

## **Robert G. Greenway**

**December 13, 1932**

Born in Seattle, Washington

### **California (Piedmont) -- 1933 to 1946**

Typical depression-era childhood -- father working long hours as dairy man, active member of the military reserves. Called to one year's active duty January 1941, brought family to his relatives in Central Georgia while he trained at Ft. Benning, GA. (Spring, fear of racial strife around us and much solitude in rural Georgia brought me into a deep and emotional relationship with the natural world.)

The war years, father in China, Japanese gardeners taken from the Bay Area, motivated me to develop a large and lucrative gardening business and plant nursery. Also, with brother, a neighborhood "Victory Garden" on a nearby vacant lot. I also had major after-school care of my sister, born in 1942.

I became obsessed with "aiding the war effort" and, able to see Alcatraz just inside the Golden Gate from my bunk bed, began keeping detailed charts of when fog would touch the island (a kindly elderly neighbor showed me how to graph it); I took the graphs to the U.S. Weather Bureau, then located at S.F. airport, received much acclaim "for helping them out", and was given a mailed copy of the daily weather map (three days late, of course). Thus began a life-long study and fascination with weather.

### **Seattle, Washington -- 1946 to 1956**

After the war, my father (a Colonel by then, and a China-theater war hero), was taken back by Carnation, Fresh Milk and Ice Cream Division, and assigned to Seattle. I became fanatic about the wild NW weather, the snow, the wild country -- took up sailing and skiing, mountain climbing, running away much of the time into the mountains, avoiding school as much as possible. (Never did graduate from high school, as I left for Sun Valley Idaho to be a ski-bum and train for the Olympic Trials.)

Seeking to avoid the Korean War, I came back to Seattle and talked my way into the University of Washington, majoring in meteorology, art, physics, and English before settling into biology -- mainly botany and ecology.

Married in 1953, first child born in 1954 -- houseboat on Portage Bay, across from the university.

*Life changing event:* Upon graduation, invited by the then legendary ecologist, W.T. Edmondson, to work with him on an analysis of Seattle's priceless Lake Washington, which was rapidly deteriorating. We studied algal progressions from "dying" lakes from all over Europe, going back 100 years, found similar patterns in Lake Washington, and I worked with Edmondson to convince Seattle to vote in the first "metro sewage treatment system" in the country, thus saving the lake (it is now much cleaner -- swimmable and drinkable -- than it was then).

With a family to support, I left graduate school to take a job as writer for Sunset Magazine in Menlo Park, California.

### **Palo Alto, California -- 1956 to 1960**

Sunset was a forced education in conformity to their writing style ("The Magazine of the Western Liver", we writers called it) but I was assigned five or seven articles to write each month on garden and building articles and a photographer, and wandered all over the West studying and writing about gardens and "Western" architecture, meeting landscape architects and building architects, studying their philosophies.

I also re-discovered the Bay Area -- Berkeley, Marin, my old haunts in the semi-wilderness of Piedmont Park, Marin, and especially San Francisco and my beloved fog. I fell in with the beats on Grant Avenue, music, art -- many adventures (and two more children).

Having laboriously escaped from a fundamentalist upbringing ("Quaker Primitivism"), filled with horror at the destruction of the Santa Clara Valley, tutored by my first environmentalists (friends of David Brower), and tutored also by Wallace Stegner, and other members of the Stanford writers who lived close by (mainly Ken Kesey and Wendell Berry), thus seeking to do something to save the world, Sunset had begun to seem problematic and I accepted an offer to be a staff writer at Stanford Research Institute -- writing reports on biological research and encouraged to propose my own research interests -- an open door that drew me into local progressive churches (singing with the much acclaimed First Methodist Bach Choir), becoming a youth minister, discovering folk music, and so on. It was during this time, and out of this base, that I began studying Friends' youth-service groups emerging after WW-I, and developed a proposal for an American alternative to war two-year post-college service program, which was picked up by a Congressman from Wisconsin, given to Hubert Humphrey during his 1959 presidential bid, who, when that failed, passed the study on to Kennedy. Though (I'm sure) only one of many sources, it was part of the background that became the Peace Corps.

### **Boston, Mass -- 1960 to 1963**

In the summer of 1960, restless, longing for more graduate school, applying to East Coast journalism scholarships (winning the Columbia School of Journalism Science Writing Fellowship) -- I needed to scout the living possibilities near Columbia University before arriving there with my now considerable family and took an assignment with The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists to cover a conference on an Star Island titled "Religion in an Age of Science"-- one of my major inclinations.

At the conference, wandering among ministers, scientists, psychologists, playing the hot-shot young reporter (I was 26 by then), I got into a late-night debate with Abraham Maslow, who invited me to come to Brandeis University and help him write his books -- and in return, I would work towards a PhD in Psychology -- no matter that I had only a minimal background in psychology. Large stipends and teaching fellowships were promised (most of which never came through), and so I switched from New York to Boston

-- teaching (anything, anywhere), driving cabs at night, editing arcane books at local publishing houses, writing for Maslow, taking courses, etc.

Maslow taught "wholism" as the basis for psychology, and strongly urged multi-disciplinary approaches to, well, everything. It was then, after reading a long essay by Loren Eiseley (my first nature writer) published as "The Mind as Nature" that the epiphany came to me (1963) to pull my passions for nature, and especially ecology into a coalescence with the humanistic-transpersonal-Jungian-psychoanalytic psychologies with which I was immersed at Brandeis.

I named it "psycho-ecology" -- Maslow was pleased, my fellow graduate students were impressed -- and I became somewhat of a star. (Thus, 2013 is, from my perspective, the 50th anniversary of ecopsychology!)

### **Franconia, New Hampshire -- 1963-1966**

In late winter, 1966, writing my doctoral thesis (subject: The Use of Metaphor as an Indicator of Self Transformation in Groups), inflamed with "psycho-ecological" ideas, seriously needing an income and to stabilize my life (four children, a wife longing to work), I was recommended by my major professors at Brandeis for the Deanship of not-yet established college in the mountains of New Hampshire -- a lodge on a river, a huge old North Country Hotel as campus -- a president who had his sights on the governorship of New Hampshire, a decent salary -- I accepted with alacrity. I was to hire the faculty, find a hundred or so students (by the following September), and work with the faculty to establish the curriculum. It was an opportunity to put into practice (we thought) the radical ideas -- Paul Goodman, Franz Fanon, etc. -- and create "higher education" as the way it should be practiced.

My first "framework" was to bring to the college planning stage the systemic ideas of "psycho-ecology" (with some creative self-creating through the use of metaphor and group processes thrown in). We were young, quite crazy, very enthusiastic -- students came, a creative environment seemed to be education -- some faculty liked the non-traditional approach, some didn't; some townspeople liked what we were doing -- but as the 1960's began to impact the students (who travelled often to the coffee houses of Boston and Cambridge) the town (from which the trustees were drawn) became, well, worried. It was a tempestuous time.

### **Washington, D.C. -- 1966-1968**

Because of my background in the founding of the Peace Corps, I proposed to them academic credit from Franconia for various forms of National Service, including Peace Corps and Vista. Both Peace Corps and Vista liked the idea (Sargent Shriver, Harris Wofford) -- and Franconia offered the first credit for service -- in the Lower Eastside of NYC, in villages above the Arctic Circle, and in Latin America.

In 1966 the Peace Corps offered a high-level staff job (training, program evaluation, "institutional relations" -- of which I was named Director). My sense of paternity with regard to the Peace Corps was a draw, and thus our family moved to Washington D.C., and I found myself with tasks all over the country, and the world. (Again, "psycho-ecology" became a model for proposed Peace Corps training programs -- especially attempting to deal with the "culture shock" Volunteers were suffering from.) Such travel was not compatible with family life and I went through a very difficult divorce in 1968.

### **Santa Cruz, California -- 1968-69**

The University of California at Santa Cruz offered me the job of Director of Planning in the spring of 1968 -- which I saw as an opportunity to bring my family together. Also, Washington D.C. was burning, and interactions between the CIA and youth movements and anti-war activity seemed to be tearing the Peace Corps apart, so I took the job, and moved to California -- also taking a job as editor of Change Magazine in NYC when it became clear that my family was staying on the east coast -- two demanding jobs, and a time of turbulent social change -- I came to realize that I needed to settle for a longer duration in a place where family, or at least children, could gather, grow, respond to changing world conditions -- live righteously, in other words.

### **Sebastopol, California -- 1969 to 1990**

I sought and received a faculty appointment at Sonoma State University, moving there in 1969. It was still very new, still designated as one of the "innovative institutions" in the state system. The psychology department included a strong leaning towards humanistic-transpersonal psychology, and included old colleagues from Brandeis. Though I longed for my home country in the NW, I settled in. It was a good fit, and I was encouraged to teach what I had a passion for.

My first courses were "wilderness therapy", "psycho-ecology", "transpersonal psychology" and several basic psychology courses. The wilderness program -- a "growth" program more than a "therapy" program -- because established as a graduate program, complimentary to the psycho-ecology field that began burgeoning at that time -- and many masters theses on "wilderness psychology" and "psycho-ecology" were written during that time. Many leaders of well-known wilderness programs at institutions around the country went through those programs.

During this time, I discovered the work of Ken Wilber, and began teaching the first graduate seminar on his work (1982) I found it very synergistic with eco-psychology and the wilderness program that were emerging.

Also during that time, with "psycho-ecology" morphing into "eco-psychology" for obvious reasons, I established a commune near Mendocino, became a single parent for 10 years, guided the establishment of a coffee-house/ learning center by students in the town of Mendocino (known as "The Well"), and established a learning center in the Round Valley Indian Reservation, east of Mendocino.

### **Port Townsend, Washington -- 1990 to present**

With a new marriage, wanting to raise our young child in a community rather than the suburbia of California, an aged father in Seattle to help through his final days -- we moved back to the Northwest, and chose the town of Port Townsend -- a favorite place I'd sailed to many times as a boy, and a strong community.

The transition into "retirement" and from California to the NW was surprisingly challenging. I remained teaching part-time at SSU for two more years, commuting from Port Townsend. The NW "culture" is strikingly different from the more flamboyant California culture. My wife, Darby, a psychotherapist (and co-leader of many of my wilderness trips) found work in town, I was soon writing for the local paper, then appointed to the local Planning Commission and became immersed in local politics.

Around that time, moving to a five-acre beat-up piece of open land in the geographical center of town, we began creating tilth and adopting intensive small-farm practices that, over the years, became Corona Farm, our present home.