night, with a crash and burn to follow.

Bad juju? Most likely youthful folly

Jack kindly loaned me his fabulous Raleigh bicycle that spring, and I unfortunately ended up riding over a huge pothole in south Minneapolis while looking for a friend's house, not looking down at the road, denting the rear wheel rim quite badly. Not good. I told him about it, offered to compensate, but he said it was alright and accidents happen. But after that it was obvious that he was disturbed with me under the surface, so I gave him and Britty a large psychedelic oil painting as hopefully a gesture of retribution, but it didn't seem to do the trick. Something wasn't dealt with correctly, and attitudes and friendship suffered as a result.

Mayday

Not long after that, on May 1st, Lenore and surprisingly split up. It was a gloomy afternoon, after meeting downtown to catch a matinee of *The Hunger*, the goth vampire flick starring David Bowie (a huge favorite until *Let's Dance*) we walked to the Island in disturbed moods. (the gloomy movie? the weather?) breaking up by the old train trestle in a moody huff.

We had a half a year of timeless bliss, in a legendary romance, bigger than our young years. Spending quality time on the Island. Until I didn't know why at the time, but I let my behaviour sabotage it. In retrospect, I think I (and her too) needed to be unattached into full-time college years of personal growth. I had MCAD and on to

San Francisco and Europe, but I should have been more graceful. I was a naive, myopic, insensitive youth. Maybe that's simply what it takes to move on?

Yet that was a fine if very young romance, mainly because she has heart, brains, and beauty.

We were, in the cry of a woman who saw us part ways in front of Lenore's apartment building, as I was getting on the bus, but difficult to part we were embracing so lovingly, and blowing kisses from the bus as if I was going away for years — the woman yelled out "*Bellissimo!*"

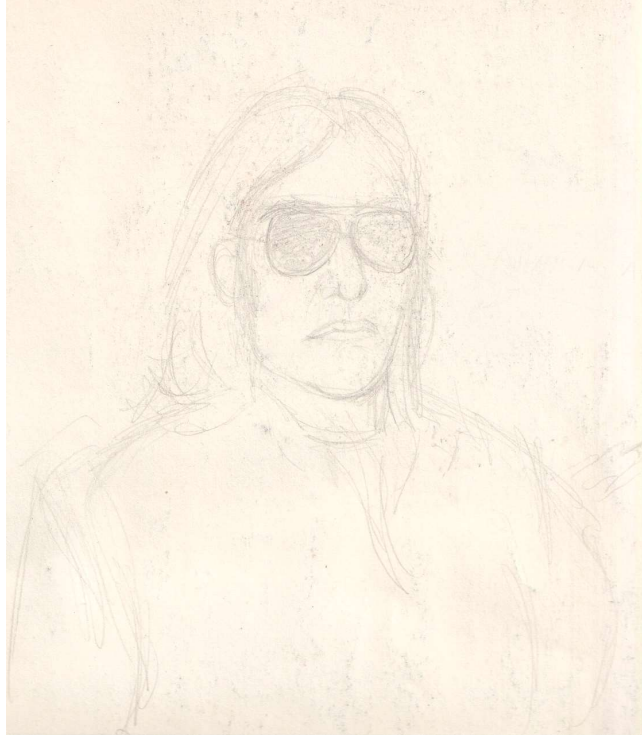
An operatic moment.

[and continuing to be *bellissimo* since we've become reunited in 2021! After a 39 year break of zero contact — We are legendary epic stuff! Thanks to Nicollet Island as the catalyst for our meeting.]

New eyeglasses, a studious, long depressing summer

Pivotal yet hard, gloomy time period. The falling out with Lenore surprised everyone. And the fallout with Jack was another bummer. I had some growing up to do, and being discontent will usually be just the thing we need to do so.

I discovered the source of my increasing headaches — blurred vision — astigmatism plus a wandering eye. (all that time over the drawing table, working on detailed drawings must have been the strain that pushed my eyes.) I had an optometrist appointment that May. Picked out a pair, mostly rimless, shaped like the following portrait of Joe just ahead here. It took months to get accustomed to wearing, but helped my vision and I read more that summer.



Joe Ryan - sketch I drew at The Cabin, relaxing outdoors

Memorial day weekend '83 [unlike '82]. Went back to our family cabin near Lake Pulaski, but this time with the Joe Ryan and Joe Kernan. No cabin painting labor this time, and certainly had our own firewood!

A nice relaxing time, reading, drawing, swimming, firepit time and food, beer. I think Mitch drove us that year.

The Grateful Dead return!

6-25-83 after congregating with friends on the Island to be doled out hits of microdot, we took the bus to St Paul civic center for the Grateful Dead show. I painted GD icons all over a pair of old bell bottom pants (pics anyone?!). It was a high energy odyssey of a night that went on endlessly. I already wrote about it here:

https://dean-gustafson.com/autobiographical/My_2nd_GD.pdf

It depicts a turning point of our Island activities. and was my last acid trip until a brief return 10 years later in San Francisco.

During this same week, we played an odd party gig in the burbs for friends of Dhaivyds. We played in their garage (somewhere like White Bear Lake?) It was a muggy, wet day.

The final Heavy Wave gig — July 4th, 1983

In the midst of that long, depressing summer, Jason called to tell me and encourage my participation in a band party gig on the Island. Jack had a flatbed truck gig on the railroad bridge, with a good party crowd on the old trestle. I succumbed to the party, and once I got behind the drum kit, played like a mofo getting pent up *angst* out. We went wild, with a relatively big crowd for that train bridge. We churned out a good long “*Dream within a dream*” which had the crowd dancing, especially Dhaivyd. Jack calmed the cops down when they arrived to find our band on the bridge with beer kegs. Somehow he could be a chief diplomat amidst such illegal activity. We ended up simply having to rope off the edge of the bridge as a safety precaution, with the idea that someone could fall in, and then carried on. Easy, and on with our final gig.

My drum set, and moving on

I still had to get my drums back. A pickup time was found and my dad was able to drive. I never was in that house ever again. I had full-time college in a few months, and other vast horizons ahead.

Afterwards and Now

I don't think there was another Halloween party there again, as most of us moved on. That entire scene fell apart by then. I blame our acid use combined with collective undeveloped social skills of being wild teenagers.

Fortunately I met up with Jack around a year later, and since he's like a creative brother, we've been good since then. Disappearing for stretches, but contacting occasionally, meeting up during some of my Minneapolis visits. One time I was on the road trip with my now ex-wife in '98, we stopped by when he was living in

Wisconsin. In '07, I was suffering from divorce, he threw a party for me — a surprise partial reunion of the Island days! Bryan, John Chaffee, Scott Soule, and Darrell! I hadn't seen them for decades. It was great, and now that I was a good fingerpicking guitarist we had a nice acoustic jam session!

He finally visited me in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2016 and 2020. Good times!

John Chaffee is still on the Island, but in a different house a block over. I think with Judy. I visited in 2008, having a nice afternoon with them out front.

The Island since has been transformed into a beautifully preserved and restored historic place by the city — 15-17 Maple Place included. Now it's a fabulously restored Victorian, looking like a million bucks! This seems to have been started with the resurrection of Grove Street apartments years ago. The Grain Belt sign too — with new neon installed!

I have a tape of us in Jason's basement that Dhaivyd copied for me years ago, I believe Jack and Al may have had the whole caboodle (Jack had a wall shelf full of Heavy Wave and Deep Space tapes when I visited him once in '92), but may have been destroyed by his house fire in 2009.

I would love to reconnect with Jason! I haven't seen him since he passed me by on a vespa near MCAD one day in 1984. Hopefully he's doing well. Can't find him online.

I kept in touch with Joe Ryan for a few years following, and we were in another band together In 1984 — Mach Shau! Here's a rare pic with Joe Ryan included ..



Mach Shau, 1984 (l to r) me, Joe Covert, Joe Ryan, Scott S.

Saw Joe Ryan last in 2002 on a visit back. It had been since 1985, Good to see again! Friendly as ever, but ruddy and alcoholic, still with a warm personality with a sharp wit, but I was thrown off by all the wine he downed. We emailed a few times after that, talking about art making (he occasionally painted. I remember his expressionistic interpretation of *Comedy And Tragedy* as being bold, even if unskilled.) Soon afterwards he disappeared. I was hoping he would focus on getting cleaned up (and it's hard work for some). But a few years later (2012) I got word from Joe C. with the harsh news hit that he died. Alcoholism got him bad. Tragic. Wish he could be reading this!

Joe C., Darrell, Bob, Jack, Dhaivyd, became family guys with kids! not all are still with the same wives. I think only Joe and Darrell?

Joe C, who originally introduced me to the Island, has been an active professional musician in Beatles copy bands for years. He truly loves it! They are excellent — I've caught a few gigs of his during visits back.

I lost contact with Bob. We last met in 1992, I visited his place for a nice dinner. He became a professional chef.

Dhaivyd! I kept doing things with for years, and he was **the** dancer when my other bands played in 1984!

I ran into him at a Dead concert in 1989, again in 1991 after he moved to Marin. We spent countless great times there! Bicycling Mt tam! shows in San Francisco, etc. He moved back to MN in '97. Had kids. Later reconnecting with his 1992-96 sweetheart Diana — now happily married! living in Minneapolis near Lake Nokomis.

I saw Al a couple times in 1984. I visited him in northern Minneapolis one cold winter's afternoon. He stopped by at MCAD for an hour to enjoy checking it all out. Oddly when I saw him last at a Rendered Useless gig with Jack on drums, where he ignored me as if we never met. Weird guy.

Scott Soule. I was in the band Mach Shau with in '84, and working with cleaning MCAD for a night job. Good!

yet...

Lenore. The greatest enigmatic disappearance. I thought for certain we'd cross paths somewhere in South Minneapolis, but never did, and it turns out that we were at some of the same Todd Rundgren shows ! so close and yet so far.

I thought of her often over the years, and how sudden our end happened.

I ended up finding her online, after a search at the Southeast Free School revealed her surname is now Kaibel from marriage. I would have never known. I found her on her birthday, July 1st, 2021 — over 39 years since our last contact! Now a widow for a couple of years, and her mom died the previous year, leaving her with tragic losses. I seemed to have woken something up with her. We have been close ever since! Not geographically, she's in MN, I relocated to Seattle. She's been visiting me regularly since my birthday in 2021. We jokingly say that we took a 39 year break!

[*BTW, she was the one checking me out early morning after the 4th of July party!]

Brother Brian made a 1971 film

For University projects, my late brother Brian Gustafson and a colleague documented the Island on silent Super 8 film. This was recently digitized by an archivist with Nicollet Island connections. It's a fascinating view of the whole island, beginning with photos of earlier historical roots, then proceeding driving around each road. There is a brief scene of the house included, and several unfamiliar structures long demolished.

It's on YouTube here:

https://youtu.be/uwbfA618_IY

Conclusions

'82 was our "summer of love", full of psychedelics, youthful goofing off, socializing and loose-knit creative activity in primitive music and art. The setting was beautiful,.. that river!! The constant change in the currents flowing around the Island — that must have been the heavy wave! The waters slowly moving perpetually, altering the changing shoreline, lighting, the smells, the character, .. .

Eventually in mid '83 the scene we generated dissipated, I feel the drug use shook apart any semblance of healthy comradery and no one seemed to get along as well by that point. I needed to get serious about something and started full-time college at MCAD in the autumn, not interested in Marijuana or LSD anymore... then in a few years I went to Europe, and permanently left for Northern California ...

As far as the band is concerned, we didn't sound very professional, but that's okay...for the sake of my memories and impressions, they were fascinating, adventurous, creative times that mean a lot personally. Giving kudos to Jack for facilitating our experiences in a spirit of generous creativity.

Otherwise what can I say. At 18 and 19 years old, they were formative years, affecting my penchant for unique cultural enclaves, especially in San Francisco a few years

later! (written about extensively. See my Cacophony Society memoirs.)

1982. The freshness of being that young was never to be returned to, but then again who ever can, and why would I ? — this gives memory banks something to do.

- Dean Gustafson, September 2025 (started as far back as 2003)



"Org"— drawing by Jack when visiting me in early '82

Albums of the time

The power of recorded music: So often, playing favorite albums from past times bring me back, directly back at times to some kind of essential mood of whatever season I discovered it in, or absorbed it like a sound sponge, unlike anything else. Smells, words, and pictures do that too, but I feel most attached to musical experiences to create the most vivid flashbacks to past “states of mind”.

There are a lot of albums I became vividly acquainted with during that seminal era of my youth. To name just a few wouldn't do justice, but I shall attempt to summarize: *David Grisman Quintet* – Jack taped this album for me, and I became a big enthusiast of Dawg Music instantly.

Steve Tibbetts –“Yr”. Found in the library, attracted by the psychedelic rapidograph drawing, the music inside was even better! A mesmerizing, journey through exotic soundscapes... still one the best LPs I know of.

Frank Zappa “*You are what you is*” not FZ’s best by a long shot, but it was an album of 1981, with Frank’s biting contemporary satire.

Gary Burton “*A tong funeral*” – another taped by Jack, unique arrangements and moods.

Greg Brown “*44 & 66*” and “*Iowa Waltz*”...two fine folk albums Jack had.

Grateful Dead “*Blues for Allah*” I knew it previously but not intimately, I really sunk deep into that album on the acid trips of ‘82.

Terrapin Station. Jason gave me a copy!

“*Workingman’s Dead*” was also played frequently on the Island, perfect with it’s laid back acoustic country feel, filled with classic GD songs.

XTC “*Drums and Wires*” Jack and Al had this on frequently. It was the speedy, upbeat, modern, angular sounds of the new wave era after all. Also albums by The Police and the ska pop of The Specials.

Pink Floyd ‘*Meddle*’, I bought a fantastic Japanese audiophile lp of this, at Northern Lights Records in 1981. A real treat!

Pink Floyd, *live BBC broadcast. 1971*. Jack gave me a copy, decades before it was eventually officially released. I spun that cassette to death!

The era closed with Pink Floyd’s depressing fine art masterpiece ‘*The Final Cut*’.

There are a LOT more, as we all had huge, diverse record collections and taped a lot of it for each other..

to be continued, and added to, probably

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