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Showing postings 1 - 39 of 39 in the thread: Beatniks in Willi ?.

Posting: Beatniks in Willi ?	Posting 1
Poster: John Boudreau	
Date: 17 August 2007 5:46 PM	
Did the Beatnik craze ever catch on in Willimantic in the late 50's/early 60's ? Where did the Beatniks hang out ? Any stories ? As a little kid my image of a Beatnik was Maynard G Krebs on the Dobie Gillis show ! LOL ...	
Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?	Posting 2
Poster: Ed Gervais	
Date: 17 August 2007 5:57 PM	
John:	
We, in California were never able to rid ourselves of "Zelda" of the same show!	
She is an "Assembly Person" for our state government, and an "Outspoken" lesbian rights activist. She still looks the same as she did on the show 40 years ago.	
Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?	Posting 3
Poster: Francis Sellars	
Date: 17 August 2007 7:34 PM	
Ed Gervais, Ed is Paul & Esther still living if so where do they live. What is the status of their children and where do they live.	
Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?	Posting 4
Poster: Skipper Barrett	
Date: 18 August 2007 12:04 AM	
ed & all:	
yes...wmtc had beatniks....i think i was one, sort of...at least i read jack kerouac and went to NYC once in a while and hit the coffeee houses. in hartford, there was a guy named hugh romney who was a poet at a place called the golden lion. later he became named wavy gravy , part of ken kesity's gang in south west.	
also, there was a dear ole pal of mine named rich ' scoop; bellavance of wmtc -- who worked as a reporter at the chronicle in 60s. rich was sort of a 'beatnik'. he was a terrific guy...he passed away a few years ago. we were good pals.	
wmtc had no coffe houses...wish it had ... would have hing out there	
and ed, are you not referring to actress sheila kuhl, the 'zelda' of the GILLIS show?? she is in santa monica as a politico now.	
Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?	Posting 5
Poster: Ed Gervais	
Date: 18 August 2007 12:35 AM	
Skipper:	
My God! I forgot about Rich Belleavance. He was a great guy. Reddish hair if I remember correctly. Definitely a special guy. He had a sweet sister, too.	
Shiela is the lady that I was referring to in my post. There is no mistaking her face as being "Zelda," do you agree?	
Whitey:	
I am ashamed to say that I have not kept contact with my family as much as I should have. I believe that Esther is living in Windham Center, somewhere around "Lover's Lane. Paul passed away on March 3, 2004, about 3 days before his 85th birthday. I'm not sure where the children are off to. There was Rodney (Rod), Adrian (Tommy) and beautiful Norma. I'll have to contact my cousin Peter to get the latest information. He lives in Windham Center near Indian Hollow Road.	
I'm sorry that I can't be of more help.	
Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?	Posting 6
Poster: Skipper Barrett	
Date: 18 August 2007 1:14 AM	
hey ed:	

yeah dick bellavance was a great guy for sure..he graduated WHS in 58 with our class, but was supposed to graduate in 57 he told me....dropped out for a while or something.

he went on to work as a reporter at new britain herald and then back to wmtc in 60s. we hooked up about 1997 after a long, long disconnect.
he was sick for a long time and finally lost the battle in about 2001 or so.

his sister elaine died in 1988. i remember her too from school

take care

sb

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 7
Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 18 August 2007 2:37 AM

Skipper ,

" yes...wmtc had beatniks...

think i was one, sort of...at least i read jack kerouac and went to NYC once in a while and hit the coffeee houses. in hartford, there was a guy named hugh romney who was a poet at a place called the golden lion. later he became named wavy gravy , part of ken kesey's gang in south west. "

I remember seeing Hugh Romney at the Woodstock Music Festival in 69 . He was some sort of co-MC or some such thing . Bob Dylan mentions him in his book " Chronicles " . Apparently they gigged at a lot of the same places in NYC in the early days of Bob's career .

I discovered Kerouac late (hey - I was born in 1952 so ...) , but he is my numero uno fave writer . I have all the prose and poesy books plus a bunch of bios , DVDs , CDs ...you name it . We had a lot in common he and I . To me Willimantic was , in the 50's anyway , a miniature redbrick Lowell ...

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 8
Poster: John Tormey
Date: 18 August 2007 1:03 PM

I crossed paths with Hugh back in the Late Fifties while I was a student at Boston University. My roommate and I had a pad on Huntington Avenue near Copley Square and a lot of the coffee house crowd poets crashed there. And I mean crashed.

Hugh R. was a gentle guest. His optimism impressed me. His poetry fit nicely through a red wine haze.

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 9
Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf
Date: 18 August 2007 4:18 PM

Don't quote me on this but I think I saw a few of them at a recent Thursday Night Festival on Main Street!!

I missed the Hippy and Beatnik movement since I was too busy fighting the Vietnam War. . .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 10
Poster: Ed Gervais
Date: 18 August 2007 4:57 PM

Richard:

If you should ever want to see the Hippies and Beatniks that you missed seeing when you were "In Country," they're are alive and well in the halls of the California Assembly, the mid and upper management slots in the bureaucracies of the California and Federal Governments. Try looking at the State Department, Department of Commerce, and the EPA. They're are many of them there, some even sport their same haircuts. Shiela Kuhl Assemblywoman for Santa Monica, mentioned in another post, is a good example.

Ed

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 11
Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 19 August 2007 9:00 PM

Hey Ed ...email me at

sonor23@yahoo.co.jp

and I'll give you Unc Norm's address and phone # .

John

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
 Poster: Steve Starger
 Date: 20 August 2007 3:14 PM

Posting 12

Hey Skip,

Haven't been over here in a while.. You and I were beatnik poseurs in those days -- black socks, white sneakers, black turtle-necks, etc. But we did read Kerouac et al faithfully, listened to Miles Davis on a Sat. 1/2 hour show called Just Jazz, hosted by Bill Lacey. We'd go to NYC a bunch and prowling the Village -- the Gaslight, where William Morris and Hugh Romney (before he became Way Gravy -- read their poetry; the Cafe Bizarre, the San Remo, Figaro, etc, looking for that scene that had passed on years before and was now populated by second-generation hangers-on (I suppose we were parr of that). I remember writing a lot of bad faux Beat stuff then, but that's what writers do to find their own voice. I also copied Wolfe, Faulkner, Hemingway, and others. It was part of the education of a budding writer.

In terms of what the fifties were like (John B), I was in high school during the last half of the fifties, and I think Skipper will back me up, that it was a struggle a lot of the time for kids who were a bit "different." That probably hasn't changed. But time levels everything; the Great Equalizer gives us all receding hair, pot bellies, and God knows what diseases.

By the way, I just read a review in the Sunday Times Book Review of the new Kerouac book. Yes, the original "Scroll" version of On the Road has been published. Now we can read what old Ti Jean was really up to with that book. Can you believe, 50 years????

Steve

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 20 August 2007 6:17 PM

Posting 13

Where have you been Steve ? Great to see you back .

Re: On The Road scroll ...

As we all know , the published version of On The Road was heavily edited , reluctantly I might add , by Jack and others . It was the only way the book could get published at the time , unfortunately .

Take a look at this example :

In the book, it says , "My aunt once said the world would never find peace until men fell at their women's feet and asked for forgiveness, but Dean knew this . "

In the scroll :

" My mother once said the world would never find peace until men fell at their women's feet and asked for forgiveness. This is true all over the world in the jungles of Mexico, in the back streets of Shang Hai, in New York cocktail bars, husbands are getting drunk while the women stay home with the babes of their ever darkening future. If these men stop the machine and come home and get on their knees and ask for forgiveness and the women bless them peace will suddenly descend on the earth with a great silence like the inherent silence of the apocalypse. "

Big difference , ey ?

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
 Poster: Steve Starger
 Date: 21 August 2007 12:08 AM

Posting 14

Yes, very different. Also the famous "mad ones" passage is a lot briefer (shorter???) in the scroll versions. The whole "exploding like spiders across the stars" and "everyone goes awww!" isn't there. So in my mind that passage benefited from Kerouac's later editing. It's pure poetry. K may have reluctantly done revising and editing, but all proof seems to point to his being a careful, canny writer who knew what he was about. The spontaneous prose part of his writing is still legit, though. I think Malcolm Cowley was a sensitive editor for Kerouac, but it'll be nice to read the raw stuff, with the real names in there. Of course, a dog ate the ending, so we'll never know what K had in mind there. Still, I love the way "Road" ends now.

John, I've been around; just haven't signed on. Been busy with promoting my own book and such and looking for new projects, family stuff, etc. etc. When these kinds of subjects come up, I'll be there, mouthing off.

Speaking of which, I interview Hugh "Wavy Gravy" Romney for the COurant Sunday magazine in 1971, when he brought the Hog Farm to Ct. Valley Hospital in Middletown to give the residents a show. I think it lifted everybody's spirits, if only for a brief time.

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
 Poster: Ada Kerachsky Albright
 Date: 21 August 2007 3:14 PM

Posting 15

You might want to check this out from today's (8-21-07) NYTimes:
<http://papercuts.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/08/21/he-was-a-very-lonely-man/index.html?hp>

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?

Posting 16

Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 21 August 2007 5:56 PM

Thanks for that Ada .

Back in 67-68 , Jack , and a young friend of his who did substitute English teaching at Lowell High , went together to the school one morning after Jack demanded . The office staff , upon seeing Kerouac who had been drinking , got very uptight and called up a couple of coaches from the athletic department . One of the coaches remembered Jack and because of some ambivalence as to how to handle the situation , Jack and his friend were allowed to head for the class .

Kerouac was introduced to the class and it was necessary because most kids had no idea who he was .

Jack discussed Melville's Moby Dick . After the class , Jack was prevented from going to his friend's next class by the coaches .

That night Jack and his friend were at a cafe , where Jack's long oratory included only a brief reference to his Lowell High visit .

" I went to Lowell High today and I dug the kids there , but as for the rest of them , they rejected me . He then repeated softly , " They rejected me . "

Jack's friend's account of this years later : " There were no tears rolling down Jack's cheeks , but there was a powerful lot of crying going on inside of him . "

Oh , Jack's friend was never called on to do any more substitute teaching at Lowell High .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 21 August 2007 6:02 PM

Posting 17

And by " Jack demanded " , I meant that Jack wanted to teach the class with his buddy so he " demanded " that he go with him to school .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: Steve Starger
Date: 24 August 2007 4:18 PM

Posting 18

I just received the Scroll book from Amazon. There are three long essays by Beat scholars; the one by the editor of the volume has all that any Kerouac geek (any takers, John????) would love. It's a blow-by-blow account of the entire history of the writing, rewriting, rejecting, and final publication of "Road." There's a lot of insight into Kerouac's state of mind throughout the close analysis of various drafts. I think he'd love being a part of the Viking Portable series and revel in the fact that his books are still in print and more ancillary books about him and his buddies and his times are coming out.

I won't say how the Scroll version ends; we know the legend of the dog eating the final pages, but it was a surprise to me. Highly recommended, again, for Kerouac nerds and anyone interested in literature, language, and the endurance of both.

ss

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 24 August 2007 8:49 PM

Posting 19

Steve ,

My copy arrived from Amazon Japan yesterday . I got a little choked up looking at the photo (which I'd seen before) of Jack holding the scroll , as I was talking to my daughter about the book . She is a sophomore at Kyoto University and is an English major . One of her classes this year , taught by an American instructor , concerned America in the 1950's (movies , literature , etc ...) and she did learn about Kerouac and Cassady ! I was pleasantly surprised to say the least . She of course already knew about Jack through me , and actually visited his grave with me in Lowell when she was only 4 and a half . She still remembers it .

I'm going to start reading it over the weekend .

All my best Steve .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: Steve Starger
Date: 27 August 2007 3:38 PM

Posting 20

John,

You probably know that the scroll is on tour now; it's in Lowell for a couple more weeks, then, fittingly, it hits the road again. I actually saw the scroll rolled into the typewriter years ago at the Whitney Museum of American Art in NYC. They had mounted a "Beat culture" show and there it was, the Holy Grail, protected under plexiglass. It was an interesting show for me, but the only fine art (by common definition) on display was some of Larry Rivers' paintings. There were lots of record jackets, first editions, raw manuscripts, etc., certainly a valid cultural display but kind of strange for a major fine art museum to offer.

Meanwhile, the Gotham Book Mart, on 47th St. between 5th and 6th avenues (in the Diamond District) has closed its doors after G-d knows how many decades. A lot of the Beat luminaries et al hung out there and gave readings over the years. Great bookstore. There aren't too many left like it, in NYC or elsewhere. They're dropping like flies. Do I sound like an old fart or what??

steve

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 21
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 27 August 2007 8:39 PM

Steve ,

Yes , I had read somewhere that the scroll was " on tour " and now in Lowell .

I wonder how Jack feels (safe in heaven) about all the millions upon millions of dollars being made by his wife's family and others off of his legacy . I understand that his estate was worth \$ 91 when he died . Now worth over \$ 30 million .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 22
 Poster: Skipper Barrett
 Date: 27 August 2007 11:27 PM

hey stra -gah:

what ya up too???

sorry i mised ya in californie.

yeah i remember poet taylor meade in the gaslight cafe and his poetry reeking of poor taste and poor writing... and that trip to NYC years ago with bruce whatzhisname... and the claridge hotel on times square.

and god was pooh bear, or maybe a rolled up ole newspaper blowing across 42nd street

sb

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 23
 Poster: Steve Starger
 Date: 28 August 2007 12:27 AM

Hey Skippah,

I guess I'm doing OK, all things considered, you know

Taylor Meade, right. He also "starred" in the Mekas brothers' films. Remember "Hallelujah the Hills"? I think I saw that at the Paris Cinema in Wethersfield or the Art Cinema on Franklin Ave. in Hartford when it was an art/foreign film house, before its porn years.

So many memories drifting back from "old Willi." Maybe it's getting old; maybe it's this forum. Skip, we went to New York with Bruce Thompson in his '51 Ford, hit some jazz clubs, got our pic taken with Gene Krupa, who Bruce, a drummer, idolized. Bruce and Ron Menditto were killed in Bruce's 56 Fairlane ragtop on Rt. 6, near the golf course, when we were in college. Helluva nice guy. Damn shame. I found out about it from that cop, St. Marie (last name, can't remember his first name), who came to my father's store a lot while walking his beat. Then I opened the COurant and there it was, splashed on the front page. I was sick, couldn't work in the store for a long time that day after that.

Grab every second, boys and girls

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 24
 Poster: Steve Starger
 Date: 28 August 2007 12:34 AM

John,

I think Jack would be happy his work is still in print and canonized but pissed that he didn't have the money from the sweat of his creative labors. Jack Kerouac at 85 is hard to picture, like trying to imagine James Dean or Marilyn in their dotage. Myths arise from young flameouts. For the rest of us, the extant work and the myth have to suffice.

"He is buried under Thomas Wolfe's October leaves "

Allen Ginsberg's remark at a press conference I attended for the Courant at Yale a day after K's death. Ginsberg and Orlovsky were there to do an appearance at the Yale Political Union. A tragic confluence of events.

ss

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 25
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 28 August 2007 7:11 PM

I wonder how Jack feels about his name being sold (by Sampas) to real estate developers who are selling JACK KEROUAC LOFTS in Colorado ???

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 26

Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 28 August 2007 7:12 PM

<http://www.kerouaclofts.com/>

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: Steve Starger
Date: 29 August 2007 3:27 PM

Posting 27

It's all merchandising now. Marketing is the new art form, or is that fashion? Kerouac, solid, patriotic American that he was, despite all of his craziness and searching, might have been OK with condos or whatever named for him. How about Jack Kerouac Alley, next to City Lights Books, in San Francisco? I bet that was a lot easier to get through the city fathers of SF than Eugene O'Neill Drive in New London. I remember the fight the city council had over that because some didn't want to name a city street after a local drunk! Bottom line, writers probably don't care all that much, unless they're political radicals and don't want to have their names associated with bourgeois culture. And, sad to say, in the long term, serious writers, musicians and artists don't mean a hell of a lot anymore in this culture. And to think there used to be heated debates in the country over literature!

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: Skipper Barrett
Date: 29 August 2007 11:30 PM

Posting 28

steve:

yeah the gaslight in the village....and that tall blonde waitress that served us chilled cider on a sultry august day circa 1959/60 after that long the train trip down to NYC from hartford... and years later wasn't it the claridge hotel on times square for \$4 a nite on those days with bruce thompson ...yeah..i remember now...the basin st east and the nite the waiter got mad cuz we were all too broke to tip him when they shutterboxed us with gene krupa.... i have that photo still

lately i have been reading the haiku poems of gary snyder again, speaking of beats. i can see so many, many stars (and constellations) way out here in the CA desert at nite...it is a wonderful and spiriritual place even if the temps today hit 116f. i have 4 road runners (meep, meep) that come by our place and barbara and I feed ground turkey 3-4 times a daily. they are lovely creatures -- so intelligent, actually dog like and come to a certaion whistle i have perfected.

zowie

skipper

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: Steve Starger
Date: 30 August 2007 3:42 PM

Posting 29

Skip,

Zowie indeed and YOW! too (Thanks, Zippy). Oh, the stars in the desert. How well I remember them. Truly big sky celestial mystical mind blowers. Reminds me of being a kid in Willi and lying on the grass in our back yard at Ardman Drive and looking clearly, straight up into the Milky Way. O Lost and O Found! all at once.

Yep. the Claridge Hotel and Basin St. East with Krupa. Actually, the waiter who got pissed at us for not tipping him (were we dorks then, or what) was at Birdland. Remember the "Peanut Gallery," where you could sit for two bucks and not be hassled by drunk hustlers and just dig on the music?

I've got that Krupa pic as well. We're all holding cigarettts and wearing ties and jackets! Just thought we had the world by the glutes.

Be well, my brother.

ss

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 30 August 2007 9:14 PM

Posting 30

Steve ,

The Sampas family have become multi-millionaires not only by raking in dough from Jack's novels (On The Road for example still sells over 150,000 a year World-wide) , but also by licensing his name and image which turn up on everything from condos and cigarette cases to smoking belts and wallets and God knows what else . I don't think Jack would be too happy about his name or image being used to sell these types of things . I am positive that Allen Ginsberg wouldn't . Now Allen did do The Gap's khaki pants ads , however he donated all the earnings to The Jack Kerouac School for Disembodied Poetics, a non-profit school dedicated to poetry and spiritual studies .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: John Boudreau
Date: 30 August 2007 9:49 PM

Posting 31

Some interesting readin here ...related ...

<http://www.roadratroberts1.bravepages.com/JACK%20KEROUAC.htm>

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 32
 Poster: Steve Starger
 Date: 7 September 2007 3:36 PM

John B,

Well, Burroughs shilled for IBM before he died, but he was hip to the subversive qualities of technology, kind of like the word virus concept. Yeah, I guess if Kerouac could disown his daughter (but he did give her permission to use his name! What a dad!) I suppose he wouldn't like his precious name besmirched by crass commercialism. He was a bundle of contradictions, that lad.

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 33
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 7 September 2007 8:16 PM

You're right , Jack could be contradictory at times . And he certainly was no saint . Why he couldn't bring himself to accept Jan as his own in his later years is something I can't fathom . Telling her she could use his name down in Mexico writing was his indirect way of admitting she was his daughter , but for a man who was so " sympathetic " , and to whom family was so important (father , mother , brother Gerard) , that is one hell of an unforgivable way of doing so .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 34
 Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf
 Date: 8 September 2007 7:25 AM

Who the hell was Jack Kerouac? Did I miss something?

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 35
 Poster: John Boudreau
 Date: 8 September 2007 6:08 PM

Jack Kerouac was a novelist, writer and poet from Lowell , MA . He , along with William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg were the best known of the Beat Generation writers .

Jack is considered an important and influential writer of spontaneous and confessional prose that inspired many other writers , as well as musicians like The Beatles, Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison. Kerouac's best-known books are On the Road, The Dharma Bums and Big Sur .

Surely you know of whom I am talking ?

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 36
 Poster: J. Richard Phaneuf
 Date: 9 September 2007 9:14 AM

Sorry John. . . I've never heard of him. . .

I apparently missed a whole big chunk of American history, culture and events during the Vietnam years. Another popular person I completely missed was Buddy Holly. On the anniversary of his death several years ago, I wondered what all the hullabaloo was about the guy since I hadn't heard of him either.

I remember loving the music during those years like "Fire and Rain," "Somethings Happening here," and "Bobbie McGee," but Holly completely got by me.

Being halfway around the world was probably why I missed the Lowell novelist. . .

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 37
 Poster: Steve Starger
 Date: 10 September 2007 10:24 AM

Richard,

Buddy Holly was the great Texas '50s rock and and roller. With his band, the Crickets, he produced classic hits like "That'll Be the Day," "Peggy Sue," "Rave On," "Every Day," et. etc. Holly was part of the sound track of my high school years. He was killed in a plane crash on Feb. 3, 1959, along with Ritchie Valens ("Donna," "La Bomba") and the Big Bopper ("Chantilly Lace") while they were flying from one concert to another, during a snowstorm in Iowa. When Don McLean wrote in "American Pie" about "bad news on the doorstep," he was talking about the news story of the crash. That's what he meant by "the day the music died."

Steve Starger

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ? Posting 38
 Poster: John Costello
 Date: 11 September 2007 11:05 AM

Buddy Holly was also quite a musical innovator - Lennon and McCartney attributed a lot of their music composition tendencies to Holly's influence.

From a 'History of Rock & Roll' perspective, in Holly's songs "Raining in My Heart" and "It Doesn't Matter Anymore" he was the first rock guy to use a full orchestral background, featuring violins and harps, on a hit song during those days.

Give those two great songs a listen, if you can find them - well worth it!

Posting: Re: Beatniks in Willi ?
Poster: Steve Starger
Date: 11 September 2007 2:36 PM

Posting 39

Good point, John. Thanks for supplying the info.