

Roger Derrough

Side 1:

His mother was from Burnsville, NC (see notebook and tapes of the History Club), and he lived there for 10 years, moving to Asheville and graduating from Asheville High. He attended Western Carolina University but, having no strong career direction, did not return. While on campus he enjoyed working as a carpenter's helper.

[11] He continued living with his family and completely renovated the basement while working as a carpenter.

[15] His father gave him money so he could take an outdoor leadership course. In 1974 there was much concern about complimentary protein which would enable people to thrive without the consumption of meat. [Roger Derrough, Sr.]

[24] The 5-week strenuous course "NOLS" (National Outdoor Leadership School), under guides, traveled over rough terrain in the Rockies 8-9,000 feet above sea level. He was asked to lead a small group of 5 for the last 4-5 days of training over a mountain range and meet the rest of the groups (total 20-30 people) at a specified time with nothing but a compass and basic gear. They lived on the land - berries and fish, but mainly raw energy.

[78] After the course, he decided he wanted to stay in the west and lived in a van while looking for work. He met a traveling couple who were vegetarians, happened on a book Health For The Millions, made a sauce for a dinner he cooked which had tainted ingredients, became desperately ill, took the book as an omen and became a vegetarian much interested in food. [Herbert Shelton]

[125] He went on another strenuous trip - this time on snow shoes - and was a total vegetarian.

[131] He returned to Asheville and, after determining that there were no other health food stores, decided to open one. He convinced his family that vegetarian cooking was more healthy - better for the eco-system and better for human bodies.

[200] His father co-signed a note for \$200 and, after renovating a store on Merrimon Avenue (opposite the Hop and now used for martial arts), and doing low-budget advertising, he opened and was able to earn \$50-\$100 a day. The business grew in little leaps as more people learned about his venture but, with the national publicity given to the value of oat bran, focus on healthy eating got bigger and bigger.

[248] In 1974, realizing that he needed more space, he moved to Broadway, calling his place again "Dinner for the Earth." Within a month or two the co-op {French Broad Food Co-op} opened in a larger store. It had been a buyer's club with no store front for years (see photos). Pockets of health-conscious people were opening all over the country and macrobiotics along with TM (Transcendental Meditation), a movement out of India, and yoga swept the enthusiasm of young and old alike. [The Princess Ann Hotel on Charlotte Street became the TM center in

1996. It has taken over the 3rd (top) floor. Classes are held. The organizer is Tom Ball - cousin of Ewart (see Ewart Ball tape).] [Maharishi]

[332] The Broadway store was only 1,200 square feet. The floor was concrete, shelving primitive, light fixtures poor, and parking difficult - but it was a success and appealed to the many people who were moving here. A magazine called Mother Earth News was operating in Hendersonville, NC and put the region on the map (see enclosure).

[385] He used to attend meetings at Gore's house (Route 9 out of Black Mountain) for Friday talks before the Light Center was constructed (see enclosure). Gore was "told to move" to Swannanoa and moved to VA, later to discover that it should be Swannanoa, NC by another spiritual leader. So, he moved his entire family to the area in the 80's. This is considered a sacred place like Findhorn in northern Scotland. [James Gore, Walter Russell]

[453] At this period people were interested in a medium called Ramtha in Oregon, a dentist's wife who saw a vision and acted as a channel. She said that while California was going to fall into the Pacific Ocean, Asheville was a power center and a safe place. [JZ Knight (known as Ramtha)]

[527] There was not enough room to sponsor speakers in the Broadway store, but through store advertising, groups were formed for vegetarian feasts every full moon. Some people, especially newcomers, formed lifetime friendships.

[564] The Sufis developed a community in Leicester (see John Johnson tape), a group is founding co-housing in west Asheville (Westwood Co-Housing - see enclosure). [Earthaven is another community, starting 4 years ago as Westwood was being organized. (see enclosed Permaculture Activist, Nov., 1996, P. 29, in which Jill Lieman, a member of both communities, compares them] [John Shenshaw]

Side 2:

Earth Fare is doing phenomenal business. Even Atlanta doesn't have a store to compare. People come from all over, and the store attracts customers beyond the regular health food store clientele.

[2/19] There has been a massive change in the way people have changed their eating patterns.

[2/28] The Broadway store appealed to the "granola" type. The new store attracts a broad spectrum along with people who attend churches like Jubilee, Unity in Arden and the Light Center. The "hippies", "Rainbow", and "New Age" people are right at home, but so are the more conservative. Some, however, feel they are entering "The Third World," or an alien culture. He wants to go forward, broaden his scope, and not give people a reason not to come back. He is not trying to dictate and be strict as some health food stores do, but is loyal to principles. While he carries beer, he won't carry Tide (soap), Lay's potato chips, or Coca-Cola. Esquire magazine is not on his racks.

[2/78] The new age store, Seventh Heaven, is in the process of expanding (see enclosed photos). They moved from Biltmore Village and opened in 1993 because Earth Fare had leased its space. [Bruce Cauble]

[2/100] He modeled Earth Fare on two chain stores in Durham and Chapel Hill which he visited 10 years ago. He knew he had to move from Broadway. He realized that moving would cost thousands of dollars but that increasing in size notch by notch, would leave space for possible competition. He decided to "go for broke."

[2/123] His overhead was doubled in his new location, and he knew he had to come "out of the gate running." He spent over \$100,000 on advertising, and his grand opening was too successful. He had to hide the carts because of the crowds, and old customers said they would not have come had they known about the crowding. He used radio, newspaper, and three postcard mailings. Randy, who had worked in the Durham and Chapel Hill stores and had co-founded two stores in Charlotte, was available to plan and design the store. He is now working with Al who is helping with the Charleston, SC store which will open in May. [Randy Calley, Al Kirschner]

[2/173] He was shown the site in Charleston, SC, a year and a half ago. A "hard core" store wouldn't even need to put up a sign to attract customers [although Ingles, see enclosure, does a great deal of advertising]. It must have a lot of traffic, and stand out like a "bull's eye."

[2/195] Conventional grocery stores (see enclosures) have central warehouses and jobbers who re-supply items such as bread and milk. Earth Fare has over 200 different suppliers. Each department has a buyer for its specific needs.

[2/221] The last store-wide meeting of employees was held about 9 months ago. He feels that one every 3-4 months would be desirable.

[2/242] The employees (over 80 in the company, and a little less than 10 in administrative capacity) are internally motivated because they believe in the products they are selling. He feels he needs to figure how to make their service consistent. He doesn't want to rely on luck in the Charleston store. The sales personnel's enthusiasm and depth of information says more for them than the result of their training. [They are indeed free spirits and the tenor of the store is jubilant. They enjoy their jobs.]

[2/310] Al functions as the financial planner. There is an incentive plan, and they will get into the 401K. They have the cafeteria plan which covers medical, worker's comp, and other benefits. [Al Kirschner]

[2/326] His sister and her husband had a store called Gracious Goodies. They started in 1978 and changed their name to Earth Fare. Randy has worked with them to improve their store. [Carol and Steve Neely, Randy Talley]

[2/346] It took 14 months to come up with the name Earth Fare. Dinner for the Earth was too long and brought up the image of the Third World. He wanted to delineate from the past in a

healthy way. He kept the word earth, and with flags, the store looks like a fair - the word fair (as in food fair). The name is simple. One word alone would not carry a message.

[2/380] He has a sister in Frankfort, Ky. She and her husband and two sons live on a 50-acre piece of land. Steve works for the state, and in the summer Carol runs a camp for children who have had no connection to nature. [Julia and David Rome]

[2/423] In order to get his Charleston store started well, he will be moving there for at least 6 months. He is looking for a manager for the Asheville store in his absence.

[2/451] In his new store he wants to have some tools to evaluate hiring the right people. Many employees don't work out, and he wants to be clear about his methods of choosing people who consistently reflect the character of the store and are reliable.

[2/485] In Westgate space is made available, at no charge, for lectures. He is able to sponsor a number of talks (see enclosure). Erasmus wrote Fats That Kill, Fats That Heal and Robbins wrote Diet For A New America. Robbin's father founded Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream. John disassociated himself from him, raised his own food, and has become a household name in the vegetarian realms. Gaia Herbs, a ten-year-old company, a premier herbal extract company in the country moved from Mars Hill to Brevard. The owner and founder is an excellent speaker and educator. One MD has opened up to natural medicines (enclosure). [Uro Erasmus, John Robbins, Rick Scalso]

[2/558] Speakers address their own area of expertise and also focus on their own products. The lectures are not geared to general education.

[2/594] Letters in the newspaper are appearing regarding pharmaceutical companies pushing their products and Dorothy feels that the public is not being served with adequate material. [Dorothy Kirschbaum]

[2/607] A Florida doctor is scheduling a talk. [Dr. Andrew Wilder]