

Mary Praetzellis, Anthropological Studies Center, shared this memory, 29 August 2012.

Some Memories of Dave Fredrickson

I've always imagined that Dave and Vera-Mae Fredrickson would host my memorial in their home on Parker Street in Berkeley. As they are my parents' age, I don't know if this expresses my innate optimism or pessimism—probably both. So many memorable events in my life took place in their historic wood-shingled craftsman home. Not just crazy parties and transcendental conversations, but also very personal disasters and triumphs. I've always wanted to write a screen play situated in their living room, with the same people moving in and out over the decades. I can envision it from my memories, but if I had the kind of talent to deliver, I wouldn't be a SSU manager today.

As a Berkeley undergraduate, I lived in a flat across the street from Dave and Vera-Mae. During the People's Park troubles, the National Guard secured the city for a radius of a few miles from campus, where the main disturbances centered. During that occupation, my friend Fern, who lived on the same floor, decided to set up a Kool-Aid stand to serve the troops and passing demonstrators. I don't remember if the Kool-Aid contained any special ingredients, but Fern did. Six-year-old Niomi Fredrickson was her only customer. The two spent the day coloring. Niomi said: "you should meet my mom." So, Fern and I met Vera-Mae. I don't remember if Dave was there or not. Fern is brilliant; she and Vera-Mae soared, I listened, as usual, and learned much.

The following year, Fern and I moved two doors down from the Fredricksons into a large house with many roommates in the free, open style of the times. The Fredricksons came to our parties and we went to theirs. I was an Anthropology major by then, but as I never said anything, it was never discussed. I remember our Christmas party, where their guest hung his draft card decorated with green and red stars on the tree.

Eventually, I spent two summers in England working at Winchester. Then after I graduated from UC and couldn't find a job to save my life, I went back and worked for the York Archaeological Trust. There I met Adrian and actually learned how to dig. On a visit back in an odd twist, Adrian and I ended up back on Parker Street in my old place; we visited Dave and Vera-Mae; they took the English archaeologist under their wing and helped us find our first archaeology job in California with Bob Orlins.

Time passes, we go back to England, marry, return to California, and end up in Sebastopol to be near my grandma. Despite Adrian's lack of even a

bachelor's degree, we managed to secure a contract with Sonoma County for an archaeological survey. We decided to run this agreement through Dave's program at Sonoma State College, completely ignorant of all the potential pitfalls this entailed. We did the survey, wrote the report, and brought it to Dave's office on campus for him to review. He read quietly for a few minutes, looked up and with a sigh of relief said: "You can write!" In our eagerness, we hadn't realized till then what a risk he had taken with us. He had assumed responsibility for this contract; he only knew us socially not as professionals; we weren't students and in fact didn't even have an adequate education to undertake the work we did. He had absolutely no way of knowing that we could run a project, manage a budget, or create a credible paper trail. And yet, he gave us the biggest opportunity of our lives. And as I came to realize later, we were not the only ones Dave took a risk on. He invested in people; he provided opportunities. He took risks so that others could try their wings—and some crashed and he had to pick them up. But that is what the Dave was about—giving individuals opportunities to prove themselves (and fixing things if they didn't). This was my DAF moment.

Adrian and I are still at the ASC today, all these years after we brought in that first contract, because we believe it is our responsibility to pass down what Dave taught us about people and chances and opportunities, as well as about archaeology.



Vera-Mae and Dave Fredrickson, with Adrian Praetzellis