

Dodging Hippies With Graham Parker



Parker: An angry young man in a plaid shirt?

THE NOTORIOUSLY ACERBIC Graham Parker sounds like a Sixties throwback when he talks about his adopted hometown, Woodstock, New York. "You can look like anything here, and nobody bats an eye," he says. "You can be yourself."

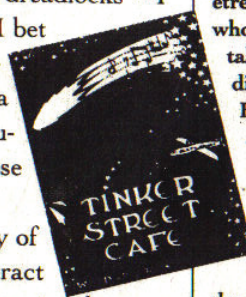
Parker lives the life of a country squire with his wife, Jolie, and their four-year-old daughter, Natalie. "I get up in the morning and walk out onto my land," he says proudly. "I love mucking about in the mud in my big yellow boots. And there's nothing I love better than sawing down trees with a buzz saw."

Ever since Bob Dylan and the Band laid down a few tracks in a big pink house near Woodstock in 1967, rockers have come to the town to live and record. Parker's neighbors include Todd Rundgren, Marshall Crenshaw and Kate Pierson and Keith Strickland of the B-52's. He's constantly stumbling upon would-be rock stars. "One guy was helping fix my pool," he says. "He's up to his neck in muck and chlorine, and he says, 'Hey, Graham, I play drums, you know.'"

Musicians aren't the only locals who give Parker pause. "These guys in Rasta colors and dreadlocks - I just don't believe them at all," he says. "I bet two years ago they were into the Grateful Dead, and then Ziggy Marley had a hit." And what about all the New Age boutiques selling crystals? "I look at all those things," he says, "and I have to giggle."

August 16th, the twentieth anniversary of the Woodstock festival, is bound to attract scores of tie-dyed teens and Sixties leftovers to the area. "I've got to keep an eye out for that date," says Parker. "You want to avoid Tinker Street on a big weekend."

"But I like the town. It's nice to be a healthy distance from the city yet near to something that's not *bick*. You know, it's not a place where mountain people drag you off to the woods and torture you." - BRANT MEWBORN



★ SHARING THE EXPERIENCE ★

★ **Hangout:** Woodstock's village green is the town's hub and heart. Hippies, teens, artists and tie-dyed Deadheads mingle with day-tripping tourists.

★ **Stargazing:** The Little Bear restaurant, on Route 212, for viewing resident rockers, actors and musicians. Also, the Grand Union on Mill Hill Road.

★ **Rock landmarks:** Many hallowed sites, including the following, are hard to find (for example, Woodstock the festival took place in Bethel, New York, sixty miles away from Woodstock the town), and locals aren't forthcoming with directions. Pan Copeland's Field, on Glasco Turnpike, was the site of outdoor concerts by Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix, even before the Woodstock festival. . . . Big Pink, Stoll Road, West Saugerties, is the suburban split-level where the Band and Bob Dylan collaborated on *Music From Big Pink* and *The Basement Tapes*.

★ **Alternative shopping:** Tinker Street. Everything from crystals and Birkenstock sandals to tacos and tofu, but you find more offbeat bargains and meet more local characters at the outdoor flea market (Maple Lane and Mill Hill Road) and the area's numerous yard sales (check the *Woodstock Times* classifieds and keep an eye out for signs).



★ **Skinny dip:** Big Deep (ask for directions in town). A small natural pool in the bend of a creek, deep in the woods, a couple of miles outside of town. A classic Woodstock spot.

★ **Tubing:** On rocky Esopus Creek. Pick up your tube in Phoenicia, the town next door.

★ **Live music:** The Tinker Street Cafe, 59 Tinker Street. Formerly Cafe Espresso, a Dylan haunt in the Sixties, it features new bands, jam sessions with Woodstock residents Le-

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von Helm and Rick Danko and a freewheeling poetry night.

★ **Hot tickets:** A rare performance by the outrageous (remember that word?), obscene Sixties band the Fugs, led by original members Ed Sanders (a Woodstock resident) and Tuli Kupferberg, August 18th and 19th, Byrdcliffe Barn, Upper Byrdcliffe Road. . . . John Sebastian, Artie Traum and friends perform at the Woodstock Home-made Jam benefit for the Youth Center, July 8th and 9th, noon to 8 p.m., at Andy Lee field on Rock City Road.

★ **Outdoor concerts:** Opus 40, 7480 Fite Road, Saugerties. This six-acre environmental sculpture, created by artist Harvey Fite over a period of thirty-seven years, makes a dramatic stage for the Philharmonia Virtuosi, performing Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, August 5th; the John Hall Band, September 2nd; and Taj Mahal, September 23rd.

★ **Spiritual retreats:** Karma Triyana Dharmachakra (KTD) Monastery and Retreat Center. Atop Meads Mountain in a beautiful compound, the North American seat of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism offers seminars and retreats. . . . At the Zen Mountain Monastery, stressed-out Manhattanites get lessons in Zen archery and "the art of mindful photography" and even poetry readings by Allen Ginsberg.

★ **Happening:** Every month, on the first night of the full moon, Woodstock residents of all ages and persuasions bring congas, flutes and tambourines to Magic Meadow, on the top of Meads Mountain, to howl and dance around a bonfire. Cars parked by the road often get ticketed, but some consider the ten-dollar fine a worthwhile price of admission. - B.M.



★ EVE OTTO: BACK TO THE GARDEN ★

In Woodstock, the Age of Aquarius has become the New Age. The best embodiment of this evolution is located at 5 Tannery Brook Road, beneath the sign "Garden of Eve, Almost Anything Shop, Also Dry Cleaning Service." Proprietress Eve Otto, 46, is a feisty, fun-loving gypsy earth mother who mines - with her own pickaxe - the Herkimer healing crystals she sells. She also reads tarot and dispenses folk remedies and spiritual advice to her loyal customers. "Garden of Eve is my church," she says. "It's open seven days a week, and anybody who needs moral support or health advice can come staggering in, and they'll walk out a little lighter and a little more knowledgeable."

Eve played her string harp at "sound-ins," the happenings that led up to the Woodstock festival, and has jammed with the likes of Richie Havens, Pete Seeger and the Isley Brothers. In the Seventies, she was disabled by rheumatoid arthritis, but she regained her strength through holistic therapies. In 1980 she opened the Garden of Eve. "Now I'm one of the last fading bohemians left in Woodstock," she says.

But Eve has no intention of leaving her garden. "I have a past life as an American Indian lady gathering herbs in these mountains," she says. "So I'm really rooted here. Besides, there's not another dry-cleaning service in town!" - B.M.