

Sandra Hollimon of the Santa Rosa Junior College shared this memory, 16 March 2013.

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I had the privilege of living at 1940 Parker Street with Dave and Vera-Mae in 1991. I realize now that having a key to this house was like having a key to the wonderful world and wonderful people in California archaeology. You never knew who could be found in the living room there: founding figures in California archaeology, musicians, artists, and sometimes all three in the same individual.

One day when I got home from working in the Hearst Gym basement, Vera-Mae asked me how the day had been, and if I had run into anyone interesting. I told her that Jim Bennyhoff was working on the same project that I was, and he was also working with collections in the basement. Vera-Mae said, “Well tomorrow, invite him to come over for a drink after work!” I did, and Jim, Vera-Mae, Dave and I shared a wonderful afternoon into the evening, drinking wine, discussing California prehistory and enjoying each other's company.

Vera-Mae also looked out for me when I had a somewhat scary encounter with a homeless person. I had never really experienced anything like that, even after having lived in Berkeley on and off since the age of seventeen. The person tried to panhandle me, and I declined, so he followed me up three blocks of Telegraph Avenue, hurling abuse. When I described this to Vera-Mae, she said, “I have just the thing you need.” She collected several vouchers issued by the city of Berkeley, and told me to hand them out when a homeless person needed one. Several months later, I found them in my jacket pocket and was reminded of Vera-Mae's pragmatic and somewhat maternal concern for me. I still have those vouchers today.

Dave was also very helpful to me. He was instrumental in getting me my first teaching position at Sonoma State, and eventually, I had the privilege and honor of teaching “Dave's course,” California prehistory. Dave was kind enough to come and give guest lectures after he retired, and I remember the last time he spoke to my students. I gave him a huge bouquet of flowers, and said that these were for him, but that I also chose an arrangement that I knew Vera-Mae would like. I told him that it was just the smallest token of appreciation that I could give them for their kindness, hospitality and generosity. These two remarkable people will be greatly missed.