



Sculpture by Robert Lamboy

a dark time

In the fall of 1968 I was 21 years old. Growing up in a small rural village our "diversity" extended to being Catholic or Methodist. When I went to college I lived with Jews and African Americans. My world became so much larger. In September 1968 I landed in Peace Corps volunteer in a small town in Southern India. 25,000 people and I was the only white person. Diversity had been turned upside down! For the first four months I went to work at a poultry farm, went home and stayed inside listening to the BBC on the radio. I knew little of the Indian culture. I had never met anyone from India and knew little of the local language. I was scared to go out. I became depressed because I was scared. I didn't know if I could make it there, no less feel as if I made a difference. This went on and became worse by Christmas. It was my first Christmas away from home. And Christmas was a big deal in my house. I cursed the day I decided not to go to jail or even Vietnam. Somehow, I knew I had to do something! So, on Christmas Eve, I walked into the main part of town. I went into an ice cream shop. I was very, very scared. but once I sat down people started asking me questions, smiling and laughing! In my broken Kanarese I answered them. They laughed hard at me but took time to correct me. They were friendly, outgoing and helped me not to fear the unknown - to laugh at myself. From that day on, I went into town every night and sat with the people. In three months I was fluent in Kanarese! From then on my fear and depression evaporated and I learned one of the most important lessons in my life. That is, darkness and light are two sides of the same coin. Fear is something you walk through. And people will help and make it worth your while.

A Peaceful Place

I don't have one peaceful place that I can think of but I do know that the sound of water always makes me feel at ease. Sitting on a rock listening to the river run, falling asleep listening to the waves slap against the hull of a sailboat, closing my eyes and hearing the ocean waves hitting the shore or listening to raindrops hitting the roof.

Some people give me a sense of peace.

I can get lost in drawing or making something like the abstract wood sculpture on the opposite page.

