

May 22, 2008

Hi John,

I hope things are well with you.

I feel fortunate our paths have crossed, and that fate had an odd hand in it. Of course, we don't really know each other, and the thread of Bella Vista is very thin. I have a vague memory of you; I was just another kid face in the hall, misnamed in the yearbook. Uneventful school years for me, but followed by some of the most powerful years of my life as I wandered, then landed with all my fingers and toes, and both feet at least close to the ground. I was fortunate. I survived when many did not, and I have enjoyed a rewarding life.

I never did graduate with my class. My family fractured, and I found Folsom and Fair Oaks dances, parties, and raising hell with my no-good friends far more interesting than BV. I dropped out junior year, wandered for a year or so, then claimed my diploma through evening classes in Folsom.

Then, it was off to San Francisco. My friend Jim Codromac and I were interested in the coffee house/Beat scene; Kerouac, Ginsberg, Dylan, Folk music, poetry readings, and beautiful hip chicks with long hair. It was a great time there in '66 before the flood. Quiet, foggy backstreets with secret doors.

We had a friend who had moved there that year. You may remember him. Ralph Kellogg was a BV alum ('65) who was a great musician and moved to the City to play. Bruce Stevens was another good musician and part of a group I knew from Robert's Elementary and BV. He also spent a lot of time there. Both of them went on to be in the early heavy metal group Blue Cheer. I lost track of Bruce, and Ralph (he changed his name to Ethan James) died a couple of years ago of liver cancer (he put nasty things in his body early on, and although clean in later life, the damage was done).

Jim and I eventually moved to SF, and shared a couple of different places there. When things got crazy in the summer of '67, it was time to leave. (All this may not mean a hoot to you, but it does have purpose. You need to know how I acquired the DW sculpture.)

As my time in SF wound down, I decided to return to Sacramento and do something productive, at least get the hell out of the insanity of the Summer of Love. I eventually went back, enrolled at AR and then Sierra College, and finally dropped out of school again for a long career in radio. Near the time I was getting ready to leave SF for good, I stayed with Ralph and his girl friend in an flat. They had decided to move and made it clear I should not come along. I stayed on for a bit in the empty apt with a couple of buddies. I noticed that Ralph left the sculpture behind as a discard. I always thought it was cool. I knew that Dave had created it, but was not sure how Ralph came to own it. I knew I had to have it. It became mine; and I was fascinated with it from the beginning. Java Man meets Beatnik.

For the more than 40 years I have been caretaker of this art, it has always had a prominent display place in my house moving from brick and board shelves to more "civilized and mature" furniture, and crafted bookcases. When Dave's short military bio was published on line, I printed it out and kept it with the sculpture.