The Beatles

A key aspect of cannabis as a social phenomenon has been its boundary-crossing quality, how it leapt like a flame from one culture to another. So did jazz. The music and the weed were both drawing power from an underground that was joining the casualures of hip. Even after the onset of federal prohibition, when vipers and distinctively were out of favor, contraband cannabis could be procured at jazz clubs such as Minton’s Playhouse on 118th Street in New York City. That was where the great saxophonist Lester (“Prez”) Young could get it. In the middle of the fudging writer, his first taste of marijuana in 1941. It would prove to be a seminal, flame-keeping moment. Carouco and his cohorts got together in small groups, much like the bohemian writers who congregated in the mid-nineteenth century Paris. The Beatles were conscious of their link to this great stoned lineage of European artists, which included the Dadaists, Surrealists, Symbolists and others who defied convention. Kerouac’s catalyzed the associational fluidity engendered by cannabis, how it loosened the powers of analogy and unleashed the spoken word. They stayed up all night smoking fat marijuana bombers, listening to jazz, reciting poetry and confiding their deepest secrets, their hopes and fears, in protracted, stoned rap sessions. Marijuana was a truth drug, of sorts, for what you felt in the beat poets, the legend knew. When you sang a love song, he recalled. “All that we knew was that we were making sense to each other; you know talking from heart to heart, that nobody else was around, talking like some kind of strange, lunatic robots in business suits.”

“Good Duty” for the Narcotics

“Hoover University,” located at Quanticco Marine Base in Virginia, specialized in teaching smoke how to smoke and networks in the black market. For Carolyn and her husband, Jerry Garcia, cannabis was always more sacred than commodity. Their home in Marin County, just north of San Francisco, attracted a steady stream of visitors and travelers, including some who brought mari-juana seeds from exotic places.

Mountain Girl

When Carolyn (“Mountain Girl”) Garcia, the matriarch of the Grateful Dead, started cultivating marijuana in her backyard in the early 1970s, making money wasn’t part of the homegrown equa-
tion. For Carolyn and her husband, Jerry Garcia, cannabis was always more sacred than commodity. Their home in Marin County, just north of San Francisco, attracted a steady stream of visitors and travelers, including some who brought mari-juana seeds from exotic places.

Mountain Girl, the daughter of a botanist, had a way with plants in general and cannabis in particular. She planted a few pot seeds from Vietnam in a secluded spot in her outdoor garden. She knew that they would extend their family were getting blazed on MG’s “Marble Buddha” weed. It was stronger than any pot they had smoked. “Two hits of this stuff and you were gone, you’d turn into a marble Buddha,” said Mountain Girl. Mountain Girl shared her growing techniques with other eager gardeners. “I had a whole circle of friends who were doing this — this whole group of women growers who started in Mendicino,” she recalled. As more would-be pot growers turned to her for advice, Mountain Girl put her thoughts down on paper. Primo Plant, the first cannabis cul-tivator’s handbook written by a woman, included homopsex tips on composting, ground preparation, greenhouses, soil mixes, pruning and cultivating a deeper relationship with one’s plants. She felt that a grower’s personal vibe became part of the plant’s vibe. “Thai farmers pray and meditate in their gardens,” MG noted. One of Mountain Girl’s infamous associates from the psychedelic Sixties had his own ideas about how to augment a marijuana crop. Augustus Owlesley Stanley III, the legendary underground chemist who produced some 12 million doses of LSD before running afoul of the law, also got into growing reefer. He studied Rudolph Steiner’s writings on biodynamic gardening and applied them in a rather idiosyncratic way to marijuana horticulture. Owlesley maintained the herb grew better if you made love in your pot patch. Owsley maintained the herb grew better if you made love in your pot patch. He studied Rudolph Steiner’s writings on biodynamic gardening and applied them in a rather idiosyncratic way to marijuana horticulture. Owlesley maintained the herb grew better if you made love in your pot patch.

Smoke Samples continued from page 6

bigger flower clusters with more sticky, aromatic resin in an attempt to catch pollen that never arrives. Known as sinsemilla (Spanish for “without seeds”), the unfertile female buds, trimming leaves and stems, oozing psychoactive THC and other phytocannabinoids, are the most prized part of the marijuana crop. This ancient method of cultivating potent, seedless reefer was rediscovered and resurrected by American horticulturists in the 1970s. Sexing the plants was simple — all you needed to know was what the male and female flowers looked like in their earli-est stages. Mountain Girl wrote about it. So did Mel Frank and Ed Rosenthal in The Marijuana Grower’s Guide. Cannabis, a hearty, adaptable plant that almost anyone could grow, also lent itself to sophisticated breeding and cultivation techniques, such as cloning and crossing strains, which were ex-plained scientifically in Robert Connell Clarke’s Marijuana Horticulture. These books would influence an up-and-coming generation of gardeners who quickly picked up on the rule — if you want great stuff, smuggle the males.

WAMM

Founded with the explicit intention of catering to the needs of low-income and unem-ployed youngsters, the Walden House, Alliance for New Renaissance, also got into growing reefer. He studied Rudolph Steiner’s writings on biodynamic gardening and applied them in a rather idiosyncratic way to marijuana horticulture. Owlesley maintained the herb grew better if you made love in your pot patch.

WAMM

“Everybody knows this group isn’t about recreational drug use,” said Mayor Emily Reilly

Suzanne Pfiehl, a paraplegic WAMM board member and postpolio patient who needed an assisted breathing device, was sleeping at the Corrals’ home when two dozen DEA agents barged in screaming and waving their semiautomatic weapons. Paralyzed from the waist down, Pfiehl was awakened at gunpoint and handcuffed to her bed while men in business suits quickly gathered up her marijuana and pot seeds. They were never charged with a crime. Smoking marijuana during an undercover assignment “required a much higher degree of control,” Payne explained. “You had to be very careful that anything you did didn’t compromise the operation.” Payne fooled his surveillance targets by posing as a pot dealer. This way he could eas-

The ruined garden:

WAMM

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Mountain Girl

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Canadian Ross Rebagliati, the first snowboarder to win Olympic gold, was almost stripped of his medal after he tested positive for marijuana in 1998. He said he had inhaled secondhand pot smoke at a party. Between extreme winter sports and celebrity entertainment, it was indisputable that cannabis-smoking was not uncommon among world class athletes — soccer stars, swimmers, skiers, boxers, football and baseball players, the guy who drove a car named mari-juna, a pain-management and stress-reducing medicine, to be well suited for the injurious lifestyle of an athlete.

It was “Hash Wednesday” at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana in 1988. Several hundred students gathered for the annual outdoor pot-smoking celebration, held during the third week of April. Debbie Goldsberry, a nineteen-year-old sophomore, looked forward to a pleasant afternoon, a stoned frolic on the campus commons, as she and a few friends shambled toward these festivities. But the police were in no mood for fun and games. A melee ensued as cops in riot gear bloodied peaceful participants with billy clubs and arrested nine people. This unprovoked assault was a galvanizing event for Goldsberry. It catapulted her into a lifelong career as a cannabis activist. The tall, statuesque, and beauty from Goldsberry framed the pivotal role in jump-starting a nationwide grassroots movement for marijuana law reform.

“We were motivated. We realized we had to get organized,” said Goldsberry, as she recounted the senseless beating that took place at her college. Marijuana was mainly a personal-freedom issue, a pro-choice issue, for this young woman, who vowed to carry on the Hash Wednesday tradition. She contacted people at other schools and reached out to the national scene. It was “Hash Wednesday” at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana in 1988.

It was an ironic moment, to be sure: Musikka held up a canister of marijuana cigarettes and announced that she had recently received from the U.S. government as she spoke to a crowd of des...
CAN had frequent run-ins with cops. But the hempsters knew their constitutional rights (they memorized the ACLU guidebook), and they always stood their ground politely but firmly when dealing with the police. Occasionally CAN would file complaints at state courthouses where judges were dispensing severe mandatory-minimum prison sentences to marijuana offenders. CAN’s mainstay Monica Pratt would help launch Families Against Mandatory Minimums, a grassroots civil rights organization with the motto “let the punishment fit the crime.”

In 1996, home-town hero Woody Harrelson, the famous actor, was arrested after he brazenly planted four hemp seeds in full view of the county sheriff’s office in Lexington.

In the early 1990s, the Cannabis Action Network set up its national headquarters in Kentucky, a centrally situated and economically depressed state once known for its abundant hemp fields. The locals were receptive to CAN’s message and welcomed their presence. Hard times had fallen upon farmers throughout the region, and many desperate families, lacking other sources of income, were cultivating marijuana to survive...

Hemp was a lightning rod for discontent in Kentucky. In 1996, home-town hero Woody Harrelson, the famous actor, was arrested after he brazenly planted four hemp seeds in full view of the county sheriff’s office in Lexington. “Industrial hemp can help meet our fiber needs while also revitalizing our struggling rural economies,” Harrelson told the press at the time of his arrest. He had long been outspoken against government policies that allowed the clear-cutting of old-growth forests while at the same time prohibiting the cultivation of hemp, which would lessen the need for timber. Thanks to Harrelson’s celebrity status, his symbolic act of civil disobedience made national headlines. Later that year, the American Farm Bureau, the largest U.S. farming organization, urged federal and state authorities to reconsider the ban on growing hemp. The American Farm Bureau called hemp “one of the most promising crops in half a century . . . [It] could be the alternative crop farmers are looking for.”

**The Seattle Hempfest**

Cannabinoid compounds interact synergistically for maximum effect: so, too, with social-justice movements — they’re far more potent in combination than as single-issue endeavors.

The Seattle Hempfest grew out of a peace vigil opposing the 1991 Gulf War. Allen Ginsberg visited and sat with the vigil during the six months that it lasted. Shortly thereafter, Vivian McPeak and several cohorts organized the inaugural Washington Hemp Expo, which drew 500 people. The keynote orator was Jack Herer, the bombastic hemp evangalist, who gave a barn-burner of a speech at this “humble gathering of stoners.”

Renamed the Seattle Hempfest the following year, it was destined to become a major Northwest summer attraction, a flagship event of today’s sprawling global cannabis culture. More than 20,000 people showed up in 1994, and the crowds kept increasing year after year, feted by the likes of Dennis Peron, Valerie Corral, Debby Goldsberry, and other activists who starred in the hemp movement.

On the 20th anniversary of Hempfest in 2001, an estimated 150,000 attendees heard Woody Harrelson denounce America’s “injustice system” and “the war on all natural, noncorporate drugs.” In October of that year, the Drug Enforcement Administration tried to ban hemp food products, even though they packed about as much of a psychoactive punch as a potato. Emboldened by the authoritative fervor that followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the nars tried to pull a fast one. They thought they could get away with a sneak attack against a wide range of hemp food items, including nutrient-dense hempseed oil, one of the few complete plant-based protein sources on the planet.

The DEA, citing THC concerns, pegged the hemp industry and medical marijuana as a “reasonable suspicion” of “impairment to order drivers to submit to a blood test, and a “per se” definition of impairment based on the amount of THC in a driver’s blood (five nanograms per milliliter, and zero for drivers under 21). Stroup, calling for a “yes” vote, said that the political momentum would shift accordingly.

the young CEO of Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps, who funded and coordinated the Hemp Industry Association’s protracted litigation against the DEA. The industrial hempsters scored a major victory in February 2004 when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the DEA’s hemp food ban on substantive grounds.

Hemp, the world’s most promising crop in the 21st century America. New processing techniques made hemp cloth silky soft, but federal law stopped American farmers from growing the plant.

**Vivian McPeak (left) on the Hempfest main stage, organizes a huge crew of volunteers who put on an amazingly peaceful, enjoyable, and informative mass gathering.** Everything from booking the speakers to cleaning up the garbage gets done, miraculously, and there is no admission charge. Attendees from other cities and towns, accustomed to cold hostility from law enforcement, are pleasantly surprised by the respectful demeanor of the Seattle Police, and how few uniformed officers the brass assign to patrol the event. Traditionally held over a weekend, the 2012 Hempfest opened on a Friday, in hopes that the extra day would make for thinner crowds along the paths overlooking Elliott Bay. The strategy seems to have worked. Bravo to Vivian McPeak and all concerned!

**Add Scenes from the ‘Fest**

**Brilliant buskers! Smokin’ seahawks!**

**‘Be there or be in DARE’ — W.T.**

**Unabashedly in Seattle: from left, journalist Steve Elliot, political consultant Kari Bonier, NORML general counsel Keith Stroup, and ACLU attorney Alison Holcomb debated Washington’s legalization measure, I-502, at the Hempfest Aug. 18, as a woman signed what was being said. Elliot and Bonier (the naysayers) protested a clause allowing police who have “reasonable suspicion” of impairment to order drivers to submit to a blood test, and a “per se” definition of impairment based on the amount of THC in a driver’s blood (five nanograms per milliliter, and zero for drivers under 21). Stroup, calling for a “yes” vote, said that the day after the election people across the U.S. and the world would read a headline proclaiming either “Pot Wins,” or “Pot Loses,” and that political momentum would shift accordingly.**