

~~~ Peter Doty ~~~

a collection of memories from an old friend, Dean Gustafson.

if only still around ...

"Peter, I thought you would definitely outlive me, and make it to 60, always hitting the milestones first — us from 1963. You always appreciated my memory for events of the past, so I'm writing them down. I can hear you half jesting that I should be your biographer! So this is what I have for now, and as the memories keep compounding, this won't be very short.

The problem is, you won't be reading this. Yet others will. So here's one for your Egofest™ in the hearts and minds of your community. Hey, it's a form of living on!"

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**Our friend Peter Doty** — Psychedelic dandy, vintage anachronism, dancing singing hippie, Cacophonist prankster — subverting dominant paradigms, self-proclaimed luddite, fine art photographer, thoughtful to friends, generator of fun, irreverent humorist, a true provocateur, and more. Well loved and gone too soon, and now hundreds of memories pour in. I shall attempt to summarize some of them here, to honor a good friend that he was, and still is in memory.

### **- Parties / Cacophony Society events -**

My first memory of Peter was at one of Ronn Rosen's dada surrealist Cacophony event parties. At a point Ronn played an old Hayley Mills record, and Peter helped turn it into a crazy dance party! And I thought, what a nutter of a freak who knows how to have fun! This must have been spring of 1990.

Next was at the 2nd Atomic Cafe event, June 1990, in an abandoned warehouse south of Market, with the Haight Ashbury Free Band before I joined. It became a crazy "post- apocalyptic" dance party! Peter was the wildest hippie dancer on the floor. There was A hand holding chain of us dancing through the space, with Peter in the lead. A memory from that event, Peter was running up to many of us spreading the rumor that Allen Ginsburg was there! Pointing to a look alike, exclaiming "*oh my gawd, that really is Allen Ginsburg!*" That was a great night we reflected back on as a highlight. He said it was one of his first events.

I saw him around a few times, and then there was the extraordinary Cacophony based '*The Night of the Exquisite Corpse*' event in the Mission — a Halloween

Saturday night — people costumed up, I had a horned papier mache painted mask, and Peter as the memorable "mom" persona, with curlers in beard, acting the part of a malcontented suburban housewife. Hilarious! He really pushed the part — a true actor! Afterwards was both of our first 1907 Golden Gate Halloween parties, where he really continued playing the part!

1990 was a great Cacophony events year for both of us. 1991 even moreso for Peter throwing some of the most memorable events of the times! (covered extensively in the Cacophony Society, book.)

### **Downey st. Upper Haight**

He held remarkable theme parties at his Downey Street flat. Memorable were:

- **The Blue party**, with everything blue! Food, lights, music, attire, blue markers to draw on big sheets of paper on the walls! This was a real hit! Early 1991.

- **90s nostalgia party**,— but it was only 1991! We invented imagined history — some of it came true!

- **Egofest™** [yes, he trademarked the name!] A theme party all about Peter for his 30th birthday, I decorated a portrait of him on the cake that P made — fun! We were supposed to check our own ego's at the door! Images of Peter everywhere, most everyone got a purple t-shirt with image of Peter! Pictures autographed, buttons, questionnaires with prizes — Lisa the rat girl [had pet rats, she has a sweet personality] won the Peter quiz! He sang his parody ' You're the pits"! His artworks on display, his "still-morph" photography collages! Etc, brilliant! Near or on his birthday, June 11,1993

- **The Generic party**. Everything as generic as can be, blank. Some wore all white. '92?

- **Eviction party** 98? Unfortunate circumstances during the dotcom years brought a massive amount of evictions to renters citywide, and Peter got hit. Really distressing for him, starting with a chain of apartment struggles trying to stay in the upper Haight. Yet he turned his last day there into a party with nothing there! BYOF (Furniture)

I believe some of these were schemed up with roommates, like the blue party for Sarah's birthday? These theme parties were the results of truly original creativity at play !

### **- more Cacophony**

Peter Copperseed's Penny Parades! More than once, a good way to clear that penny jar that everyone seems to have, and hand them out in the Haight! "penny for your thoughts?" is heard by our host, clad in lavish copper colored garb! After we ran out of pennies, the party pranced into the park, past Hippy Hill to ride the vintage European merry go round! Perfect day activity.

I remember how much he was into my 1991 Sutro cave shaman event. That was wonderfully weird thanks to all of the participants.

We teamed up for a late night walking tour from St Francis soda fountain, over Bernal Heights. Patterned after John Law's popular midnight walks. A nice event in '93.

Enjoying fish & chips at The Edinburgh Castle at our monthly Cacophony meetings. Followed by brainstorming future events. Later that would be at Tommy's Joynt on Van Ness, another eccentric old school restaurant and bar.

### **- Holiday cheer**

He absolutely totally loved my annual Christmas Glögg parties! Especially the flaming of the Glögg — A fun spectacle of igniting the boiling spiced alcohol on the stove, resulting in a large flame before dropping the lid. Everyone roars delighted approval! Peter wanted more than one flaming, so we'd light it again!

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We'd go to Noe Valley to bask in the glows of the more extreme Christmas decorated houses! I remember the two extremes on San Jose Street near 24th, Peter sang all 12 verses of a satirical version of The 12 days of Christmas — from memory! (I only have reference to the Zippy the Pinhead variation).

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Often at the always packed annual Christmas party at Nancy and Nik's in the Sunset district.

And the first Saturday of the year — Danger Rangers post-yule pyre! Meeting at the Doggie Diner head by the ocean, bringing retired Christmas trees to make an enormous very illegal bonfire on the beach! A grand tradition for years. Peter was often there.

## - Music experiences -

After getting to know Peter through Cacophony Society events , and Haight Ashbury Free Band gigs, we'd run into each other at concerts in the park, for bands like Paul Kantners Jefferson Starship. Discovering we had overlapping music tastes, starting to swap cassette tapes, meet up to record various albums and attending shows. Here are a few we got together to enjoy, not counting all we were both at, before acquainted.

**The Charlatans** at the Fillmore, 97. With warmup by **It's A Beautiful Day**.

Most fun at a Fillmore show, that we raved about for years. Plenty of space for dancing up front, wearing George Hunter style straw boater hats. In style! A dream come true for Peter, the originators of the San Francisco eccentric hippie sound of the mid-sixties, with anachronistic 1920s styles. This was a rare reunion show, and they were in good form. He was so bummed after I told him what fun they were in the summer of love festival that autumn. He missed that one act, while volunteering way in the back. Urf! So the Fillmore appearance helped make up for that. Years later I found a decent audience recording of the show, so I copied the cds for him, and loved it!

**Phil Lesh and friends** with **Bob Dylan**, Shoreline, 2000.

Peter drove Alisa and I from the airport returning from Europe. So we treated him with dinner at Caffe Proust, jet lagged but fun. The next day gifted him to the show. He loved going there in our "pumpkinbus", orange '71 VW hippy bus. I remember a highlight was when Dylan and band rocked out a rousing version of ' Leopard skin pillbox hat", Peter swinging his shirt overhead like a helicopter propeller, whooping it up, dancing up a storm! That was a hoot!

- **Pete Best band**, at the carousel ballroom, 03?

Peter treated, since I was unemployed for that time, and knew how much of a complete Beatles freak I am,. Needless to say, we had a blast, rocking out to early sixties Cavern Club Beatles sets!

- **Donovan**, 2016, Regency Ballroom

It had been a few years since Peter was living in San Francisco, and he was visiting and got ahold of me! I asked if he was going to see Donovan since he's a big fan, but had no idea about this show. Trying later to get tickets, he was too late, it was unfortunately and unsurprisingly sold out. He planned to try and score one out front

before showtime. I went with friend Bruce. I was into another year with ALS, using a walker by then. Got in early in the intimate venue, and Peter got in! Found me, I had told him where I'd be, around 15 rows back. Nice spot for a nice solo acoustic performance! With Donovan stories told between songs. Bruce kindly gave Peter his chair for awhile, sitting on my cushy walker in the aisle, so we were enjoying what turned out to be the final concert I attended with Peter.

### **More shows**

- **The Mermen**, 19 Broadway, Fairfax. '05
- **Steve Kimock band**, GAMH, '00.
- **Summer of Love anniversaries**, Golden Gate Park, 1997 and 2007. Peter was in his hippie element, decked out in fully original hippy regalia. One of a kind!
- **The Christmas Jug Band**. Annually! Often at the 2 AM Club in Mill Valley, and at Rancho Nicasio. Big fun, and the only Christmas music style I go for! Late 90s - early 00's.
- **Hot Tuna**. Mystic theater, Petaluma 2008. Peter treated!
- **New Riders of the Purple Sage**, GAMH '08.
- **The Residents**, The Fillmore, Halloween' 97. With several other costumed Cacophonists! Now that was a fun and bizarre multimedia experience!
- **Baby Gramps**, Hotel Utah, 1999. A truly eccentric solo performing wonder I knew Peter would dig. Yep!
- Sausalito Art Festival 1998, **Todd Rundgren, Dick Dale**.

We'd often drive him to these shows (my ex-wife and I) Always fun to have with. There are more, all great music and great times!

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**The Haight Ashbury Free Band**. I really dug them at Cacophony events in 1990 [Something at the No Nothing, Atomic Café #2], then joined as the drummer in 1991. An adventurous "out" freak jazz ensemble that Peter was a defacto dancing member known as Peter the Hippie! We only played highly unconventional gigs, such as Cacophony events like the Atomic Café, a few unusual events in abandoned warehouses, piano factory, a deaf postal workers convention, flatbed truck gigs

roaming the city, and so on. Peter was a dancing presence with fun panache! Those were some big out there exploratory, crazy music gigs, and practices and occasional big parties at 46 Belvedere, Nick's place and Free Band HQ. We often convened afterwards at the Blue Front café for falafels after band practice, and Peter would join. That was some good community!

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Village Music, Mill Valley. My favorite record store / 20th century pop culture museum, I drove Peter there on one of his many visits when I lived in San Anselmo. I knew he'd trip out over the *horror vacui* of memorabilia filling every inch of the place, the Cipollina guitar displayed, and the LP treasures found for sale! Yep, we bought some records and he totally was floored by the place. A memorable visit!

### - Recording "You're the pits" 1993 -

Hilarious parody Peter, who rewrites the classic "You're the Tops"! With old 78rpm authenticity. I first heard him sing it live at one of his parties, at his 30th birthday Egofest. Totally over the top!

Later he asked to have me do the drum track for the recording. *Yeah!* Although I rarely ever record other than live. It was in a studio not far from me in the Mission, around 17th & Alabama st. I did a run through with Peter there, with most of the song finished previously, then one take — with flaws, but Peter preferred it to be imperfect, so it was done!

A cassette tape had the final product; two songs, "*You're the Pits*", and another he wrote that I hadn't heard before, "*Lets kill all the liberals*", a political satire pointed at extreme right wing loonies.

I don't know how many copies were mass produced of this short tape he titled "Peter Doty's Weirdest Hits". My copy is still in storage somewhere. My part is fortunately buried in the intentionally murky mix, meant to sound like an old 78rpm from the 1920's. It works!

Later Peter wanted pay me with a hit of LSD! Ok, but a bit old and weak. Saying cheekily "I like to pay my musicians with drugs." !

### - Theater -

I'll start with his acting onstage. I don't remember the name of the group, in the Mission was a theater group that Peter was involved with, getting parts in a few

local plays. I caught only two of them "*Clue*" as in the whodunit board game, with the outcome different each play. Peter played the part of Professor Plum, with style!

And the other play I attended was about Emperor Norton, when Peter's role was the dog Bummer! Acted very differently than the other role, and fun!

This must have been the early 00's. Another talent of our myriad friend! Peter could act!

### - movie theaters -

He was mainly into vintage silver screen and 60s cult films.

I being a total Beatles freak, he joined for restored versions of *Yellow Submarine*, Castro theater 1999, and *A Hard Days Night* — around the same years at the 4Star theater on Clement Street.

For 'A Hard Days Night' Peter got everyone singing along to every song, and it worked! Nobody complained, it was too much fun!

Otherwise a few Cacophony outings to unique cult films at the Red Vic, Castro and York theaters.

One time just him and I went to see '*Festival Express*' at the Bridge theater? 2001. Good footage of hippie era musicians— Janis, the Grateful Dead, etc.

### **Loved my '71 VW bus, nicknamed "The Pumpkinbus"**

The day after the 1997 Summer of Love concert in GGP, in the soccer field between the windmills near Ocean Beach, Peter calls to ask if I want to pick up a load of free pumpkins at the concert site, then hand them out for free on Haight Street. Yeah — that sounds like fun!

It was nearly Halloween, I lived nearby, so I fired up the old machine, and off we went.

I remember the site was busy with cleanup crews. It felt good to drive on the grassy field in late afternoon sunlight. Guided to a large pile of perfectly good pumpkins. Peter had been volunteering for the event, and knew those in charge.

We loaded around 30 pumpkins into the spacious pumpkinbus, getting to the Haight before sunset. I found parking on Haight Street around the corner from Belvedere. Peter the pumpkin barker into announcing "*Free pumpkins! Hurry hurry, step right*

*up and pick one while they last!"* and so on, something to that effect. Takers were grateful locals, some with kids. They were all taken by about a half hour. Fun thing to do! The generous spirit of Peter got that happening. Something we reflected on for years afterwards as a favorite memory.

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Another fun time was when good Minneapolis friend Pam visited, and we took a long, winding drive to Bolinas and Point Reyes in the ol' pumpkinbus [1999]. Fantastic highway 1 drive! But poor Peter got carsick from the motion, so we stopped along the way. He did a bit better in the front passenger seat, and stopping at the beach in Bolinas was refreshing. [Pam found an interesting rock there. Heavy but I shipped it later, and she still has it]

Point Reyes lighthouse was closed. Too windy. I have a vivid memory of us at the top of the gated steps, wind almost knocking us over. Wild, with the fantastic wide open vista surrounding. Then a twilight ride back via Drake blvd. A fine outing, that we'd talk about for years, again!

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Peters Bear Mountain steam train trip near Santa Cruz, with a picnic at the top. Peter aptly dressed in vintage railroad threads with a classic stopwatch. That's our style conscious friend!

Meeting a small gang of his friends — mostly from Cacophony, so I knew most of them — we got our tickets and board the authentic iron steam engine train. Astonishing industrial era technology — very physically noisy and smoky, and the train whistle — LOUD! We were thrilled! The train rhythm made me wish to play live music to — talk about an early 20th century music rhythm track. Now this was real fun!

Picnic at the top. Returning to San Francisco, we gave mutual friend Hannah Silver a lift. Such a fun day for everyone, thanks to our early 20th century enthusiast host. July 2000.

### **Caffè Proust**

For three years, P Segal had Caffè Proust, only a block away from her home. Near the Panhandle, corner of Baker & McAllister. A real bear to maintain, but such a joy to us who were able to savor it as a social crossroads with good taste!



Peter was frequently there, and contributed his collage creativity on at least one tabletop — the vintage men on one half, with women on the other.

We'd meet friends there, treat each other to dinners, have birthday parties there. Good times from 1999-2001.

I remember a few specific times with Peter involved, one was new years eve before the big 2000, several hours after our final Cacophony event protesting the next millennium! Evening of new years eve, December 31st 1999, I planned to paint all night — which I did — but wanted to join the party for an hour to toast the new big number with good friends, and Peter was there. A good NYE.

Also, Peter would have event planning dinners there, specifically I remember the planning of the above mentioned event, months in advance.

Another time was mid-April taxes time. I'd finished mine, but several hadn't yet. So P and Peter organized a last minute tax form filing evening at the Caffè. Peter was named **Captain Charisma** that night dressed as a resplendent hippy superhero, his feat was to deliver the forms before midnight! I only stopped by briefly, and saw how busy that table was!

### - yet more Cacophony

Back about the Millennium protest event; Tracy and Peter met at Peters a few days previous to make signs. Tracy had "Where's my jetpack?!", as the futurist. I was the luddite, protesting that we needed to redo the 20th century right this time, with "Bring Y1.9K back". Peter sporting "Y2K is a BFD"

We did the protest at the Embarcadero around noon, with some press that Peter rallied, and a microphone with amp. Some took turns with soapbox rants; Tracy, Peter, Hannah. Press asked questions, including columnist Jon Carrol, who I almost blew my cover to. I can't act well like Peter! This was my final Cacophony Society event.

### - art subject

Around that time, Peter came over to pose for Alisa and I. Her portrait turned out excellent, while mine flopped. She gave it to him, he was totally thrilled, in favorite hat, likeness perfect. (there might be a file of it in my archives)

I had better results in sketchbook drawings of him from over the years. He later wrote this after I mailed some drawings :

*" The small sketch of me is absolutely MIND BLOWING!!! You really captured me, and with such economy of line! (I remember that hat!) This is now my favorite likeness of myself. Maybe I'll become a latter-day Mme. Racamier- in my art history class, the textbook described her as being a Parisian socialite in the early 1800s "who never tired of commissioning likenesses of herself," including an oil portrait by David and/or Ingres, and a marble bust by Houdin. She had good sense of who would be great artists, and now pictures of her are in museums all over. Well, that's one way to immortality! "- July 26,2022*

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Speaking of my ex wife Alisa, we had many memorable outings with Peter during the 11 year stretch we were together. Peter helped make our Halloween wedding happen. Like a Cacophony event, we snuck costumed attendees into the forest to our ready made hopah, festooned pull-up bars. Anyway, Peter was part of our small planning team, and acted as a guide. Afterwards he took some really creative night photos of us for a wedding gift.

The marriage ended a few years later, unamicably. (as many do) Peter showed up and was a real supportive friend, while remaining friends with both of us. That can potentially be a tricky juggling act, but he rose above. Conversely, when he and friend Nick had the major falling out, I remained friends with both. I was on Nicks side of the ordeal, yet kept it neutral. That was really hard to see, and that became a major transition period for Peter, leaving his beloved Haight Ashbury, moving to New Mexico, I didn't see him for a few years. Before then I'd stop by regularly at 46 Belvedere after he moved in, to visit him and Nick ; I'd be there often for years previous for band practice when it was the Free Band headquarters.

Back when Nick and Peter were friends, in 1995, his close friend and roommate for a few years, Sarah, got married to Nick! They had a big blowout wedding and party at Stern Grove. Peter was a strong participant, with an elaborate display of how the two met through him! Lotsa fun!

Even though both of our marriages didn't last, like any good event, the memorable aspects lasts positively!

### **Health and San Francisco in the 20-teens**

He'd been suffering from fibromyalgia for awhile, becoming too chronic to drive anymore. So friends would give lifts. A few times from me, otherwise someone (I forgot who) used his car in exchange for errands lifts. This was not long after Peter

got a nice shiny car for the deal of \$1! Through family? Around 2010?

We would meet at the Blue Front when my paintings were displayed there. We stayed in touch about things going on, but not many parties then, with 1907 gone, but a few at P's new place.

I'd run into him around the Haight, with cane, bundled up and moving like an old man. That and the sporadic spasms were hard to see. Health problems apparent, before mine. Guess we'd say we both had bad nerve karma.

We still managed to have good visits. I didn't see Peter during the big eviction, then he moved in with family in the southwest, helping his mom.

I heard from him in 2015, when news of my unfortunate ALS diagnosis got around. Said kind thoughts, and whenever emailing we'd swap good memories, Marx brothers musings, psychedelic music raves, and the like.

Now that I'm writing an essay about Peter, the big regret is that I didn't get this out when alive. He would have loved the "This is Your Life!" quality!

There's more that keeps on flowing in!

### **- Fine Art Photography -**

For portions of several years, he'd be in home state of Maine, finding scenes to set up camera in same exact spot during each of the four seasons. Then after all of these were developed, would carefully slice them apart, so each season was mingled into one seamless image. Perfectly crafted! for example, a single tree would be part green summer, part snowy winter, part spring buds on branches, and part colorfully explosive autumn. Peter called them "Still-Morphs" and trademarked the term!

He'd find remarkable northeast landscapes to photograph for elaborate still-morphs to skilled effect. Beautiful and clever, he was onto something!

I experienced them at his open studios. Impressive work! Then Alisa made his promo postcard files print ready in exchange for one of his pieces. So we had one in the home for a few years. I think this was 2000?

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He showed up at several of my painting shows, always supportive and appreciated. [I recently saw a guest list from my 1992 show at Fort Mason, he wrote a book good

first note, with his signature self caricature.]

### - Burning Man -

His first was 1991, continuing to go until sometime in the 00's. I missed '93 when he did his famous Christmas camp, essentially starting the ongoing trend of specific theme camps! Always one to give credit as well as accept, he credited me with the first interactive installation with my anamorphic sundial of 1992.

Peter stayed interested for years after I stopped going. It is a phenomenal event of grandiose creativity, I just didn't appreciate big crowds for several days. Peter encouraged me to return, and thoughtfully arranged with Larry to get free tickets for my 40th birthday present! For Alisa and I, she wanted to go more than me, so agreed yes! I hadn't gone since 1995, when it felt too big for me with 5000 attending. This was 2003, growing exponentially it was now Black Rock city, with thousands. Different indeed.

The week before my birthday, and we went! Joining VW bus camp was perfect. The art installations were incredible, the crowds at night were wild. Much is written about the event elsewhere so I won't elaborate. But the noise, crowds, were not our thing, and we couldn't find Peter anywhere, or other familiar faces from the first years. I saw Danger Ranger for one minute and that was it. So we left the day of the burn, wisely, because we really didn't want to be idling in a ten hour traffic exodus. It was still worth it — thanks Peter!

### - Astronomy -

Often when returning from visiting his family in Novato, Peter would visit in San Anselmo when I lived in that idyllic little old house. This was when I built reflector telescopes. [2003] Pulling my first 'scope out with the 6-inch mirror was perfect for viewing planets and the Moon. Saturn was such a trip to see live, and Peter flipped upon seeing!

Later after I built a much more powerful 'scope with the 12.5" mirror, deeper sky visions were improved!

I would bring it into the city for Sidewalk Astronomy with John Dobson — the legendary, and my telescope building teacher extraordinaire. A few times I gave Peter a call, to meet us at the corner of 9th & Irving, and he'd make it, for good views of the Moon and planets, with public socializing!

One of the Mt Tam star parties, he got a ride from Tracy and Richard, with their

daughter Hannah, and Ronn was with too! That was a great night of dark sky viewing of galaxies, nebulae, and clusters that are not visible in urban light polluted areas. So glad they joined!

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Writing these specific memories down has served to cull yet more and more memories. So this doesn't end it. Impressions of other related people and events and places arise. It's an elaborate life, with overlapping circuits.

Now I'm thinking of his friends that I know through Peter : Sarah Kliban, who joined for the best November shooting star viewing near Fairfax 2002. He brought her over a few times with good socializing! Sarah Rosenbaum who did Cacophony events, and parties when they were roommates, then married friend Nick, getting involved with Haight Ashbury Free Band activities, such as slide shows and video taping. Fun! Lily the late singer, only by acquaintance since she died so soon after meeting. Otherwise we both knew several members of the San Francisco Cacophony Society, Burning Man committee, and through P Segal's world of the legendary 1907 Golden Gate, and Caffè Proust. Names too many to list. You know who you are.

I mentioned Nick earlier, a really good friend who had a really bad falling out over Nicks apartment. I kept out of it, and never brought it up with Peter to not upset him. A few years after, Nick said something telling and not at all contentious to the effect of "It's really sad. At the end of the day we all love Peter."

I regret not finding a good opportunity to relay that sentiment to him. It probably wouldn't have healed that fight much, but possibly would have set mind more at ease about an old friendship lost?

I was also out of touch when Peters father died. Condolences would have been sent, he sent very kind handwritten cards when my parents died in 1997, then in 2005.

Later after being in email contact by 2019, he was in the bay area for a few days and hitched a ride to San Rafael where I was living . I was in a power wheelchair by then, Peter had been dragged through years of fibromyalgia then cancer treatments — we didn't look young anymore. But great to see him for awhile! It was a good final visit. Warm-hearted ravaged old friends.

It was unfortunate when before the pandemic, he intended to join me at Terrapin Crossroads — my regular hangout — and introduce him to Phil Lesh. He'd jokingly would exclaim "you're buds with Phil!", well not really, but I'm a TXR community

member who Phil knows. That place was ruined by the pandemic, sadly.

I think it's great that we kept in touch by email, a format Peter shrugged at with a luddites pride, yet the only way for some of us severely disabled can communicate.

Thoughtful friend !

After I moved out of living independently into the nursing home in Seattle, Peter lost his mom during the pandemic, tragically because he wasn't allowed to visit her nursing home. Later he emailed a fabulous homage to her. (I don't save many emails, so it's gone here.)

When finding out how alienated I became, he kindly alerted old friends who'd been out of touch. Results were a flurry of letters and cards from friends I hadn't seen or communicated with for years! Thanks to Peter — very supportive to an old friend hundreds of miles away.

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A few more...

His birthday party at **Cha Cha Cha** in the Mission. Sangria galore! Good tables full of friends. 2004?

Angel Island for a day trip birthday picnic! 1999?

Calling me up to invite to the Haight Ashbury neighborhood library on Page Street for a showing of rare Beatles films! Naturally I was on it. Ronn joined too. That was a nice evening! 2009?

Peter continued to tell me when more Beatles events would be there, whether by phone or email, presented by Beatles scholar Richie Unterberger.

For his Let Them Eat Cake event before the election of 1999, he brought papier mache heads, caricatures of the three main mayoral candidates. [Frank Jordan, Willie Brown, Clint Reilly; each had contentious policies for the homeless, affordable rents, gentrification, etc]] He dropped them off for me to paint with acrylic, to be guillotined in front of city hall! He really did it — dressed in fancy 17th century aristocratic garb, looking and acting the part. Brilliant! While handing out cake to the homeless.

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### **Last times in touch.**

Last I heard from Peter was in entries in response to my weekly "name that drawing" title contests, which he dug, and submitted good ones! (now I wish he'd won once, but competition is high. So many good entries.)

Here's what he sent :

11/8/22.: *Great idea Dean! How about "Trippy Man" ?*

12/21/22 , *"Why do I always have to vacuum the sidewalk?!"*

*I hope you are in good spirits. And I love the title contest idea!*

*Peace Love and Holiday Cheers- Peter (\8}>"*

1/13/23: *"Hi Dean- Here I am (more than) a day late & a dollar short. I thought of my title immediately upon receipt but forgot to submit it! Oops! Anyway, for your amusement, my title was "The Umbrellas of BORG"- my take on The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg. Kudos and Kompliments to both Pam and Javi; their titles were wonderful!*

*It's clear you're having a lot of fun with this project, Dean, and that makes me happy for you! And it's GREAT seeing all the incredible and trippy titles people come up with. I'm waiting with cosmic anticipation for the Vernal Equinox- more sunlight! I think of you often and fondly, Dean, all the great memories, and all your very cool art circulating among people I like and some I don't know. Take care.*

*Peace Love & Umbrellas of BORG- Peter (\8}> "*

1/21/23" Hi Dean- Here's my title:

"Keeping Watch Under The Palindrome Moon."

*You may have already figured this out, but my drawing title included the word "Palindrome" since you drew it in 1991. Thanks for thinking of me as being clever!*

*Peace Love & Palindromes- Peter (\8}>"*

1/29/23: "Hi Dean- "Quixotic Ventilation." *Happy Sunday- Peter (\8}>"*

2/14/23 "Hi Dean- I think you already nailed it with "Strange Doodle Opus!"  
Cheers- Peter (\8}>"

and the last he sent was Feb 22, 2023:

"And Pa In His Cap..."

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And that was it, finding out he's unexpectedly gone, happening just a few weeks after that. Totally shocked me and everyone. We know that he struggled with poor health, but I had no idea this bad. Just a few months after getting the family house, I told him that's a good way to enter your sixties. He tragically didn't make it that far and beyond .

One of most fun, crazy luminous characters I ever knew. And a good friend.

I'll end this on a high note, with a short list of what he liked.

### **San Francisco 60s hippie bands**

- loved the Jefferson Airplane most. Calling himself "an Airhead"! Met band members over the years, and thrilled when Grace Slick said he looked familiar! (book signing)  
And once interviewed Paul Kantner for something I don't remember.

Quicksilver Messenger Service / John Cipollina

The Charlatans

Country Joe & the Fish

Terry Haggerty

Moby Grape / Skip Spence

Big Brother and the holding company

early Grateful Dead (not nearly a deadhead like me)

Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks

The Christmas jugband

Hot Tuna

- Vintage jazz {1920's}

- Dance hall show tunes

- The annual Dickens Christmas fair. 19th century anachronistic pageantry at its



best, we rendezvous'd there a few times, dressing and acting the part!

- Cacophony society events. Most have been written about extensively elsewhere, especially his own standout events ;Fantasia protest, BART lounge, etc.

- The annual 1906 earthquake anniversary at Lotta's fountain, every April 18th around 5am. Met him there several times. He managed to get a ride in one of the vintage jalopies!

- Saint Stupids Day Parade! I can see Peter riding atop one of John Laws Doggie Diner heads, as we of the Dogminican order pulled the Doggie up Columbus Avenue!

- The Marx Brothers. We both grew up on them, obsessively! We were both Groucho for Halloween around the same time (1973 for me) but he was with friends as the four Marx brothers!

- Parties -

Birthdays, weddings, Halloween at 1907 Golden Gate, Proust wakes at the Wickett museum, Christmas parties at Nancy Drew & Niks, Glögg parties at my place, Cacophony events, and his own creative original theme parties. I think of Peter as the life of the party.

Always.

I'll end with this video tribute I made and then posted on YouTube, featuring Peters own brilliant parody of *You're The Tops!* That's all his vocals and wit, rewritten lyrics, arrangements and all. (I'm on drums, fortunately buried in the anachronistic 78 rpm style mix. ) Recorded in 1993-94.

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you, for your entertainment, the inimitable **Rude Valet, Methyl Vermin and The Orchestra Pits!**

<https://youtu.be/6mcYv1wq13s>

Signing off with Peters very own emoticon,

(\8}>

- **Dean Gustafson, 4/10/23. Revised 3/4/24. Exactly one year after his passing.**

[written with love with a Tobii Dynavox, using eye tracking technology.]