



Photo courtesy Paul Kuitenbrouwer

PART
1
(out of 5)

Paul Kuitenbrouwer in 1971 in British Columbia, just after his release from prison in California.

My father, his firebombs and me

Growing up with a hippie father who was on the run

BY PETER KUITENBROUWER

On a sultry August night in 1969 when the Healdsburg police pulled over Paul Kuitenbrouwer for a routine check about 60 miles north of San Francisco, where California Highway 101 winds through the lush vineyards of Sonoma County, only my father knew how much trouble he was in. Woodstock was still a week away, but my father's Sixties, the era of peace and love and hippies and flower children, a movement centred here on America's north Pacific coast — and in which he styled himself a pivotal player — were about to come to a very dark end.

Among my father's troubles: He was wanted by police in British Columbia, having jumped bail on narcotics

possession charges, and in California, on charges of possession of an explosive device “with intent to willfully and maliciously use such material.” Posters bearing his mug shot hung in post offices up and down the California coast. Two young women, neither of them his wife, carried his unborn children. He was travelling with a forged driver's licence. And the trunk was full of marijuana.

When the troopers shined their flashlights into the front and back seats of the sprawling white Ford Galaxie my father drove, they saw six children. Three were his. The eldest, my sister, was 10 years old. I was seven. We had just gotten aboard the car, after my mother put us on a flight in

Vancouver to San Francisco, to go spend a summer vacation with our dad. He had not told her that he was a wanted man.

“I thought the best way to hide from the cops would just be to go on holiday with my kids,” my father says.

This is an adventure story best viewed through a kaleidoscope, while high on hash brownies and listening to Jefferson Airplane’s Surrealistic Pillow.

The setting is the coast, from Vancouver to Mexico. The time: the late Sixties. The main character, Paul Kuitenbrouwer (whom Mendocino locals still refer to, with affection, as “the crazy Dutchman”), who crossed paths with the noteworthy, including Bill Deverell, his lawyer in Vancouver, later to become a best-selling crime novelist, and Lowell Bergman, the journalist who was my father’s roommate and friend in San Diego, later immortalized by Al Pacino in *The Insider*.

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With his Bob Dylan hairstyle and his On The Road lifestyle, his sultry young girlfriends and his imported green sports car, his revolutionary opinions and his illegal activities, my father embodied the drug-fuelled freedom dance of the 1960s radicals.

The problem is that I did not see this story through a kaleidoscope. I saw it through the eyes of a bewildered and somewhat terrified seven-year-old boy. Perhaps by accident,



Paul Kuitenbrouwer in 1966 in British Columbia, two years after he broke up with his wife, the author’s mother.

my father visited on his children some simulacrum of the terror he felt as a small boy, growing up in German-occupied Holland. The 1930s scarred him; the 1960s scarred me.

On that night in August 1969, a lot of police arrived. They handcuffed my father and put him in a squad car. Other police took us to the Healdsburg police station. There, police photographed and fingerprinted my dad and locked him up. And we kissed him goodbye through a kind of wire cross-hatching of the police station holding cell.

“I remember thinking at the time, “This is a horrible, ruined vacation,” one of my elder sisters, then nine years old, says now. I learned to hate police that night; little wonder — they imprisoned my father. As a child, and later as a man, that anger shaped me. Like my father, I raged at authority. Later, I turned that rage at my father, for putting his children -me -in harm’s way.

Forty years ago, the United States deported my father from a holding pen in San Francisco, into the hands of police in Vancouver. On this anniversary I decided to look back on the events of the summer of 1969, seeking answers to questions that have haunted me. Who arrested my father, and on what grounds? Why were we with him? Where were we going? What happened to him? What happened to us? Do other children of the 1960s bear scars like mine?

My parents were early adherents of the hippie generation; my father “dropped out” in 1966, when I was four. The children of the hippies are only now coming to terms with how this upbringing shaped them. My father’s co-conspirator from those days says I have an opportunity, from my accidental frontrow seat, “to tell a story of the magic of that era,” but his daughter, who calls us “freerange children,” has a less rosy view of our childhood: hash brownies, macramé, Hindu mysticism, no furniture, no rules and no clothing, with a soundtrack by Donovan.

She summarizes her parents’ rules: “I could smoke pot, but I wasn’t allowed to have Fruit Loops because there’s chemicals in it.”

They took us back to the garden; how did the garden grow?

My mother says “the hippie era was a time where people who had been brought up with all kinds of really rigid values said, ‘To hell with it.’ “

Add to that my father's ad hoc revolutionary impulses - a poorly-planned, failed bombing attempt with dire consequences — and one is forced to conclude that this was surely a glimpse at the dark side of peace and love.

And yet I am reluctant to declare the hippies' experiment an utter failure. Their narcissism coupled with neglect of their offspring is indefensible. Yet their spirit of playfulness and adventure was infectious. Their environmentalism and some aspect of their mistrust of authority certainly shaped me and many others raised in such an unconventional way. Indeed, the particular challenges of my upbringing taught me resilience.



Paul Kuitenbrouwer, the author's father, on "the Farm of 1000 Secrets" near Wendover in eastern Ontario, fall 2010.

"Very high levels of chaos" in bringing up children, is "a riskier strategy that results in a higher probability of difficulties," observes Dr. Jennifer Jenkins, the Atkinson Chair of Early Child Development and Education at the University of Toronto. "But if you look at the spirit of openness, playfulness, learning and freedom, those are all great things."

Today my father lives on a farm in eastern Ontario; my mother lives on a larger farm in western Quebec. For these stories I visited both my parents, to get their versions of my summer of 1969. My father told me some half-truths and left out facts; still, he has saved a remarkable trove of letters, mainly to and from prison, which helped enormously. That he co-operated with this project is a testament to his character. I also interviewed my elder sisters. One lives in Ontario, the other in B.C.

Then, I flew to San Francisco. I travelled up the coast to Sonoma and Mendocino Counties, to the redwood forests by the Pacific Ocean, in search of the past. I found stories in the bound volume, microfilm and CD archives of five

newspapers, featuring eight spellings of my father's surname (not a single journalist spelled "Kuitenbrouwer" correctly, though part of it, I suspect, was him blurring his tracks) and hundreds of pages of court documents on microfilm. I met people who knew my father in the 1960s. And gradually - sometimes painfully, sometimes in conversations rich with humour and hilarity, and other times with insights delivered with heartwrenching clarity — I began to piece together what actually happened that summer.

Downstream from Ottawa, where Highway 17 winds towards Montreal, nestle a string of French-speaking hamlets. A dirt road leads into the woods; off that road is a gate made of poles and driftwood, held taut with cables. Down a muddy driveway spreads an overgrown 50-acre former dairy farm, featuring a grand 19th-century barn patched over the decades. My father calls this "The Farm of 1,000 Secrets."

Paul Kuitenbrouwer first came to this farm in 1972, and now co-owns it with one of his ex-partners. She does not live here. He lives alone in a tiny three-storey cottage he built of cinderblock and timber that he calls "the Annex," barely big enough for one person.

"The Annex" has no running water or connection to the electricity grid. The main floor, the width of a boxcar and a third the length, houses an elegant table my father crafted from West Coast cedar driftwood legs and a white pine slab. The wood cook stove is a lovely old baked enamel period piece, but there may be something wrong with the chimney; the house often fills with smoke. There are two chairs. One, a swivelling wood office chair from the 1940s, is where my father sits.

On my most recent visit, my father warmly embraced me, and cooked, on his wood stove, a supper of fried potatoes and breakfast sausages. As the night hung jet-black, we sat down by his light, hooked to a car battery, to talk about the deep past.

"I still think that Trudeau got me out," my father says. "I wrote him a letter [from Soledad Penitentiary in California]. I told him what had happened to me. To the prime minister in Ottawa."

Born in 1934 and raised in Bilthoven near Utrecht, in Holland, my father is the third of 12 children of Magda and Louis Kuitenbrouwer; his father, a columnist and author, used the pen name Albert Kuyle. Paul Kuitenbrouwer immigrated to Canada in 1954, aged 19, and worked in Alberta and British Columbia, then returned to Holland

“He got involved in the hippie movement, the discotheques. He was a free bird. Everybody liked him.”

in 1957 for his eldest brother’s wedding. That June, sailing back to Canada on a ship full of Hungarian refugees, he met my mother, Marianne Dekking, the daughter of a doctor who grew up in Holland’s northern city of Groningen. The pair eloped and settled in Burnaby, a suburb of Vancouver, where my mother bore three children, in 1958, 1960, and (me) in 1962. My mother’s choice of mate enraged her parents, putting great strain on the marriage.

Still, my father, partnering with a fellow immigrant from the Netherlands, Ben Vermeulen, set course for an immigrant-makes-good story; the pair, from the same Dutch village, founded Lake City Steel in Vancouver.

The company thrived, but within two years my father had cashed out his share, split with my mother, founded a discotheque on Davie Street in Vancouver, sold the land he had bought with my mother in North Vancouver, used the proceeds to buy a forest-green Morgan sports car, and begun smuggling marijuana from Mexico to Canada.

“What was your smuggling technique?” I ask. There is a long pause, which my father ends with a raucous laugh.

“Bravura,” he replies.

After founding Lake City Steel, Mr. Vermeulen went on to establish West Bay SunShip, now Canada’s biggest yachtbuilder. I reach Mr. Vermeulen in South Surrey. He remembers me as “a pretty blond kid,” from when we were neighbours. I ask him about my father’s radical transformation.

“He was a very free spirit,” Mr. Vermeulen recalls. “He got involved in the hippie movement, the discotheques. He was a free bird. Everybody liked him.”

Mr. Vermeulen told me how my father, driving a company truck, hit a nurse in front of Vancouver Hospital, and fled the scene. Later my father turned himself in.

Mr. Deverell recalls my father in those days this way: “He was a bold and brazen dopesmoking Yippie entrepreneur full of schemes and scams. The only incident that stands out is that we made a run across the border together in his car — some kind of marital/custody issue was at stake — and he was denied entry at Blaine, then blithely proceeded to the next crossing, Douglas, and made his way into Washington State.”

In 1964 my parents’ marriage collapsed. Both were unfaithful. “I wanted her to leave,” my father recalls. “It wasn’t working out. And she wanted to go. There was just too much strife, too much discord.” My mother recalls that after the initial breakup, “Paul really, really wanted to get back together with me. More him to me than I to him.”

My mother moved us to La Jolla, near San Diego, Calif., to be near her elder sister. In our house there she took a boarder, a young California man, and they fell in love. We moved around often, twice evicted because we had no furniture. In 1968 we wintered in Montreal, where my sisters and I attended Grade 1 at Herbert Simons Elementary School.

Meanwhile, my father met a young woman from Whitehorse named Gloria Simpson. He fled criminal charges in Canada to live in California with her.

“The whole world was full of new ideas. I was trying to change the world,” he says.

He tuned in, turned on, and dropped out. My father explains his transformation from 1950s Canadian family man, to 1960s radical, drugsmoking hippie as follows: “I had failed in my marriage, so I needed time out. Time out meant going on an adventure. So then my adventure turned into my life.”

To fuel the revolution, he began smuggling marijuana from Mexico to Canada. After the Morgan, he bought a little yellow International Harvester school bus, for \$300, from the University of California, Berkeley; the bus had been used to ferry nuclear scientists from the school up to the Livermore nuclear labs on the mountain. It was during this time that he first visited Mendocino.

“I was a smuggler of marijuana. I had the school bus. I was living in it,” he recalls. “And I was moving marijuana from Mexico to Canada and Mendocino became a stop along the way because there were people there who were part of the — whatever you call that, a bunch of people I was involved in, who were into supporting whatever we thought was the radical movement that was going on. We were the radical movement. We established this campground in the state forest, that got pretty big, and it was there for a year, and I was there in my school bus, and then it became illegal or whatever, cops came around all the time and harassed people: ‘You can’t be here. You can’t camp in the state forest. It’s illegal. Can’t do this, can’t do that.’ Then there was

resistance, people said, 'Naw, come on, go away.' And then in the end there was a big raid. The day of the raid, they told all the people to leave within an hour, to carry what they could and then they set it all on fire.”

Mendocino, pop. 1,100, on the Pacific coast about 200 winding kilometres north of San Francisco, is today an immaculate — and very exclusive — enclave of white wooden houses and historic wooden water towers and churches. At the end of every street in town, one can see the sun sparkling off the Pacific Ocean.

I duck into the cozy, bustling Mendocino Bakery. The man behind the counter — like most in California’s service industry, a Latino who speaks flawless English — serves me a bialy, a California version of the Polish onion bun, and a latte. Then Roger Collin, a burly guy, six-foot-3, with thick white hair and beard, walks in, wearing a lumberjack shirt and ball cap and steel-toe boots. Mr. Collin, 65, is an old friend of my father, whom he first met right here, in 1968. Mr. Collin orders his coffee in a takeout cup; he is eager to take me to the redwood forest where my father set up camp in 1968.

We climb into his red Dodge Ram 2500 pickup, and as he steers east on Little Lake Road, stories of the 1960s flow forth from him, like a fine wine that had yearned to be uncorked. He speaks wistfully of those days of peace, love and flower power, when, sporting shaggy hair and a guitar, he was a student of the drug prophet Carlos Castañeda.

In his early 20s, Mr. Collin travelled to Mexico; Mexican police arrested him “for being a hippie,” he says, and threw him in jail. A fellow prisoner said, “If we get out of here, there’s a place where you can go and chill out: Mendocino.”

“I hitchhiked up here, must have been spring of ‘68,” Mr. Collin recalls. “I slept in my wet sleeping bag in a rainstorm. Finally someone picked me up at 2 in the morning and let me sleep on their couch.

“In the morning I started walking into town and the whole front street was boarded up stores, except for one little grocery store. I didn’t see anyone. There was a bank building across the street, and across from that there was a pasture, with like black and white cows, so it was really bucolic. The sidewalks were made of redwood planks, but the nails



Paul and Marianne Kuitenbrower (now Marianne Dekking) in 1957-58, the first winter they spent as a married couple in British Columbia.

had rusted through, so the boards went ‘Kaplink, kaplunk, kaplink.’ It was like walking on a xylophone.

“I got down in the middle where the bookstore is now, and there was this guy, this long-haired guy, you know, nailing shakes on a building. It was your father. I walked up to him and said, ‘This is really a far-out little town, man, what do you have to do to stay here?’”

“And he looked at me with a big grin and he handed me his hammer.” Mr. Collin beams at the memory. “I’ve never put it down, in about 40 years. That was a big moment in my life where I was given the keys to the kingdom. A hammer.” He throws his head back, and laughs heartily.

“At that point you didn’t have to know how to do anything, you just did it. And that was Paul’s point, he was always saying over and over again, ‘Just do it. Just do it. You don’t have to know how. You just have to have the desire to do it.’ It felt like he was right in the crest of a wave of liberation theology, for lack of a better word, where people were going to take over the world, and we were going to start with Mendocino. You know, they were doing it in Berkeley but it was too complicated. Out here in nature it was easier to do it. And he made a kind of a declaration or a decree, where he claimed the territory for the people.”

Ron Blett, a potter from Kalamazoo, Mich., had moved to Mendocino in 1967 and met my father in 1968.

“He and Gloria were staying in the yellow bus out on the headlands,” Mr. Blett recalls. “In those days you could just park out there and hang out. We’d go pick mussels and go by the Post Office and get some rosemary out of the flower box. Some garlic, a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine — that was a feast for us. He had a lot of energy, a lot of talk. He talked about revolution — he left us far behind.”

“The back-to-the-land thing was just starting,” recalls Paul’s then-girlfriend Gloria Simpson. “There were a lot of artists living in Mendocino. There was a lot of work there for Paul, because he was a good carpenter.” When authorities balked at people camping on the beach, the couple asked permission from park rangers to camp in the Jackson State Forest, east of Mendocino.

“We just parked the school bus there and we built a little treehouse and we lived there part of the summer and into the fall,” recalls Ms. Simpson, who now lives in Cumberland on northern Vancouver Island. “And because we lived there and there was no flak, other people came. We went to Mexico for the winter and when we came back it had turned into this



In the summer of 1969 police arrested Paul Kuitenbrowwer in Fort Bragg, Mendocino County. His trial took place in Ukiah, Calif.

huge scene. There were lots of people living there. People had treehouses and yurts and tipis, and houses in hollow redwood stumps.”

When lumberjacks cut an old-growth redwood, its 1,000-year-old root structure remains alive, and sends up shoots around the stump, which grow into a ring of new redwoods; locals call these “fairy rings.” My father built a treehouse up in such a ring. In the summer of 1968, when I was six, my two sisters and I visited my father in that forest. I remember he would lower a basket on a rope from the platform, and I would place a lit cigarette in it for him. I caught a terrible case of poison oak — it is a vivid childhood memory.

In Mendocino today, almost no one remembers my two sisters and I — the products of my father’s “straight” Vancouver past, that he had somehow shed like a snake’s skin, to replace them with his poncho, leather sandals and mop of hair.

About six miles east of Mendocino, Mr. Collin steers his truck onto a tiny track into the woods. A rotting, moss-covered log the height of a couch blocks our path. We park and continue on foot, spending an hour and a half trampling around the wet, steaming forest, trying to find “the meadows,” where my father had camped, four decades earlier. But redwoods have grown up; now so tall that Mr.

Collin cannot locate the spot. Still the woods — a riot of young redwoods, Douglas firs, oak brush, huckleberry, white fir and bay laurel — exude such luxuriance, serenity and majesty that I can feel what drew my father here. I close my eyes and imagined the long-haired, bandana and bell-bottom clad youth going, as Crosby Stills & Nash sang at Woodstock in the summer of 1969, “Back to the garden:” the bonfires, the vegetable plots in the meadows, the houses built of boughs covered with translucent plastic.

There was also a commercial side to the enterprise. In Mr. Collin’s description my father sounds part brigand, too: a kind of Robin Hood of Redwood Forest: “It was not a designated campground or anything like that,” he says, “just a secluded spot in the woods where it was safe to stack kilos of Michoacan weed ... and hang out naked making rainbow candles hanging from a redwood branch hoop rotating over a smoldering fire ringed with pots of wax.”

Even so, he adds: “There was something that had happened to him, a restlessness or a lack of fulfillment, something that

created this rebelliousness in him. It didn’t seem like a bitter rebelliousness, it was a joyous rebelliousness and it involved sexual revolution, political revolution, social revolution, the whole nine yards. Somehow, he did have the ability to get people to feel that hopefulness. We can do this, we are going to break out of all the social, political, religious constraints, that have bound our families and our nations.” As Mr. Collin speaks, I can hear birds chirp in the forest. “Create a totally free world. Anarchy. In the best sense of the term. Each person is responsible for your actions and nobody can tell you what to do. I felt like that was his credo.”

In the spring of 1969, when my father and Ms. Simpson returned from Mexico, they rented a house near Mendocino, on a street called Tranquility Lane. Though he now had a house, he remained committed to helping those camped in the forest. His tranquility was about to be brutally interrupted.

PART
2
(out of 5)

Eviction & retribution

‘I decided it was time to retaliate. We ended up with a crate full of Molotov cocktails’

BY PETER KUITENBROUWER

Purity Supermarket survives in a curved, steel-frame building whose large parking lot holds a sprinkling of cars. In the dairy section I find him: an old man, white-haired, shuffling and stooped, wearing a red apron over his white shirt, arranging small pots of yoghurt on the shelf.

“Stephen Anapolsky?” I ask. He looks up and nods. “I’m Peter Kuitenbrouwer.”

He reaches out a gnarled hand to give mine a firm shake. Then, changing his mind, he reaches up and pulls me into a hug. “I know Paul so well that I feel like you’re my son,” he says.

I have come a long way, flying from Toronto to San Francisco, then driving three hours up the coast to Fort Bragg to find Mr. Anapolsky, the man who drove the car in April 1969

with my father and six Molotov cocktails. In 1969, the two men carried the flag for the rebellious hippies: young, brash, charismatic leaders in a generation that yearned to be free.

Today, Fort Bragg, pop. 6,500, is on the decline, its last lumber mill having closed down about a decade ago. Mr. Anapolsky, who insists he is 74 (court records say he is 72) works shelving groceries, 20 hours a week for \$9 an hour.

Arriving in Fort Bragg, I need a few hours to work up the nerve to walk into the supermarket: I have heard bad stories about Mr. Anapolsky. I go first to the Fort Bragg courthouse to read his file. The computer spits out five cases since 1995, including possession of heroin. And that does not include his time in Swiss prisons. “I have a longtime history of being a heroin addict,” Mr. Anapolsky told one judge. “I mean, since 1950 I have been a heroin addict.”

IN THE JUSTICE COURT FOR THE _____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
Plaintiff,
vs.
PAULUS KUTENBRAUER aka PAUL FRANK BROUWER and
STEPHEN MAYER ANAPOLSKY,
Defendant(s)

4777C

No. C 7167

COMPLAINT - CRIMINAL

(FELONY)
FILED

AUG 27 1969
VIOLA N. RICHARDSON
COUNTY CLERK

COUNT ONE

The undersigned, first being duly sworn, on information and belief, complains and says: That said defendant(s) did in the County of Mendocino, State of California, on or about the 22nd day of April, 1969, commit the crime of FELONY, to-wit: violation of Section 452, Subdivision (a) of the Penal Code of the State of California in that said defendant(s) did then and there possess a flammable, explosive and combustible material or substance, or a device in an arrangement or preparation, with intent to wilfully and maliciously use such material, substance or device to set fire to or burn buildings or property.

COUNT TWO

The undersigned, being further sworn, says on information and belief, that said defendant did in the County of Mendocino, State of California, on or about the 22nd day of April, 1969, commit the crime of FELONY, to wit, violation of Section 452, Subdivision (b) of the Penal Code of the State of California, in that said defendants did possess or manufacture a fire bomb.

COUNT THREE

The undersigned, being further sworn, says on information and belief, that said defendant/did in the County of Mendocino, State of California, on or about the 22nd day of April, 1969, commit the crime of FELONY, to wit, violation of Section 11530 of the Health and Safety Code of the State of California, in that said defendant /did possess marijuana.

In 2004, Mr. Anapolsky made the front page of a local daily when, to punish a man who had stolen a pound of marijuana from him, Mr. Anapolsky and two accomplices caught the man, duct taped him to a chair, and Mr. Anapolsky tattooed the word "THIEF" (only Mr. Anapolsky misspelled it "THEIF") across the man's forehead. He pleaded guilty to one count of mayhem and served three years in California prisons.

As I walk into Purity, my head echoes with the bitter description of Mr. Anapolsky from his daughter, Daisy, who lives in Virginia: "One time my dad came to visit me and my son, who was 8, asked, 'How come someone is burning spoons in the bathroom?' My dad was shooting up heroin on Thanksgiving."

That story put my own warped family life in perspective: At least my father never took hard drugs and, after the 1960s, has stayed out of jail.

Yet the man I meet in the dairy section seems hardly strong

enough to hurt anyone. "Far out!" he says. "I am about to knock off for lunch. We can go to my house and rap."

In his white 1988 Volvo station wagon (bumper sticker: "In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act") we drive through the streets, passing Manzanita, Elm, Spruce, Fir, Pine, Laurel, Redwood, Alder, Oak, Madrone, Maple, Hazel, Chestnut, Walnut and Cypress, the names reminding me of the resource that gave this town its wealth. Today the trees on this part of the coast are all cut down. The town feels quiet and slow, speckled with a few big-box pharmacies, a giant new Safeway, and a few trendy cafés and bistros in renovated historic buildings.

Mr. Anapolsky followed his father into the "shmatte business" (the rag trade) in San Francisco in the 1950s and early 1960s, and then moved to Mendocino, where he met my father and teamed up with him to work as carpenters.

"Your father was a person of tremendous influence. Here was this crazy guy with his hair sticking out, with his sparkling eyes," Mr. Anapolsky recalls.

"Not only was he a fine craftsman, but he had a way of organizing communes and a new kind of freedom that was completely new to everybody."

Mr. Anapolsky takes me to his rented one-bedroom cottage in Fort Bragg - its walls decorated, in a riotous send-up of religion, with dozens of crucifixes, stars of David, plus images of Ganesha, the Virgin Mary, Buddha, dogs playing poker and Jesus Christ - and, on a bookshelf, a large plastic Bart Simpson doll. Many plants thrive. He whips up two thick ham sandwiches on brown bread and two cola drinks. With his two year-old weimaraner/dachshund dog, Rosie, squirming on my lap ("That dog is a trip," Mr. Anapolsky's girlfriend, Judy Lane, says later), he rolls a joint and takes me back to the 1960s.



Stephen Anapolsky with his dog, Daisy, at his home in Fort Bragg, Calif., January, 2011.



Stephen Anapolsky on the roof of the Mendocino Coast Jewish Community Centre, circa 1968.

“You have a chance to do something very interesting,” he says. “Tell a story of the magic of that era. The women didn’t want to wear corsets and brassieres. The men didn’t want to wear ties, and they didn’t want to work in the Chevrolet factory in Oakland. People say drugs are bad, but if you take drugs together, you are just part of the family. Let us not forget, it was the sexual revolution. Women were finally free of the terrible plague of the threat of childbirth. People like your father had a feeling of organizing for a purpose that was more than just yourself.”

It is striking how much this man reminds me of my father, considering they have not seen one another in many years. Both live alone with lively dogs in small homes filled with eclectic momentos, buy the newspaper every day, ingest marijuana continuously, speak in declarative sentences, have trouble keeping appointments, buy clothes in thrift shops, are abrupt (even curt) and drive big old cars strewn with books and ashes and buckets and tools.

In 1968, my father and his girlfriend helped Mr. Anapolsky and his wife, Reva, build a unique wood home, with no right

angles, on land the couple had bought near Mendocino. My father encouraged others to move into the nearby Jackson State Forest, with some of the dwellings sitting on land owned by lumber companies. Police had kicked hippies off the beach, so campers flooded into the forest. Then on April 7, 1969, the State Board of Natural Resources in the capital, Sacramento, changed the rules, permitting camping only in designated areas, and posted notices, giving everyone 10 days to leave the state forest. Ronald Reagan was governor of California, and he wanted no hippies in his woods. The stage was set for the showdown that would change my life.

Early on the morning of April 22, 1969, my father and Mr. Anapolsky drove to a prearranged meeting with forestry officials in Fort Bragg, seeking a reprieve for the campground. When they arrived, they learned the officials had been called away, “on an emergency.”

The friends then drove to Mendocino’s Sea Gull Inn for coffee, where “someone came in and told us that there were a lot of policemen and highway patrolmen and people up in the meadow,” Mr. Anapolsky later told court. “So I went up

“I decided it was time to retaliate. I went to the gas station and filled up some jerry cans. And we made Molotov cocktails.”

there with Paul.... The police were, like, they had talkers, and they were running around with helmets and guns, just very upset.” he adds, “The police called it the ‘Royal Flush.’ [One woman] was nursing a baby and this great big cop came and told her to leave.

“Your father had built a tree house. There was nothing we could do. They had their orders. In two hours they had 50 people moved out of those nice little houses.”

“We went to the campsite around 10 a.m.,” my father later told a probation officer, according to a report in my father’s court record. “Many rangers, highway patrolmen and sheriff’s deputies were busy rounding up the campers and moving them out. A number of men from a state detention camp were taking down & levelling the tents & shelters. Groups of campers and their crying children were standing in the rain among their wet and scattered clothes and luggage. A sanitary toilet I had built was destroyed with a few blows of an axe. I became very agitated and upset, yelled at the people who were doing it, felt that with a little time and consideration this all would not have been necessary.”

According to the probation report, “Mr. Brauwer [sic] told [fire prevention officers] that ‘this is grounds for gorilla [sic] warfare.’”

Ms. Simpson recalls, “It was very alarming. There were so many of them and so much firepower. It was like being on the front lines. Paul has never been able to handle authority, and I think that goes back to his formative years in Holland.”

My father invited the evicted people to stay at the house he shared with Gloria, near Mendocino, and Mr. Anapolsky joined them later. “Say it was 7 or 8 at night,” Mr. Anapolsky recalls. “Somebody had taken a gallon of wine and put about 200 hits of acid in it. There was a person making acid at the time and it was orange sunshine. It was really good acid. About 40 people were dancing around naked at a big bonfire. The first thing I did was take a swill of the wine. In a matter of minutes I was high on acid, so everything looked very far out, to say the least.”

My father vowed revenge for the eviction from the forest. “I decided it was time to retaliate,” he says. Ms. Simpson recalls: “I went to the gas station, and filled up some jerry cans. And they made Molotov cocktails.”

My father continues: “We did some practice with Molotov

cocktails, and we ended up with a crate full of Molotov cocktails -beer bottles full of gasoline.” My father, and Mr. Anapolsky, loaded the bottles into a friend’s 1958 Renault Dauphine. It had just one working headlight. Rain fell.

They drove north on California Highway 1 toward Fort Bragg, intending to set fire to a display cottage next to the offices of the Union Lumber Company, the town’s main employer of the era. On their way, the Dauphine (a car Time magazine has dubbed “the most ineffective bit of French engineering since the Maginot Line”) broke down twice.

These days, my father’s impulse to blow something up seems like certain madness. But it is impossible to consider his actions without considering the times in which he lived. My father certainly took cues from the Students for a Democratic Society, a radical group to whose San Diego chapter he gave money. He was also helping to fund the Black Panthers. The California newspapers that I perused while researching this story contained -along with stories about Nixon and Jackie Onassis, and ads for The Love Bug and Barbra Streisand in Funny Girl -stories of violent protests against the Vietnam war, and radical groups such as the Weather Underground.

In his Volvo, Mr. Anapolsky and I retrace their drive of that night (though he insists we stop to browse two thrift stores along the way). Driving into Fort Bragg on California Highway 1, we turn right on Redwood Street and stop in front of what was back then the Fort Bragg Club. At my father’s preliminary hearing, Fort Bragg police confirmed this version: that, rather than turn left to the Union Lumber Co., the Renault turned right.

“Paul and I decided, ‘F--k it, let’s go have a cup of coffee at the Fort Bragg Club,’ “ Mr. Anapolsky recalls. “We weren’t going to do anything. We just had these bottles with us.”

At 10: 37 p.m. on April 22, 1969, a Fort Bragg police cruiser pulled up behind the old Renault, and turned on its flashers, intending to issue a ticket for the burnt headlight. When the officer approached the car he saw by my father’s feet on the passenger’s side, six quart-size beer bottles full of gas, and stoppered with strips of rag.

Officer Victor Shulman of Fort Bragg police later told court: “I informed both of them that they were under arrest for carrying Molotov cocktails.”



Photo courtesy Paul Kuitenbrouwer

PART
3
(out of 5)

Paul Kuitenbrouwer at the farm he shared with several people in Wendover, Ontario, 1975.

A crazy ride

Back-seat view of my father's arrest

BY PETER KUITENBROUWER

On the afternoon of Aug. 9, 1969, three towheaded children, aged 10, nine and seven, tumbled out of the Arrivals area at San Francisco Airport and into the arms of a tall, thin man. The man's eyes glowed electric blue; topping his head was a wiry mass of brown curls worthy of Bob Dylan on the cover of *Blonde on Blonde*. My two elder sisters and I were arriving in California for a summer vacation with the man we called Papa.

My father wore a serape, a kind of poncho from Mexico, multicoloured pants and leather Mexican sandals called huaraches. Showing his huge teeth in a grin behind the impressive forest of his beard, he greeted us with warm hugs; from his clothes and hair rose a pungent smell of cannabis. Paul Kuitenbrouwer loves theatrics, and for him, Aug. 9 proved a show-stopper. We walked to his latest boat of an automobile, a white 1961 Ford Galaxie, and saw it already contained three children. Two were our old playmates from La Jolla, California: Lareine and Rachel.

The third, a boy named Sean, is someone that my father's later correspondence mentions, but whose identity, otherwise, is lost in time. My eldest sister believes there may have been a dog, too. After we piled in (who had heard of a seat belt?) my father steered us across the Golden Gate Bridge and swung the car onto California Highway 101, heading north. This crazy car trip seemed normal; the only constant of our childhood was chaos.

My parents had split when I was two, in 1964. My sisters and I, with our mother, then left our home in Burnaby, B.C. We lived in La Jolla, Calif., and then Elko, Vancouver and Mamquam, B.C. My mom met a new man and we lived in Cardiff, Calif.; on to Banff; then Montreal. My two elder sisters attended seven schools in 1967-68, and twice landlords evicted us because we owned no furniture.

In the summer of 1969, having completed Grade 1 in Montreal, I had joined my mother, stepfather and two elder

sisters on a trip to Banff. My mother studied ballet and my stepfather studied pottery at the Banff School of Fine Arts. Then, desperate for a break from child-rearing, they sent us to our father, who my mother believed to be living in Mendocino with his 19-year-old girlfriend, Gloria. We carried a brief note from my mother to my father, which he saved: "I hope the revolution can miss you long enough so you can spend some time with the children this summer! Write c/o Gen. Delivery Banff. We will go back to Quebec in Sept. Love Hans." (Hans is her Dutch nickname.)

"For the so-many-eth time we were going to be with Paul," recalls my eldest sister, whom I will call Rebecca. "We did that all the time. Now go to Paul. Now come home. And I suppose it was just an adventure, right?"

"There was this whole box of stuff that Mom sent with us," she continues. "And I still remember that it had string around it. A cardboard box full of clothes and shoes, and stuff like that. Mom had made us these two dirndls. They were matching. [My middle sister] and I were really excited, because when we got there, it was going to be warm or something; we could put these on."

My mother did not know my father was a wanted man.

"He never, ever, ever told me about anything," my mother says now. "I did suspect that he was involved in drug dealing, because how else does he keep driving around and eating and sleeping? Your money has to come from somewhere." Unbeknownst to our mother, or to us kids, posters with a photograph of my father -wanted by the sheriff's office of Mendocino County -hung in post offices all the way up the coast of California, as far as Eureka on the Oregon border. The Mounties wanted him in Canada.

As light fell over the vineyards of Sonoma County spreading out around us, my father pulled off Highway 101 to get something to eat. "I remember that there was a ton of people going into that restaurant," continues Rebecca. "And because there was Paul, it was an even bigger scene. I think there was a dog, 'cause I remember afterwards having to put all the bones into something for the dog."

On that night, my sisters and I knew very little about the man behind the wheel. In fact, nobody knew his whole story. It was only in researching these stories that I built a more complete picture. In the summer of 1969, as the Sixties crested at the Woodstock music festival, the frenzy of my father's life was about to hit its own zenith.

"The case they eventually made against me," says my father,



Photo courtesy Marianne Dekking

Marianne Dekking, 32, at the Canadian College of Dance in Montreal, 1969

"was very much aggravated by the fact that I ran. Then they really went looking for me."

After the police had arrested my father and Stephen Anapolsky in Mendocino County with firebombs in April 1969, my father posted \$10,000 bail in cash; Reva Anapolsky, Stephen's wife, put up \$12,500 in property. My father skipped his next court appearance and fled to San Diego where his younger brother Joost, a student, lived with University of California scholars active in the radical movement, with a group called Students of the Independent Left.

"We lived in downtown San Diego, in a bunch of big Victorian homes and we created what people called a commune," recalls Lowell Bergman, then a graduate student at U.C. San Diego. (Mr. Bergman later became a crusading

journalist for 60 Minutes; Al Pacino plays him in the movie *The Insider*.) “Your father was pretty wild.”

My father says this group forged him a driver’s license in the name Knut Hans Jacobsen. I ask Mr. Bergman who crafted my father’s false ID.

“I’d rather not tell ya,” Mr. Bergman replies. “We had a print shop. We were probably pretty close to being as technically proficient in using half-tone cameras as the government.”

My father recalls April-August 1969, “while I was being hunted,” with a hearty laugh. “During those four months when I was on the run, I must have changed cars three

“During the hippie era, a lot of us women were into free love,” Sue continues. “We were dumb as rocks.”

or four times,” he says. He returned to the Mexican state of Michoacan for another load of marijuana, running it up to Bellingham on the U.S.-Canada border, “and other people would take it from there.” He also found time during those four months to impregnate two women. One was his girlfriend, Gloria Simpson. Later he told Gloria he was in San Diego when in fact he slipped into San Francisco and shacked up with a young postal worker I will call Sue, who later bore him a daughter.

“He was charming and he was older,” recalls Sue, meeting me recently at the Coffee Critic in Ukiah, Calif. “He had a very good political rap, about how we all need to be sharing and caring, and I was into that. I was a love-and-peace hippie. He believed in nature. He also kind of believed in violent revolution, and I didn’t.

“During the hippie era, a lot of us women were into free love,” Sue continues. “We were dumb as rocks. The guys, the genetic contributors, had no interest in taking care of us. I didn’t even know that he had another family. He certainly didn’t tell me. Once I was pregnant I went, ‘Oh. I’m going to be a single mom.’ “

“Paul was someone who flitted in and out,” my mother’s sister Elsa Dekking recalls from San Diego. “One time he arrived from Mexico. He had a woven basket, four feet tall, with a kitten in it. I took him to the airport; they wouldn’t let him on the plane because he had no shoes. Luckily, I wore flip-flops, so I gave him my flip-flops.”

“Cassady in *On the Road* is just like Paul,” she adds, referring to the free spirit Neal Cassady that Jack Kerouac immortalized as Dean Moriarty.

After the stop at that restaurant we climbed back in the Galaxie and continued a little ways up a two-lane highway in the dark. Through my research, I now know that my father, aware that police sought him in his former home, Mendocino, had a halfbaked plan to take us to camp in a forest in Humboldt County, the next county north. Perhaps it was just as well that we never made it.

Driving on that dark Highway 101, now a winding, two lane road, with the six children, some of us dozing, my father slowed the car to a stop. Ahead of him, a police car sat parked on the shoulder. In my memory, he stopped in front of the police car, got out, and walked back. He spoke to

the officer for awhile before returning to the wheel. “What a friendly pig,” he said, as he accelerated. “Far out! Usually the pigs are a real bummer. But not tonight!”

The Fort Bragg AdvocateNews reported that: “Kruetenbrouwer [sic] was passing through Healdsburg Saturday when he was stopped by the Healdsburg police who were making a routine check. The suspect became confused and offered different forms of identification. He was quickly ‘made’ as the subject of the APB and returned to Ukiah.”

“We were sitting in the back of the car and the cruiser pulled up,” my middle sister, whom I will call Martha, recalls. “He [our father] gave the name Fitzpatrick.”

“Paul got spread-eagled on the car, you know, very gruff, yelling,” Rebecca recalls. “I remember how scary it was, and right away thinking that we shouldn’t give our real names. And I told you and [my other sister] to say our name was Kay. K-A-Y.”

Soon a second cruiser arrived. Then a third. They shone their flashlights into the car and saw the terrified eyes of the six little children. An officer snapped handcuffs on my father’s wrist.

“Pig!” I thought. Out loud I shrieked, “Hey! What are you doing to my dad?” Two officers came over and opened the passenger doors, and spoke to us. “A man who looks very much like your father is wanted by police,” one officer said. “I recognized him from the poster in the police station. You kids are going to come with us to the police station. Get into the police car.”

At the police station, the police led us into a room with a thick, scarred wooden table and few chairs. “You can’t do this!” I yelled. “Let my father go!”

“We think your father is the man we are looking for,” the officer said. “But we do not know. We are going to take your dad’s fingerprints and see if they match the fingerprints in our file. And I promise that we will let you look at them too.” The police put my father in a cell with iron cross-hatching like a cage, and we heard the door shut with a loud “clang.” The police told us we could say goodbye. “Hey!” I yelled. “You promised you would let me look at the fingerprints! Remember? Let me look at the fingerprints!”

“Sorry, son,” the policeman said. It is a visceral early memory and it sparked my distrust of authority. We kissed my father goodbye through the mesh of the jail cell; I remember the prickle of his beard, his warm lips on mine, and the cold steel mesh of the cage. I was crying, but he was not; “It’s going to be okay,” he told me.

“And then we had to go into this big room to go to sleep,” Rebecca remembers. (I think we were taken to an orphanage; in Sonoma County I visit the Valley of the Moon children’s centre, east of Santa Rosa, where barracktype structures surrounded by razor wire looked vaguely familiar, but no one could answer my questions.) “This great big room with a whole bunch of other beds with other kids. And of course one does not sleep. And I didn’t see you because you were in the boys’ part. I know they put you in a different room. They wanted us to go to sleep because it was really late, and all the other kids were asleep, and I was trying to figure out

coast to Ron’s. The fog was so thick I was driving five miles an hour with the door open to see the white line. You were not weeping and wailing and wanting your mom; you were like, ‘Where are we going?’ We went back to Ron’s, you had something to eat and went to bed.”

I remember a four-storey tower with a God’s Eye on the side; a reproduction, in planks painted in rainbow hues, of a craft children make in Mexico, binding sticks and coloured yarn. My father had built the tower; bats lived in its rafters. My sisters never got to wear their matching dresses. The box was gone. “So that was kind of traumatic being a girl, that you don’t have your clothes,” Rebecca recalls. “We didn’t have anything. And then there was some kind of free store where you could pick out clothes, so that’s what we did.”

My father wrote us a letter from prison; it is a bracing memento of the era, dated Sunday, August 17, 1969: “To Rebecca, Martha and Peter: Gloria told me that Lareine, Rachel and Sean went to San Diego again. Our camping trip did not turn out as planned, yet Gloria tells me that you are alright and enjoying your stay in Mendocino. You 3 should think about staying ... You can all then go to the Free School, you will surely like it, as you’ll see it’s a lot different than schools you have gone to so far.

“You must not worry about me or about jail even if you come here. Thousands of years ago people on our planet had some strange, wrong ideas about each other and the place called earth which and off which we all live. More and more people realize this and are together straightening it out. But many,

“We kissed my father goodbye through the mesh of the jail cell; I remember the prickle of his beard,”

what was going to happen to us. And the person who was in charge said, ‘Well, tomorrow somebody will come.’ “

Someone came: Gloria Simpson, the teen who had quit the University of British Columbia to follow my father to California. I remember her as a beatific creature, with silky long brown hair, sleepy eyes behind round John Lennon glasses and a husky, soothing voice. “I got the phone call,” she recalls, when I reach her for this story, at her home on Vancouver Island. “Paul was arrested, and would I come and get the kids. I had a pretty nice situation with Ron [Blett, a potter friend of my father’s who lives in a forest near Little River, just south of Mendocino] and we were really good friends. Of course I would get you. I had met you before. I went in Ron’s car. What I remember most was driving up the

mostly older people do not understand it, are scared and therefore have armies and bombs and schools and police and game wardens and sheriffs and banks and jails to protect themselves. So they locked me up hoping they can keep things from changing. But only dead things do not change. Always remember that everything belongs to everyone.”

He continued for awhile, then concluded: “I will be with you all when I can. You are my children and also everybody’s children and it may be silly but I am proud of you and love and like my daughters [...] and [...] and my son Peter.” He signed, “Right on, Paul.” Reading this letter 40 years later, it seems a heavy dose of propaganda with which to saddle a child. Yet it is no more fierce or definitive than the average lesson in Sunday School.

“Always remember that everything belongs to everyone.”

In the second week of August, 1969, my mother got a telephone call. “We were contacted in Banff, by the matron of the house where you had been taken when Paul was arrested,” my mother recalls. “And she said, ‘The children’s father is in jail. They are in this home now, and now what do we do with them?’ And I said, ‘Of course, we’ll come.’ But we were in Banff. So we jumped in the car again, went to Vancouver, took a plane to San Francisco.” Meantime, Ms. Simpson put us on a Greyhound bus from Mendocino to San Francisco.

There, the 1950s came to the rescue. Their standard-bearer was the woman we called Nana, the mother of my stepfather, who lived in Mill Valley in a sort of fairytale cottage whose gardens burst with flowers, just across the Golden Gate bridge from San Francisco.

“I remember it was quite comical,” my mother recalls. “I was always quite intimidated by Nana. Everything was like the 1950s at her house. Then we went to the bus to pick you guys up and you all stepped off the bus and you had no shoes. It was like five o’clock, and our flight was like the next morning. I remember we had quite the time rustling up some footwear so that you could get on the plane.”

“The first thing we did was stick you in a big tub and wash you, because you had been living in the woods or whatever, and put all your clothes in the washing machine, and then I remember you kids were very excited because there were

placemats on the table, and bowls with strawberries painted on them, and stuff like that. It was totally foreign to you, after having lived in the tent with us in Banff and then in Mendocino. It was the first furniture we had seen in a long time.”

Nana put us on the plane to Vancouver with a trunk full of Oz books. She owned the original hardcover editions, published in the 1900s and 1910s -great tomes with colour plates, including *The Emerald City of Oz* and *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*. On my recent visit to California, my daughter gave me a paperback edition of *Ozma of Oz* to read on the plane. The beginning describes Dorothy on an ocean voyage, clinging to a chicken coop that is lashed to the deck of her ship, as a terrible storm howls. The straps break, and a great wave tosses the chicken coop, to which the little girl clings, into the roiling sea. The next line sums up our own life lessons: “Many children, in her place, would have wept and given way to despair; but because Dorothy had encountered so many adventures and come safely through them it did not occur to her to be especially afraid.”

With my mother and stepfather in the front seats, my sisters and I drove back from Vancouver to Montreal quietly, sitting on the mattress in the back of the VW van, devouring these Oz books, filled with adventures only slightly more outlandish than our own. The 1960s were over.



Peter Kuitenbrouwer, National Post

PART
4
(out of 5)

The Mendocino County Courthouse in Ukiah, Calif., where, in December, 1969, Paul Kuitenbrouwer pleaded guilty to possession of a fire bomb. A judge sentenced him to prison.

A life laid out in court documents

Scarred by squalour, spoiled by the Sixties

BY PETER KUITENBROUWER

The fourth instalment in the five-part series *My Father, His Firebombs and My Messed-up Sixties Childhood*, in which Post reporter Peter Kuitenbrouwer describes growing up with a hippie father who was on the run.

UKIAH, CALIF. Stepping between towering, twin magnolia trees that flank its entrance, I walk up 25 steps to the front door of the Mendocino County Courthouse in Ukiah, Calif. Inside, a crest set in the terrazzo floor, now obstructed by the metal detector, depicts a grove of redwoods. It is a common motif, here in the north coast of California they call the Redwood Empire; still, it is a symbol I find ironic because it was when my father, in an ill-fated plot, sought to protect the redwoods, that they locked him up.

I walk down the hall, earlier this year, past the sheriff's deputies in conversation to the records department. I had mailed a money order in advance, to ensure they pulled my father's files from the basement.

James, in the criminal division, hands me Roll 84 and lifts the plastic wrap off the microfilm machine, which sits in a hall. "It's a dinosaur, but it works," he says.

The spools whir, and then the case unrolls in front of me. The People of the State of California, plaintiff, vs. Paulus Kuitenbrouwer, aka Paul F. Brauwer, aka Paul Frank Brouwer, defendant.

There are 177 pages: the preliminary examination, the probation officer's report, the "order of commitment of

insane person,” the order that “said defendant is now sane,” and the 92-page sentencing hearing, which includes testimony from my mother’s sister, her husband, and two of my father’s brothers.

My father’s hijinx put an impressive dent in the coffers of the State of California.

It takes me all day to copy the typewritten accounts. I can’t help sneaking glances at the details -he served three months in jail in B.C. after a hit and run; he wound up in solitary confinement after his girlfriend tried to smuggle him a file to a California prison, hidden in a chocolate bar; one of the Molotov cocktails was in a quart bottle of Schlitz beer.

When the court closes for the night, I repair to the Ukiah Brewing Company next to the courthouse, which is holding an open mic night. The waiter brings me a votive candle and, as long-haired dudes strum their guitars, I pick at a pomegranate and feta salad and read by flickering light the details of Case 4777-C.

In the Superior Court		FILE DEC 23 1969 VIOLA N. RICHARD COUNTY CLERK Mendocino
of the State of California, in and for the County of Mendocino		
Present: Hon. WAYNE P., BURKE, Judge.		
The People of the State of California, Plaintiff,	JUDGMENT AND Commitment To	STATE PRISON
vs.	Number 4777-.....C	Dept. No. Two
PAULUS KUITENBROUWER, AKA, Defendant.		
<p>Whereas the said..... PAULUS KUITENBROUWER, AKA, having duly plead guilty in this Court of the crime of Felony, Viol. of Sec. 452, Sub. (b) of the Penal Code as alleged in Count 2 of the information on file herein, and probation having been denied, and defendant having no legal reason offer why judgment should not be pronounced and none appearing to the Court</p> <p>IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED, ADJUDGED AND DECREED that the said..... PAULUS KUITENBROUWER, AKA, is guilty of the said crime of Felony, Viol. of Sec. 452, Sub. (b) of the Penal Code as alleged in Count 2 of the information on file herein, and as punishment therefor the defendant shall serve a term in State Prison as prescribed by ...</p>		

Encapsulated in these pages is the whole arc of my father’s life to age 35, which bears similarities to those of others of his generation: from his childhood in occupied Holland, through immigration to Canada, aged 19, his early success founding a steel company in Vancouver, then overwork, leading to the collapse of his marriage to my mom and his embrace of the hippie culture, emboldened by the people he meets in Mendocino.

“My life took a new turn,” my father, who wore handcuffs, told his lawyer, Merle Orchard, during his sentencing hearing on Dec. 23, 1969. “I felt I should probably spend more of my life in, helping people, looking for a new direction in

which people should live.” These sentiments may sound lofty to some, but to me they drive home how he entirely stopped thinking of his own three children; he even misstates the year of my birth. (As I type these words, back in Toronto, I am preparing to stop in at my son’s Grade 3 class at lunchtime, to present a soufflé that he and I baked together, to celebrate his 9th birthday; I can’t help but reflect on my own childhood, and a father who was not there for me.)

What emerges from my father’s court documents, more than any grand tale of 1960s heroism, is a portrait of a man who, scarred by the squalour of his youth during World War II, then fuelled by plentiful drugs and easy sex, makes a series of bad judgment calls, flees at every sign of trouble and ends up a remorseful shadow of the hero he had styled himself.

On April 23, 1969, the state charged my father with two counts: that he did “possess a flammable, combustible material or substance ... with intent to wilfully and maliciously use such material,” and that he “did possess or manufacture a fire bomb.”

My father jumped bail; police arrested him again four months later. The court finally was able to hold his preliminary examination Aug. 25, 1969, at this court. Fort Bragg rookie police officer Victor Shuman describes arresting my father on April 22, 1969, at 10: 37 p.m., after pulling over a Renault driven by his co-accused, Stephen Anapolsky, for a “headlight being out.” He says that “before I got out of the vehicle, the patrol unit, I observed the passenger, Mr. Brower, fumbling around in the front, by the floor boards in the front seat.” Then, “I observed a quart bottle ... sitting on the passenger side below Mr. Brower’s feet. I also observed a rag hanging out of this bottle. I asked Mr. Brower to remove the hat that was covering the remaining five bottles.”

On Sept. 12, 1969, my father pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity; a judge sent him to Atascadero State Hospital, “to remain in said hospital until he becomes sane.”

On Oct. 22, 1969, a case summary from Atascadero recommended he be returned to court to stand trial. It notes, “Patient was transferred to Ward 14 due to his having had a friend send a package to the hospital which had three (3) hacksaw blades enclosed in a melted-down chocolate bar and resealed.” Elsewhere the report adds, “He was involved in a plot with another patient to escape.” In “significant social history,” the report adds, “patient has a wife in Canada and three minor children who he claims to have not seen in the past three years [we had been with him at his arrest a month before] though he proclaims that he remains in

“He tries more than most of us to live according to his ideals.”

love with her.” The report mentions visits to the jail by my father’s girlfriend, and adds, “He has used LSD and other hallucinogenic drugs and for the past several years has seen himself as a martyr for the ‘hippie’ cult and has devoted his time and energy to their cause.”

(My father told me he had gone on a hunger strike, in order to be sent to the mental hospital, which he thought would be easier to escape from; when that didn’t work, he decided to plead).

On Dec. 3, 1969, my father pleaded guilty to a violation of Sec. 452, Sub. (b) of the Penal Code, “to wit, possession of a fire bomb.” Three weeks later, on Dec. 23, the court held a sentencing hearing before Judge Wayne P. Burke. The court put on a show, bringing armed guards into the courtroom, enraging my father’s lawyer, Merle Orchard, who commented, “Right now officialdom through the sheriff’s office has seen fit to send four deputies, armed deputies, down to this court to be sure that this man doesn’t do anything. The very presence of these men, in this manner, for this one single little human being ... can’t help but prejudice the court, this show of strength.”

The court, though, was in no mood for generosity. A probation officer’s report entered as evidence notes, “There is little doubt in the mind of this writer that Mr. Kuitenbrouwer is a highly intelligent individual and also has had an extremely tragic number of experiences in his life,” the officer writes, “but at the same time [that] cannot excuse his actions. Paul lived in Holland during World War II and remembers very well the difficulties with the German Occupation.... He learned that anything wearing a uniform needed to be counteracted. He remembers vividly his father being taken from the home and beaten. Food was so scarce that he and his brother one time attempted to steal some bread from the German Occupation Force. For this, the defendant received a bullet in his leg at the age of approximately ten.

“When the defendant entered Canada, he of course went to work and in 1961 became part owner of a steel fabricating firm. He ... states that his marriage went down due to the fact of too much time involved in his work and not enough with his wife and children.”

Still, the probation officer recommends that, “considering the seriousness of the crime, the total disrespect of the law as indicated by his past record and his escape attempt while at

Atascadero State Hospital ... probation be denied.”

Mr. Orchard still hoped to get my father deported to Canada, rather than sent to a California jail. Among witnesses, he called my father, my uncle Keith Brueckner, a nuclear physicist, and his wife, Elsa Brueckner, my mother’s sister; plus my father’s younger brothers Joost and Roland Kuitenbrouwer.

My father told the court, “I made this mistake. I, for a moment, contemplated this sort of action. I -I -I don’t know how to say it. Of course, I wish now that it had never happened. I know, even if circumstances were the same, that it wouldn’t happen again. Also, I know deep down that I wouldn’t have done it.”

Dr. Brueckner called my father, “an intense and charming individual ... a gentle man and a very, very kind person.” Joost Kuitenbrouwer testified that, “I like him very much, not only as a brother, but as a friend, and I think he is a very fine man.” Ms. Brueckner told the judge: “He tries more than most of us to live according to his ideals, and that’s why I admire him very much, because it’s — it’s easier to live ordinary lives, but he is trying the hard way to live right.” A cross examiner brought up her letter to the probation officer, in which she called my father’s views “unconventional,” and asked her, “did you mean by ‘unconventional’ different from normal mores, or against the mores of the community?”

“I would say that he would live closer to the mores than most people,” Ms. Brueckner replied.

The evidence is clear on one key point: the car containing the two men and the firebomb turned up Redwood Avenue on the fateful night, away from the target of my father’s wrath, before police stopped it; this suggests they changed their mind about throwing bombs. But by jumping bail and becoming a fugitive, and trying to escape, my father earned the court’s wrath. The judge quoted my father’s words, “in my delusion I took some bottles of gasoline and wanted to take them to Fort Bragg to set fire to a Union Lumber Company display cottage next to their parking lot there,” turned down probation and sent him to jail.

Paul Kuitenbrouwer spent 131 days in 1969 and all of 1970 in jail.

Early in 1970, two women bore his children. Gloria Simpson, a young woman who quit the University of British Columbia

to follow my father to California, had a boy; a young postal worker I call Sue, had a daughter.

“I took her down to visit him in Soledad a number of times,” Sue recalls. “[Our daughter] was a baby, five or six months old. But then I stopped going because he was too crazy.”

On Christmas Eve, 1970, he was ordered deported, and early in 1971 he travelled in handcuffs to Canada, into the hands of the RCMP.

On the morning of Nov. 19, 2010, my father climbs the spiral staircase in his tiny house near Wendover, Ontario, and, from under his bed, extricates a cardboard box full of letters, photos and documents.

He had offered me a deal: I split four birch logs into firewood, for his cookstove; in exchange, he spends half an hour going through old documents. I step out in the crisp morning air

and swing the hatchet; he emerges with a box.

“I’ve discovered that the mice have hidden a whole cache of dog food in this box,” he said, and pours a small mountain of kibble onto the earth.

He hands me a letter, dated January 16, 1971, from one of my father’s fellow inmates at Soledad Prison, written just after my father was deported to Canada. It ends: “So you’re gone, Kuitenbrouwer, to play with the purple spirits who hover like scorpio hawks among the orange dreamclouds of frail tomorrow, and who dive like doves to drink from the contagious white fountain of angel-like idealism; and though thoughts, austere and crimson, may always yet wound you; and though the backfiring of absolutism isolate you and hold you prisoner in the cells of self-echo; the sky is strong and it belongs to you, and you belong to it, pioneer Kuitenbrouwer.” Signed, Mordechai.



Ashley Fraser for National Post

Paul Kuitenbrouwer holds up a photo of the school bus in which he lived in California, B.C. and Ontario in the 1960s and 1970s.

PART
5
(out of 5)

Pioneers and heroes or a lost generation?

BY PETER KUITENBROUWER

Leaving San Francisco airport on Highway 1 North, I pass a billboard depicting The Beatles in 1969, the period of their longest hair and fullest beards. “Now on iTunes,” the caption notes. The Fab Four in California, framed by palm trees, feels profound. Let It Be. The 1960s live.

This is the road taken by so many hippies, who fled the Haight Ashbury scene after 1967’s Summer of Love, seeking a tranquil place to shed their clothing and drop out. Thousands settled in Mendocino County. One was my father.

From the 1850s, loggers had dominated Mendocino County, known grandly as “The Redwood Empire.” They called the new arrivals “dirty hippies” and locked them up — including my father.

Today the redwoods are cut, the sawmills shut. The irony is that these days, the hippies are the establishment. So was my father right after all? Am I the son of a hero and pioneer?

In Ukiah, capital of Mendocino County, I pick up the Ukiah Daily Journal, whose biggest story is the county’s biggest industry: marijuana. From the front page stares Dan Hamburg, a hippie who moved here in 1971. Having served in the U.S. Congress, Mr. Hamburg recently won election as Mendocino County supervisor, the top elected post. He openly cultivates marijuana on his property. K.C. Meadows, the Journal editor, says anyone can now legally grow a pot crop.

“Many of my peers who have stayed or moved back end up cultivating marijuana.”

“Marijuana has pretty much taken over the community,” says Ms. Meadows says. “I can go down to Median on Perkins Street and say I’ve got a migraine and they’ll give [me] a medical marijuana card. And you can grow as much as you want, apparently.”

Not everyone is thrilled with this new reality. My father sired a daughter in Mendocino; she earned a master’s degree at Berkeley and now works in health promotion throughout Latin America. On my way up the coast, we share a meal at a Mexican restaurant. She does not live in Mendocino because there are few opportunities to make a living besides growing dope. “Many of my peers who have stayed or moved back end up cultivating marijuana.”

But many here view the hippies as visionaries. The Kelley House Museum in Mendocino today seeks to chronicle and preserve the hippie legacy.

“We have done a good job of cataloguing the logging era in our historical research facility,” Nancy Freeze, the executive director, tells me. “We’re now turning our attention to the 1960s. The first item in our collection is a macramé purse that someone made on a commune.” Keenly interested in my research, Ms. Freeze offers to waive the \$9/hour fee to scour her Mendocino Beacon archives in exchange for copies of these articles. History, she suggests, will view favourably my father’s plan to firebomb the local logging

company’s model home (he never actually threw a bomb).

“What kind of newspaper articles do you think they wrote in England about the founding fathers?” Ms. Freeze asks me. “Not very good, I imagine.”

In the 1960s, the “establishment” questioned the hippies’ rock music, communes, nudity and drug consumption.

Yet in a 25 year study comparing 150 middle class, two parent married couples and 150 counterculture families, Dr. Thomas Weisner at UCLA tracked their childrens’ school achievement, peer relations, behaviour problems, drug use, as well as values and social attitudes, concluding that “contrary to some who had dire predictions regarding the children of the nonconventional or ‘hippie’ families, for the most part they seem to be doing as well or better than our comparison group.”

But most of those counterculture parents stayed out of jail, and focused on raising their kids, even if in unconventional ways. This is where my family tale parts company with a lot of other hippie childhoods.

Daisy Anapolsky, eldest child of Stephen and Reva Anapolsky, now lives in Virginia. Her story resembles mine; her father Stephen, arrested in 1969 with my father in a car filled with firebombs, has been in jail a number of times since. He is so self-centred, she notes, that in his autobiography, *The Time-Juggler* (Pacific Transcriptions, 2003) he barely mentioned his children. The book describes smuggling techniques and Swiss jails in great detail.

“The revolution came first,” she notes. “Children are only there when there’s a purpose for them, like when you want them to carry drugs for you on a plane.” She craved a normal childhood: “A Happy Days lunch box with a white bread sandwich in it. That’s all we wanted.”

Perhaps the pain would be easier to bear if we could say our fathers had actually achieved something with their revolutionary activity. But they were no good at that, either, as Ms. Anapolsky notes: “Al-Qaeda would have never had them.”

Dr. Jennifer Jenkins, Atkinson chair of early childhood development at the University of Toronto, notes that child-focused parenting produces better outcomes.



Daisy Anapolsky, the daughter of Paul Kuitenbrouwer's co-conspirator, Stephen Anapolsky, with her children at her home in Virginia, 2010.

“Looking at how they develop cognitively,” she says, “When parents are more involved the kids end up with higher levels of achievement. Your dad had other priorities.” Still, she notes, “growing up is about having a balance between feelings of disappointment and gratefulness.”

Adriana Barton, who lives in Vancouver, wrote an upbeat story a few years ago in the magazine *Elm Street*, called *Growing Up Hippie*, in which she describes how, with hippie parents, she was “desperate to be normal.” She recalls, “I begged my parents to buy me a lunchbox: a spanking new plastic one with a picture of Sesame Street or Barbie.”

Ms. Barton initially rebelled against this Buddhism and yurt lifestyle by becoming a top-drawer cellist and performing at Carnegie Hall. In a similar way, I rebelled against the rebelliousness of my parents: I paid my own way through McGill University, and later had a proper marriage, with both families present, and rings, officiated by a minister, with invitations, tuxes, registry at The Bay and cake.

My mother, Marianne Dekking, herself a free spirit, nonetheless picked up the slack of rearing us, with her second husband. I interviewed my mother at her farmhouse

north of Montebello, Que. Having raised five children and shed two husbands, she now lives essentially alone (at present she rents one room to a young woman) on her rolling, 250-hectare farm, most of it covered by forests. She has lived here 40 years. We sat at her old pine kitchen table. She brewed Earl Grey tea and served Armenian coffee cake. During our conversation, her big orange cat climbed on my lap and fell asleep.

This is the farm on which my two elder sisters and I grew up; my father later settled on a farm across the Ottawa River. The symbolism is worthy of Greek theatre: my parents live quite close as the crow flies, but there is no bridge there. Each of my parents lives alone. Yet in contrast to my father’s collection of sagging stables and log cabins, overgrown garden and smouldering stove, my mother maintains dry stovewood, crackling fires, a clean, spacious home, food, electricity, running water and bountiful vegetable gardens.

Still, my mother sees the 1960s as a time of great achievement -the decade brought her spiritual awakening (she became a Hindu) and freedom from the shackles of Europe and convention. “It was a kind of a huge relief for me, to be finished with certain dos and don’ts, to kind of explore things.” She fears my account will malign the hippie era.

My parents didn’t much care about giving us a secure and stable childhood. My mom argues that safety and stability are over-rated. With pride, she adds that her Québécois neighbours call her children *débrouillard* — self-reliant. There is truth in this. In addition, my mother raised us to realize that there are many ways to measure success. I took that to heart; journalism is not a get-rich-quick career. My parents taught me to question authority: as a reporter, I do so every day.

My mother is adamant of the positive contribution of the flower power generation.

“It was a time that I started to get into yoga and things like that,” says my mom, who spent 1967, the Summer of Love, in Haight-Ashbury (we were with our father in Vancouver). “I’d go almost every day to Golden Gate Park and there’d be huge concerts, but they’d be free, and everybody was making music and everybody was dancing, and everybody was burning incense and hanging out with their kids, lying on the grass, instead of marching off to a job and the kid to daycare.”

After I mailed her a draft of my story, my mother wrote

to me, “It’s not easy raising kids, is it? I think you are doing a wonderful job and only hope you will not be too protective of them. We all have to learn lessons and we all get bumped around in the process (like those stones they polish in moving jars).”

When I interviewed my father, we sat in his tiny house as darkness fell. He warmed rainwater on the wood stove, and by the light of a lamp powered by a car battery, he washed the dishes, including thick, graceful handcast silver spoons with which his grandmother taught him to eat soup in Holland. I asked him, “If you had it to do over again, would you?”

He said he felt the hippies made the world better.

“You don’t remember the time before the Sixties,” he says. “The world changed in the Sixties. I think the consequence of the Sixties is that generally people are a lot less afraid than they used to be.”

Others are equally eager to see my father’s actions in the context of the times. On my return flight to Toronto from San Francisco, I tell my seat-mate, Jim, of my father’s arrest in California in the 1960s for a firebombing attempt. He notes, “There was a lot of that going around. My brother was arrested for firebombing city hall in the town where I grew up [Glen Cove, Long Island]. He served a month in jail.” Told that my father spent about 18 months in California jails, he says, “That sure is a lot of time for an attempt. I guess they were afraid of what he would do. It was the hippies against the pigs. For better or worse, that’s what it was.”

History must weigh other factors in judging my father. In a letter from Bilthoven, the Netherlands, to the courts in California on April 17, 1970, his mother, Magda Kuitenbrouwer, pleaded with authorities to pardon the third of her 12 children: “The war was a terrible time for us: little money, hardly anything to eat, frequent bombing (a military airfield at 4 km distance), fright, evacuated children who lived with us for six months and the most horrible things happening all around us. This period has made a very strong impression upon Paul.”

Ron Blett, a longtime friend of my father’s who remains in Mendocino County, notes that, when the sheriff’s office raided my father’s campground in the forest, “Paul was flashing back to Holland and his father and uncle getting dragged out in the street.” That’s why my father snapped, he says.

Some in my family did not want this story told; they are embarrassed by my father’s criminal record and outlandish

exploits. Yet I feel no embarrassment or shame. Ms. Anapolsky recommended I read Jeannette Walls’ memoir, *The Glass Castle* (2005); the book helped me a lot. From the maelstrom of her upbringing with a reckless alcoholic father and dreamy, disconnected mother, Ms. Walls constructs a tale of resilience and redemption. Similarly, Ms. Barton concluded *Growing Up Hippie* noting that, “as an adult I was happiest when life was a variation on a bohemian rhapsody.”

Some of this is true for me. An appreciation for nature, a passion for gardening, cycling, healthy food and the outdoors, an inquisitive mind — these are all attributes I got from my parents. I am grateful that with the help of my wife, years of therapy and yes, this newspaper, I have let go of enough anger and built up enough distance from the tumult to finally have some kind of relationship with my father.

After he read a draft of these pieces, Paul Kuitenbrouwer called to tell me that one of his younger daughters, who also read the draft, asked him whether he had ever apologized to his kids for his reckless behaviour in 1969. “I realized I had not. So here goes: I am sorry.” I later mailed him an updated draft; he mailed it back, marked up in blue pen and stained with coffee. His scrawls in the margins ranged from specific comments and clarifications to more observational thoughts and some elements of a mea culpa, of sorts. Of the beginning, he wrote, “in context, please,” noting that 1960s radicals changed history; among other things, “mass U.S. civilian bombing raids in Vietnam stopped.” He also noted, “I left you to your mother and stepfather. Had I given it more time, we’d be closer. Too bad, and yet who knows, when I thought of you I thought you’d be all right.”

Among his strengths, Paul Kuitenbrouwer has a raucous zest for life, knows the elements of a remarkable story and is an adroit carpenter. He taught me reverence for No. 8 Robertson wood screws and the proper way to hold a handsaw, with my index finger stretched along the blade. These are useful skills.

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