Oral history interview with Jerry Grant, February 8, 2012

Grant, Jerry
Musician and politician

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CAITLIN: Caitlin Davis interviewing Jerry Grant on February 8, 2012. Hello.

JERRY: Hi Caitlin.

CAITLIN: Well I guess I want to start with explaining your background. Were you originally from Delaware? Did you go to the university?

JERRY: Sure. I was born in Delaware, born in Wilmington, St. Francis Hospital. I went to Catholic Schools. I went to St. Matthews in—in the Woodcrest area off Maryland Avenue. I went to Salesianum High School. Then I went away to Holy Cross College in Western Massachusetts for two and half years and then I came back and finished my bachelor’s in the 20 year program at the University of Delaware.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: So I came back. So just for years I graduated high school in ’69, my degree from Delaware is in ’89.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: I did much—much of what I did in between ’69 and ’89 we’ll be talking about.

CAITLIN: Okay.
JERRY: Okay.

CAITLIN: Were you always involved with music? Did you go to Holy Cross for—?

JERRY: Not for—I was—it was the old days where I accepted an offer from Holy Cross and then my father said, “Let’s go up and see it.”

It was totally unlike [inaudible] today.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: Now up there I did get my first radio experience—well, music experience. My mother was a jitterbugger. I think I get most of my love of music from my mother and she had records in the house. Do you want to go back this far or not? No?

JERRY: Sure, yeah, yeah. Feel free.

CAITLIN: She had records—she had 45s in the house—45 RPMs and I remember them vividly. It was like “Hound Dog” by Elvis Presley and “Sweet Little 16” by Chuck Berry and my mother was kind of hip is what I’m trying to say. She had at that time four kids, later on five kids, but she loved music and there was music and she’d grab us and dance with us and stuff like that all the time.

And so I grew up with that and our family was a typical family. The girls took piano lessons. The guy—my brother took—my younger—I’m the oldest of five.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: I didn’t take any music lessons. I actually took art lessons here at the Delaware Art Museum.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: It was kind of fun. But so my brother took trumpet lessons. Anyway, we had a piano in the house. And so then in high school—there’s so much to talk about. In high school I did start a band with some other friends, a kid who was taking guitar lessons and a drummer and I just sang for that band. Then the second—then that was after—I’d say between freshman and sophomore year of high school, so that would be ’66, ’67, something like that.

CAITLIN: What was that band called?

JERRY: That was called The Overdose. And I will say we—we had never seen or touched drugs in our lives. We had no idea at all, but we called ourselves The Overdose.

CAITLIN: The name was catchy.
JERRY: Right, right, right. They’re too much. So—and we were just a little band. We had no bass. We just used two guitars, drums, two singers. Two singers, where none were needed. So then the next year we decided—we were all big soul music fans. Let me back up a little bit here for the timeline just to say that radio—I’m just going to give you—some of this might be known to you. Just stop me if it is.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: But back then it was A.M. radio was really all that was available. The F.M. band was just like easy listening music streams for dentist offices and stuff like that. So the A.M. was where it was and A.M.s generally had—was top 40 radio, which had to appeal to everybody, so you would hear pop music on their, whatever that was. For my age group it was like the holdover of like Sinatra and those guys from our parent’s area, but also was rock and roll like Chuck Berry and that kind of stuff. And in my particular years—the early ‘60s pre-Beatles is when I started listening to—of course the Beatles are February of ’64, of course you know that. So—it’s like Kennedy was assassinated in November of ’63, the Beatles come in February of ’64. That’s—that’s those two events are really important.

And so we listened to WIMS. WIMS 1380 in Wilmington was what the kids listened to.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: The adults listened to WDEL, which is still around, which is more like a news talk station now, but it was—that would play like Sinatra and stuff like that in those days and a lot of times we were trapped, like “Oh, mom turn off WDEL,” but you had to know what the weather was and stuff like that.

Anyway, so we would listen to WIMS. All right bands in high school. All right. Meantime, some of us that were a little more adventurous were starting to listen to—out of Philadelphia—well, let’s get to—that was my first band. All right, in that band we mainly played a lot of British Invasion stuff because [inaudible], so we all had our favorite groups. We played Rolling Stones; Animals were one of our favorites, things like that. And we played some soul music, whatever, black music because it all goes kind of together.

We start to kind of branch off like in ’66, ’67. F.M. comes along in ’67 I believe and say, like in our class, half the hip guys listened to the F.M. underground, which was at that time starting to play—so we’re all listening to 45s but now albums are starting to come into—before albums previously had been like classic or shows, “My Fair Lady” or something like that. Now albums are like, “Ooh, Jimi Hendrix has an album” or somebody and they’re long cuts. They’re not three minutes anymore. They’re five or ten or 20 minutes, whatever.

So the F.M. underground scene starts to come along and those guys would want to play long cuts. And so, they were out of Philadelphia mainly, so WDAS, which the A.M. was black. The F.M. turned out to be an underground rock station, playing Cream, Jimi Hendrix and that kind of stuff. Also WMMR came along also that way on the F.M. band.
The other hip—they were some of the hip guys. The other hip guys listened to A.M. radio in from Philadelphia, black stations because we wanted to hear more black music because that’s all we wanted to hear, black music. So WDAS F.M. was the strongest station—strongest signal—had a signal which actually would cut their power at 6:10 or 6:15 in the evening. Excuse me, so I get excited about this stuff.

CAITLIN: No, it’s okay.

JERRY: So Butterball, who we found out years later was white, would come on like at 6:00 and he’d play his theme. He—it used to be “Cleo’s Mood” by Junior Walker. Later on it was “Sex Machine” by Sly and Family Stone and—and at 6:10 it would go blip, and just the station would go off and you couldn’t hear it anymore. It’s kind of interesting.

Anyway, all right. So—so that’s the background. So we had—The Overdose was a rock band, the first band I was in. The second band was called The Soul Children, which later there was a famous band called The Soul Children, but we were—if we had an attorney at that time we would have sued them, but anyway. And we were called The Soul Children. So we added horns and a bass player finally—

CAITLIN: So the same members from before, but you—

JERRY: The core was the same.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: The core was the same. Our guitarist had always been like from the outside. He had been from New Castle. We were all from right around Newport—I drove by Patterson’s a lot, St. Matthews and St. John would be [inaudible].

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: All right. So right. That core, we added another singer, so then we had three.

CAITLIN: Three for your—?

JERRY: So that’s the point where I—of course our idols were like the Temptations and stuff, vocal groups, and I just found this morning, god, I shouldn’t even—we had ruffled shirts. We would wait for the bus at night at Market and Wilmington and go down to Breaks, which was the men’s store—where all the black men shop. We were like, “Oh yeah, this is cool.” You know. Anyway.

But meanwhile at that point I was saying I’m not made for this world as a singer. And so I had a piano in the house, so I had my sister teach me some stuff—teach me where middle C was, but then I did go and take piano lessons from a local lady who just—everybody else was like 8 and I was 16 at this point. And she let me play—she let me play “Paint it Black” by the Rolling Stones, just a little bit of a growth experience for her. “Oh, that has a Middle Eastern feel. That’s very good.”
So anyway—so I played keyboards, but I was also one of the singers and we had two guys that just sung plus me was a singer and then we had a guitar, bass and then drums. And then we had two horns. One horn was always my brother and I don’t know if you want to talk to my brother. My brother lives right over here. He lives on Shot Cross Avenue. And he played in this band and he played in my later band, which was—and I don’t want to say “my band.” I was never like the leader of the band. I was highly opinionated, but I was never the leader of the bands.

But my brother played with me. So meanwhile I’m 16, he’s 11.

CAITLIN: What’s his name?

JERRY: His name was Jim Grant. He’s also valuable because he was editor—he was the associate—what’s the word? Deputy features editor at the News Journal in the ‘80s. He was in charge of “55 Hours”, which it still exists now, which is where you get your entertainment news in the News Journal.

CAITLIN: Oh, that’s perfect. I would love to talk to him.

JERRY: He would be—he’s kind of funny character. Maybe—he’s very articulate and—and knowledgeable. He works in politics now, too and he’ll—he’s much more anal than I am. He’ll want to know, “What are we talking about, or what are we exactly going to do?”

He’ll come with a plan of everything. So you know. You want to get all sides of things.

Anyway, so it was—the horn section was always my brother. He was 11. We were 16—a lot—we were 16 and my brother was 11 or something. He could really play. He was very musical. Still is. And so it was always him and some other person like us. We’d have like a big gunky goon of a guy who played trumpet. He had a girl playing trumpet, which was really odd. She was a twin. They would come and go. They would come and go, but my brother was kind of a—he was the brains of the operation as far as the horn section went, do you know what I mean?

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Oh we had a guy who later went on to become a T.V. minister. A guy named Gary Webster. But anyway, that’s another whole story.

And we would play James Brown, The Temptations, Sam and Dave, this is all—we would do soul basically is what we’d do. So we were The Soul Children. We did a song called “Everlasting Love,” which has had three or four other hit versions over the years because we had horns. All right, that’s enough of that.

And then I’ll just quickly say the next year, I would go on to—we’re trying—we’re trying to focus on the ‘80s, aren’t we trying to do?

CAITLIN: From ’70 to ’89.
JERRY: From ’70 to ’89, okay good, good. All right, good. So—all right. So I went on to another band and let’s just get—get that band done. The next band we were called the Soulicitors, okay?

CAITLIN: So it was still soul.

JERRY: Right, right, right. And little did we know we’ve had a couple lawyers come out of there. I’m actually trained as a lawyer. I don’t practice, but I have a law degree from Widener. Charlie Butler who’s the Assistant Attorney General right at the moment was the bass player.

CAITLIN: Soul listeners?

JERRY: Soulicitors. Like a solicitor.

CAITLIN: Oh, solicitor, okay.

JERRY: Soulicitors. So we were like soul, it made no sense at all. All right. Okay. So and then we—and then we played—we finally went where our hearts wanted to, well this is me and my brother anyway, we got rid of some of the guys—we left some of the guys that were in the old band, Soul Children. We got two black guys from McCain High School to sing. Finally it was why are we trying to sing? This is insane. We got two guys that could. So we got two guys from McCain High School. Butchy Clark and Ricky Owens. And that’s when we did fine out what drugs were all about.

And then—so Charlie Butler was the bass player—it doesn’t matter. These guys aren’t famous. Larry Iorii—I O R I I, who was the guitar player. And then Justin DiNorscia, back in the days when the only person we knew named Justin was in our band. Later on half the world would be named Justin. But Justin DiNorscia—I’ll spell it for you even though you’re not going to—D I capital N O R S C I A. And so then—the horn section then became my brother and guy named Ricky Benson—a white guy named Ricky Benson who was an excellent musician.

We were—we were pretty good for that. The venues back then were mainly battle of the bands run by high schools—Catholic High Schools or non-Catholic High Schools and we’d play we’d be up against black bands—and still got—what tried to get through is the divergence there. A battle of the bands would be typically two or three soul bands and two or three what we would call psychedelic bands in those days. The bands would copy Cream or Hendrix or those guys, do you know what I mean?

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: There was a divergence there. We didn’t really realize they kind of had a common root.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: I remember one band called—I don’t know who you’re going to talk to but there’s—there are various brothers who you should talk to about the rock scene and—the Watson Brothers.
CAITLIN: The Watson Brothers and the Melton Brothers.

JERRY: Right. The Meltons were kind of mellow/jazzy. The Watsons could rock and they—their first band was called Comfort. And their most famous band—well, their earliest band was a called Comfort and I remember being at a battle one time and they were doing all their psychedelic stuff and then they did “Paying the Cost to be the Boss” by B.B. King and we’re like, “Whoa, they’re doing a blues song.”

We’re only allowed to do black songs. Us white guys over here, we’re the only guys that do black songs. Anyway, there was that division. I’m sorry.

So that was—that’s kind of high school for. I mean, I was in this band. Every summer—it seemed like the band would break up in the spring and over the summer you’d rehearse a new band and you’d have a new band in the fall.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: And it was a way to meet girls and all that kind of stuff. And it was our social life basically because we didn’t—I mean, I was not a dancer or anything. We weren’t jocks or anything and that was our little niche there. And it wasn’t—it wasn’t kind of the glamor thing it is today. You just—you were in a band. Today it’s more of a glamor. But you learn lots of lessons. You would play in some places. You’d meet some bands that were—guys that were kind of grizzled veterans that were probably two years older than we were but they played a lot and they were getting high and stuff. It was just—it was just a whole other— meanwhile your parents are saying, “I got you a job at Stanford’s prom.”

Then we’re taking our drug addicted singers to Stanford’s prom. Yeah. And then the singer shows up with a white girlfriend. It was just a different era. It was just—and she was underage and it was like [inaudible]. I’m the only one with a driver’s license. But that’s another whole thing. You want—you want music or the arts? What do you want? Do you want—you want—?

CAITLIN: I need both.

JERRY: Okay, right, right. So that was—so that’s kind of—it’s still like rock and roll—it’s still kind of bands on Ed Sullivan once in a while. There’s no M.T.V. It’s not the glamour thing that it is today at all. I look at some of these—somebody today has a hit record or two and ends up with a T.V. series or something. I’m thinking all guys, I take it they’re all dead now. They’ve all O.D-ed, but they could have had their own show. It was just—it was different. It was the other. It was this will pass. It was “you will get over this. You’ll get over this phase.”

All right, so I went to Holy Cross. I—and redirect whenever you want to redirect me here.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: Went to Holy Cross. I was like one of four kids from Delaware at Holy Cross. And actually just parenthetically a new book has just come out from Random House—the printer
Random House about the efforts by Holy Cross in ’68—’69—I graduated in ’69. So this is September of ’69. But in fall of ’68—Martin Luther King gets shot in April of ’68. Priest and Jesuits—Holy Cross was a Jesuit school. The Jesuits there go out and try to actively recruit black students. And Clarence Thomas is one of them. Clarence Thomas, I went to school with him. I knew him—he wouldn’t wave to me because he wasn’t that friendly. He would walk around—

CAITLIN: You wouldn’t wave to him.

JERRY: Well, I got there I had a black roommate. I don’t know why, but I did and it worked out really well. But there just was some people that later become famous walking around there. So this book is about five, Clarence Thomas and four other prominent—one guy won the Pulitzer, I don’t even know he—I don’t remember from campus at all. Another guy was like Scooter Libby’s lawyer. A high profile white collar crime lawyer and stuff. Anyway it’s the [inaudible] of these five—five students, but anyway, I was there. And so I got there in fall of ’69, didn’t even bring records with me, didn’t bring my keyboard with me. I thought, “Gee, go to college, you study.”

It was all male at that time. It’s not all male now. So I went there. Anyway, I—I eventually brought my keyboard up later on and somebody tried to start a band. It didn’t work out. Meanwhile I’m listening to the campus radio station all the time and—just because I’ve always loved radio and it’s kind of like a radio dessert there. Worcester’s in the middle of Massachusetts and we’re up on a hill. And I’m listening to the stations in town and they’re not playing anything. And I still had a little bit of a prejudice against anything like the underground rock. I didn’t want to hear long guitar solos or—I still liked soul music and stuff.

So they had an oldies show. So meanwhile, albums are it. Albums are everything. And it’s unlike today’s—I’m going to editorialize one more time about today’s kids, but I took my daughter down to college and going into the dorm, like here we go. It’s like a monster, like not one sound. Whereas when I went to college and here’s Miles Davis coming out of here, and the Allman Brothers are coming out of here and it was just like what—what’s that? It was just great. It was growing. It wasn’t cocooning or whatever the hell you’re doing now. Excuse me, pardon me.

I think there’s still something. I still think the radio model is going to—first it’s Pandora. Pandora bothers me. You’re just building on what you already like. If you’re—you’re—you’re a student of the arts, right?

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: Somebody just went, “Oh show me more paintings like this.”

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: I want to be exposed to something—

[Crosstalk]
CAITLIN: That’s a good point.

JERRY: You may like it or not like, but you want to be—not just Pandora [inaudible]. Anyway. So. I’m sorry, so—

CAITLIN: That’s good.

JERRY: So here we go. So I’m listening to the campus radio station, which was [inaudible] radio station, it just went to the—to the—to the campus. And they have an oldies show. It’s a bunch of psychedelic garbage the rest of the day, but they have an oldies show Sunday nights. And I—I would have done my homework because I actually studied up there when I went to Holy Cross. And they would have contests like identify the oldie or something, and—and you would win what they call—what they called goosh records, which were promotional 45s that had been sent to the radio station. Meanwhile albums were hip. So 45s, throw them in a bin over here. Just get rid of them. Just throw them in a bin. So they would give you—

CAITLIN: Are 45s the tiny records?

JERRY: Yeah, 7". Sorry, let’s go back.

CAITLIN: I’m like CDs?

JERRY: No, no, no, no. 7”—they’re 7” in diameter. They have a large hole. In America they have a large hole where a big spindle would go through, and they go at 45 revolutions per minute.

CAITLIN: So they hold less music than a—?

JERRY: Right they only have—they generally have one song on each side. An A side and a B side. You could—in England EPs were called extended play were popular where you put two cuts on each side. And then an LP, a long play was 33 and a third and that’s an album.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And if you go way pre-1950, 78s were like 10” and they went up to 78 R.P.Ms. Okay? So right. So anyway. So here’s these 45s and he’s giving them away if you could win the contest. Well I won the contest all the time. But meanwhile—but meanwhile—I’m such a serious student, meanwhile, I had applied to read the news because I was an English major and you’d hear people butcher the names of cities or towns or something like that. And you’re like, “I can do better than that.”

So I’m up there being a news reader and so it’s all Catholic male school. There are two Jewish guys, but named Cohen. And Norm Cohen was on the radio and Lou Cohen was a drug dealer. And anyway, so Norm says—I came up to get my goosh records Monday or Tuesday or something like that. Oh, I won the contest. He goes, “Oh. Are you a news reader or something?”

I said, “Yeah, I’m doing the news thing.”
He goes, “You win these oldies all the time.”

I said, “Yeah, you know, I’m just [inaudible].”

He goes, “I hate doing this show.” He goes, “Do you want to do the show?”

So he offered for me to do the show. It was five hours. It was 7:00 to midnight on a—on a Sunday night just to play oldies. I can’t even remember—I’m sure I played mostly soul music, but I think I played everything.

CAITLIN: So that was your first real serious—

JERRY: That was my first—I actually got to go there and say, “Hey. Listen to this. And listen to this. And blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.”

CAITLIN: That’s cool.

JERRY: So that was—that was kind of neat and it kind of came— it just came out of nowhere. And it was also because one—one format was dying and he was offering me this dying format because—I should mention that that was the [inaudible] station. Holy Cross was just getting an F.M. that was going to go out over the—to Worcester. So that was the hip gig to get on F.M. radio, whereas A.M. forget it. Give it to this guy from Delaware. He likes 45s.

So there’s that. So, all right. So then there’s kind of a break in story. I go to Holy Cross for two and half years somehow I just never got comfortable there or something. I got good marks, though. I think it—it was still all male up there. It was going to co-ed in a—I already knew it was going to go co-ed in a couple of years. People always say, “Why did you transfer?”

And I can never really give a good answer. I don’t really—I think it was kind of extended homesickness or something. I don’t know what. So anyway—so—so like I say in ’72 I come back down to Delaware. All right.

CAITLIN: And do you start taking classes right away?

JERRY: Right away. I live in Short dorm and we used to go over on Academy Street, right over where the university just built its new bookstore now, used to be a pizza joint there where a lot of cuties worked in there. So I needed a job, so I went and got a job at this pizza shop. So the shortest distance between two points—anyway.

All right. That is like ’72, ’73. So I should have graduated in ’73. I didn’t. I keep hanging around Newark, though. I work in making pizzas. I work in David’s bookshop, which was a really cool bookstore in Newark, which was in the mini mall.

CAITLIN: Where was the mini mall?

JERRY: The mini mall was—it’s now where I think Lieberman’s or something is now. Next to it they built little Clothes in the Fast Lane, next door there. So that was in there and I worked at
David’s bookshop. And that would be formative because that across the street, which is where California Tortilla is now, but it used to be a white house with little shops—little boutique shops in it. And some guy opened a record store across the street from there. Wonderland was the heavy duty record store up by the railroad tracks. You know, Wonderland—

CAITLIN: So was that like the first record store on Main Street, Wonderland?

JERRY: Well in this era, it was the powerhouse. Yeah, there had been others before my time. There was a place called Maccabees or something and records would just be sold as kind of an adjunct to an electronics store, things like that, but Wonderland was the first—

[Crosstalk]

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: They carried L.P.s, all L.P.s, they carried drug paraphernalia and it was the place to go.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And it was right on the railroad tracks. It was like ten feet away from the railroad tracks. It was kind of fun.

So this other guy—this other character named Jay—I forget his name now, opened a place called Lazy Jay’s Record Ranch in this little place across from the mini mall where [inaudible] is now.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And—and then—I can tie this all together. It’s great. So—so my girlfriend at the time was a girl I met at Mr. Pizza and she was still in college and she needed a part-time job so she worked for—so in back of Lazy Jay, two guys decided to try to sell tickets because the ticket business had always been—

CAITLIN: To concerts around the area?

JERRY: That’s right, right, right. Concerts and sports. Whatever, just all purpose. And so there were two brothers and they thought they could do it. Ends up, it’s hard to enter the ticket business. It’s a Monopoly. It’s an illegal monopoly is what it is. So she goes one day to me, “Hey Lazy Jay, he wants to sell that store. Why don’t you guys buy it or something.”

And we were all—I’m at the—I’m at the—

CAITLIN: How old are you at this point?

JERRY: I am—I think I’m 24, 25.

CAITLIN: Okay.
JERRY: Okay? I’m just—in hindsight I can tell I’m doing nothing basically, but at the time I was working at bookstore, loved to read books. That was cool. And buying a lot of records, going to concerts in Philadelphia constantly. I really knew my stuff. [Inaudible] Abusing my body in various ways. All right.

So—so three of us, me and—I think I brought a business from—anyway, we bought the record—we got together and cashed—like my mother cashed in some little insurance policy she had. We each—we bought for like $3,600.00 this place—after we bought it we found out he has lousy credit so we couldn’t even get records on—on 30 days from the distributor. We had to pay for our records upfront. We were stupid, but it was record store. It was a real record store.

So one of the three us ran it and the other two—we had full-time jobs, so we stayed at our full-time jobs.

CAITLIN: And this becomes I Like It Like That?

JERRY: This became I Like It Like That because there was a famous old song called “The Name of the Place is: I Like It Like That.” And that became a hip place to hang out. Wonderland had been hip before, but we were kind of—we really knew our music well.

CAITLIN: Well, this is great because that’s my second question, what it’s all about? I have lots of questions.

JERRY: Sure. How about—why don’t you ask a question and let me see—that gets us to I Like It Like That. That gets us to, I think ’76, so I’m probably 25.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: All right.

CAITLIN: So here are my questions with that. Well you mentioned you were the co-owner. Who were the—?

JERRY: Right. The other owners were—

CAITLIN: Were they friends of yours?

JERRY: Oh yeah.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: We all lived together. Yeah. I don’t want to give you this book. Are you aware of this book? This is—you should look at this book.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: All right.
CAITLIN: This has been the bane of my existence. I have been trying to locate a copy of this book and I keep on getting, “Oh, you can get it here. Oh you can get it here,” torn back and forth.

JERRY: Yeah, right.

CAITLIN: Who actually—was this by the Newark Historical Society? Did they put this together?

JERRY: Rebecca Melvin Johnson from the University of Delaware Library was—she contacted me about it to get my information about it.

CAITLIN: Okay. And doesn’t this have—this has a music section, right?

JERRY: Yeah, yeah it does.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: Yeah. And I don’t know—I will come and track you down to get this book because they did one printing of it and that’s all they ever did. And they keep saying, “Do another printing.”

And they just—they don’t do it. So I will come and get it because it’s got my picture in it and blah, blah, blah, blah and all these things. And so—here we go. Here are some 45s and these are all my 45s. 45s are in paper sleeves here. These are—this is a random association of things. These are all from the ‘80s though. What were these guys called? These guys were called like The Snap or something like that. Here’s—here’s the Watson Brothers in a band, which was called the Wilmington Blue Ox before the baseball team came back, that was an old time. Some of these people are just nobodies. This guy named Kim Milner who did like old music from the ‘20s and ‘30s. He was very funny. So there was this group there.

Anyway, there’s no sense to it, but—

CAITLIN: I’ve been talk—Hangnail, I’ve been talking to him.

JERRY: Oh yeah, Hangnail, right, right. Hangnail right. Hangnail—here’s Hangnail. I guess have you ever seen Hangnail?

CAITLIN: No, I’ve never. Okay, so that—he doesn’t look like that anymore.

JERRY: He’s been through a couple bouts of cancer.

CAITLIN: Meat Grinder, I’ve been talking to them.

JERRY: Okay, good, good, good. And there’s some playlist from WXPR—there’s one of my playlists where you write down—I didn’t even know they put that in there. Wow.

CAITLIN: I’m trying to find how I can get into contact with George Thorogood.
JERRY: George Thorogood, yeah.

CAITLIN: Sin City, contacted them.

JERRY: All right. You got to talk to Scott Birney—

[Crosstalk]

CAITLIN: We have an interview set up there.

JERRY: There’s fat me there. This is my—this is when I had hair there. I used to play records up at the glass mug, which was a popular place to—a club—like a restaurant kind of club and B.J. was my partner on business and on the radio show and that’s him in the record store. That’s I Like It Like That looking out towards Main Street. That would be like Grotto’s—

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: And let me just see here. And that’s, here’s The Commotions.

CAITLIN: So that’s the band that you were in.

JERRY: That’s the band that started around ’80 or so, right. That—that took a while. So meanwhile—so—let me get—let me just wrap up my—what was your question then?

CAITLIN: Co-owners? Who?

JERRY: Right, so B.J. Lobermann—so it’s B.J. Lobermann L O B E R M A N N. Two Ns please, okay? And then Don Challenger was—

CAITLIN: Why—that name sounds so familiar? What—I don’t know why.

JERRY: George Stewart—you talked to George Stewart, you talked to right?

CAITLIN: Uh huh. Maybe that’s why.

JERRY: Don—Don—Hangnail—the part in Hangnail’s website about The Commotions you’ll see Hangnail sets it up and says, “Oh, I called Don Challenger and talked about The Commotions.”

And the thing just starts—

CAITLIN: Okay, maybe that’s why.

JERRY: And the thing just starts and Don wrote all that. Don is a writer and he just can write. And so Hangnail didn’t have to do an interview or anything and he just went off on The Commotions, full of funny stuff. Don also worked at the News Journal. Three of The Commotions—three of The Commotions worked at the News Journal: Don, his wife Cecelia, well I’m getting ahead of myself, and then my brother Jimmy. There’s my brother Jimmy, he
was the little young horn player, but he survives to be one of the keyboard players in The Commotions. He’s the one who lives over here.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And that’s me, that was our singer who was up from Baltimore, an interesting guy named Steve Hedgecref, and our drummer there is still in town, Mark Menutoward. His daughter’s around town someplace. I still see him. He’ll go see concerts with his daughter and I’ll be there with my daughter.

CAITLIN: Cool.

JERRY: All right, so let me just—this is [inaudible]. Okay that’s Schroeder. [Inaudible] got a little bit of a Newark scene at least anyway. So you got those guys names. So just to go real quick, we started the store in ’76. In ’78 or ’79, I’m never sure of this but some kids from W—at the time it was WXPR, it’s the university station, it was kind of current back then, too. I guess—I guess it has a little bit of reach. It has reach, right. Coming to the station and saying we’re doing a radio thon to raise money and we’re going—we’re inviting people in to do different kinds of shows and we need somebody to do a Celtic Show. We need somebody to do a soul show, implying black people. And we’re like well—in they’re in a record store and B.J. says, “Well this person, this person, the person [inaudible], I could do the last show, you know?”

Because he and I had the same taste basically. We went on it for one special show and we were so good that they said, “Why don’t you guys just stick around and do the show.”

Well now I’ve been doing that for 32 years.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: I did it for the first four or five years and I’m still on the air there. So that’s—that—

[Crosstalk]

CAITLIN: And what is the show called?

JERRY: My show’s called Hip City Part Two. You got to get part two in there. And you can just put P A R T and the Arabic number two, just two. Some people use roman numerals, it doesn’t matter, but just get part two in there. So that’s been on for 32 years, so I did that. And that’s kind of how I met my wife because of [inaudible].

So then on the radio and that’s like in ’78 or ’79 and then—so then we’re all working—we’re all working, blah, blah. The record store’s fine. The record store’s tons of fun. And then—so sidebar is George Thorogood, when we’re still—we had to move the store two or three times because the buildings were getting torn down. But we’re in a mini mall—I just remember somebody so well, but I remember one time coming back from driving with B.J. in the car and he goes, “I went to a party last night and I saw this band. It was really strange.”
I said, “What was strange about it?”

He goes, “They played all Chuck Berry.”

I said, “Oh, what did play?”

He goes, “[Inaudible], Sweet Little 16.”

I said, “Oh you mean all Chuck Berry.”

He goes, “Yeah.” He goes, “His name’s George Thorogood.”

“Well, that’s weird.” I said, “That’s not going to go anywhere. All Chuck Berry, where’s that going to go?”

So that was the first I ever heard of George Thorogood. And then—so Thorogood—I don’t know if you know Thorogood’s Odyssey. I won’t go into—I’ll let him tell his own story, but he was from Delaware, but he went up and was a street singer in Boston and stuff like that and actually got signed up in Boston by this label called Rounder, which was a famous folk label. It did indigenous country music, but also the blue grass and stuff like that. And George was their first—they loved George because he was this—he knew his roots totally. Rock and Roll and Blues and stuff like that. And they signed him and that was a really unique success story that George became a rock star. And this folk label in Boston and he’s from Delaware, it makes no sense at all, but strictly on the force of his personality.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: It would be great if you could interview him. You’ll probably never get to interview him.

CAITLIN: I know.

JERRY: I used to see him at the art museum or something. I would leave him until the very end, though. So you don’t waste your time—

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: I mean he’s got his own life. Everybody—everybody in Delaware claims they know him and it’s not—if you said Jerry Grant—if he was normal person if you said Jerry Grant then he’s say, “Oh how’s Jerry doing?”

Because he knows who I am. But he’d say “Who? Who? What?”

He’ll drag you—he puts on personas. He’s—he’s an interesting character. He’s a real character.

All right, so he’s—he has a band. So—so he comes in the mini mall and says, “Oh I got this record and [inaudible] with Rounder.”
We were carrying—we were carrying the Rounder stuff. We were carrying the bluegrass stuff. He’s like, “You guys heard of Rounder, how weird is that?”

And so—so we—we just hooked up with him and it really became fun—we—in the earlier days because he had signed with Rounder. When he breaks out with that album, people would come down from—New York record executives would come down to see him play on campus or something just to scout him out whether they wanted to sign him or not because Rounder was small time. And we would get to meet some—like Jerry Webster who is a famous producer in Atlantic. He produced Aretha Franklin.

Anyway, he came to our store. It’s like Jerry Webster’s in our store. Nobody even knows who he is, but we know who he is. That was fun. All right. So there’s that.

So that gets us going on that and then we just started promotions, so Thorogood’s kind of an inspiration for everybody [inaudible] because meanwhile the punk movement has started. In ’75, ’76 the punk movement starts in New York City. Rock music has turned into all these long guitar solos and stuff and turned into some really boring stuff like the Eagles and stuff like that. And be polite, you can interrupt but this—this will—I promise this will wrap it up. So—so I’m just trying to give you the overall—

CAITLIN: Yeah. And then we’ll go back and—

JERRY: Sure, right. So—so meanwhile people are tired of all these long guitar solos and the Eagles and that kind of boring—stuff that we think is boring. So meanwhile it starts up in New York with the Ramones mainly. The Ramones are the big—the New York Dolls a little bit, but the Ramones started—they came out and I can remember—again we were that old store where Cal Tor is now and B.J.—we would come over—he would run the store in the daytime and we’d come over and hang out at 5:00 after our day job had finished. And he said, “Check this out.”

And he puts the Ramones on and [sound].

And we’re like, “Whoa, where is this coming from? This is somebody who just has totally ignored the last ten—the last five years.”

It was like here’s comes the punk—we didn’t know it was called punk then, it was like—eventually it got a name and stuff like that, but that was a big moment. Like whoa. And that was also you just thought, “Shit I can pick up—I can start playing again. I can play as good as these guys.”

And these are the same ideas. So—so we eventually—Donnie had—Don Challenger who had played in bands in—he went to the University of Delaware. He played in two bands. He was starting to play with a guy who owned a guitar repair shop on—time is passing so quickly. The Stone Balloon used to be right on—The Stone Balloon was the club, now it’s called the Balloon Wine House or whatever it’s called now. It used to be if you had been in school ten years, you would have gone to the Stone Balloon like everybody else did and the Balloon—you entered
from Main Street and you exited back on Delaware Avenue. [Inaudible] little shack back there and he would repair guitars. His name was Bob Ross.

And Don would always introduce him to stage as “Bob [inaudible] Bob the Boss Ross or Bob the Total Loss Ross.” He’d always make a rhyme out of his name. [Inaudible] Bob Ross and trying to teach his guitar—Cecelia how to play bass and my brother Jimmy—News Journal. All these guys were working at News Journal. He’s starting a band with this guy Steve Hedgecref from Baltimore who just came into the store out nowhere. And then Don says to me, “Why don’t you come over and we’ll play with Bob Ross. We’re having some fun.”

And then finally we just realized it was all kind of goofy. My brother was playing with this one guy and I’m playing with this guy and we all kind of know each other and Bob Ross—I think he had a heroin problem or something anyway, so he was going to be a long term investment, so we said, “Oh, let’s just get all of us together.”

And we set up at 92 Wilbur Street where we lived. Where did you live? Did you live on Wilbur Street?

CAITLIN: No, I lived in University Courtyard.

JERRY: You were more of a respectable student. I can tell.

CAITLIN: [Inaudible] chapel.

JERRY: I should go back to ’76 and say that we burned—say ’77—whenever Three Mile Island was ’77 or ’78 we burned our house down [inaudible].

CAITLIN: [Inaudible].

JERRY: One more period story. One more period story. B.J.’s girlfriend at the time, Debra Moand who also sang I think in a different band, and she would wake up in morning and smoke pot. I never met a person like that at all. She—one year for Christmas or B.J.’s birthday or something, she makes a needlepoint and it says, “I Like It Like That” on a musical staff with musical notes and stuff, 1976. It’s lovely.

So B.J.—we—we leaned it up against the wall and then we didn’t look for six months. She goes, “You give me an ounce of pot and I’ll paint your living room.”

And we’re like, okay, that’s a deal. So we give her an ounce of pot. She paints the living room and she hangs up this lovely tapestry on there. And I came back in the—I think it was a Sunday. I came back in the afternoon and she was like, “What do you think? Am I great?”

And we pull the sofa back into the living room and we sit down to admire the handiwork and stuff. She smokes a joint. I smoke a cigarette because I was a chain smoker back in those days. And we said, “Hey let’s go to the Deer Park,” which is what we did every night.

And we go up there then we get a call at like 9:00 that night. “Jerry your house is on fire.”
And we have to go back and one of us maybe left a lit cigarette on the arm of the sofa or something admiring the tapestry. Anyway after all that—and we did lose a lot of our records. We had black records—we used to keep them in the student center because we did our show there, so we kept them in lockers there, but our white records, which we didn’t care that much about all got melted and stuff like that.

All right so that’s a side story. So now back to the Commotions. So we start the Commotions in ’80 and we have a lot of success with the Commotions. We practice. We start out on Route 40, a place called Mel’s. The place was a hole. And—Donnie fixed it up. Donnie fixed it up there. Donnie—he was thinking about becoming—

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: It’s not all in this book. Go online and get the whole thing if you’re really interested [inaudible]. Don’s an excellent writer. I don’t know if he ever mentions—he talks about how we [inaudible] who was Johnny Neil, who was a Delawarean who’s gone on to greater things.

CAITLIN: I’ve been trying to contact him as well.

JERRY: He’s a character, too. Yeah he’s climbed. And I think he lives in Nashville or something.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Well he comes up that night because whoever—he hung out at Mel’s. So whoever played at Mel’s were like, “Oh, let Johnny jam.”

We had—we were so—we had just learned our songs and that was it. Cecelia the bass player literally knew on this song I go six, five. [Inaudible] jam with Johnny. We’re like, “No, no, no.”

And anyway—so—and so somebody threw a stone in the window, totally unrelated to that, but Don ties it together in there and it’s really—he—they said—it kind of implies that Johnny Neil threw the stone, but Johnny Neil was blind. He would not throw the stone. Anyway, Johnny has a couple nice [inaudible].

We start The Commotions. They only last like two years or something. All right, so that’s my story. So go ahead, ask me some questions.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: I’m sorry, I’m sorry.

CAITLIN: No, I’m glad you’re so excited about this. Okay, we’re going to backtrack to I Like It Like That. So you basically—did you just opened it up on the lamb. You never really had dreams of opening a record store.

JERRY: We hadn’t thought of it independently, but it was—
CAITLIN: Right place, right time, selling it.

JERRY: And we all knew records really, really well. And—and like I said, the scene was kind of boring back then. It was just—it was getting old hat. We still—we followed—we had big ears, as they say, we were broad. We knew all kinds of rock music. [Inaudible] we didn’t like it, but we—we cussed it, but we still knew it well.

CAITLIN: So you carried all types of different music, even stuff you didn’t like.

JERRY: Oh sure. Yeah. Well that was the thing at the beginning, we’re like, “Oh, we’re going to carry all [inaudible] and Dave.”

But that doesn’t work. You have to—so we had—we had ’76, ’77, so we had Fleetwood Mac and Stevie Wonder and Peter Frampton. They were the big—this was the height of album black. This was like everyone went to double album, even better. Hey, a double album. And that was the height of that, so we carried all that stuff. We did—we always had a commitment to 45s, so we—we carried oldies all the time. We always—at that point 45s had mainly become an oldies format. Just two hits—two hits, two sides—two hits from the ’60s. But another nice thing about punk when punk started was punk when the stuff came in from England. They just started putting out 45s again. It’s like, “Oh, they’re putting out 45s.”

I should say—I shouldn’t say—I should—45s were still sold. You still sold 45s. Fleetwood Mac would put out a million—a seven platinum album, but they still put out 45s.

CAITLIN: And the radio—

JERRY: Right and that would get you radio.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Your airplay would be on F.M. for the hip people and then A.M. for—for the teeny boppers.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: That eventually to all music on F.M.

CAITLIN: Yeah, now it’s all one. Okay.

JERRY: Right, right.

CAITLIN: So they’re—at the time of your store, there was Wonderland and then when did Bert open his—

JERRY: Bert was always up on 202. And Bert just closed—you could probably find that out.

CAITLIN: Yeah, I’ve been talking to him, but did he—he—
JERRY: Is he talking to you? That’s amazing. I like Bert.

CAITLIN: Really? I’ve—I’ve only had a few conversations. We’re trying to set up time to meet.

JERRY: He’s a nice guy. His politics are kind of right wing and the rest of us are all hippies. He’s not—Bert’s not a hippie.

CAITLIN: I won’t bring up politics.

JERRY: Don’t bring up politics. Bert will bring up politics, but [inaudible]. Bert always had the store up on 202.

CAITLIN: Didn’t he also have one on Main Street.

JERRY: Then he opened down on Main Street. Yeah. That didn’t last. I mean, that was guy who bought Bert’s name. Bert still had something to do with it. Bert would get it—

CAITLIN: So the main two would be yours and Wonderland at that time.

JERRY: Us and Wonderland. And that is in the heart of the—in the heart of the late ‘70s and the early ‘80s. Then down in Newark, Rainbow opened up down on—on Elkton Road. Rainbow, which is still there now really—really—remember Rainbow Books and Music?

CAITLIN: Uh huh. Now it’s just—

JERRY: Now it’s just—

CAITLIN: It’s really tiny now. It’s like—

JERRY: He sold his space to the skate shop and he moved behind there. Pat. It’s not—it’s not—

CAITLIN: The original owner. Okay.

JERRY: I talk to him. I go in there all the time and talk to Pat. They were always competitive. They just carried—they had no music. They would carry stuffed animals and posters and we used to cuss them. We were the purists. We would only—we had a few buttons and stuff, but we didn’t—Wonderland was selling drug paraphernalia and Rainbow was selling teddy bears. It’s like, “Goddamn it people, go just sell that stuff and let us sell the music.”

CAITLIN: Oh, wait, you said Rainbow was on Elkton, so it wasn’t on Main Street like it is now.

JERRY: Rainbow was then started out where Buffalo Wild Wings is.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: It was actually like a granary in there, it was called the Granary Station.

CAITLIN: Okay. So those were like the three.
JERRY: Did you talk to Barry Solan? Did anybody talk to Barry Solan?

CAITLIN: Yeah, at State Theatre.

JERRY: Yeah, he had the State Theatre by himself. He ended up having a video store in there, too.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: So yeah, Rainbow started there. And then what killed me at the end was I—my—my store lasted until ’87 and then a couple—a couple—a weird couple like an unmarried married couple from—came up from New Orleans like around ’85 or so and started a place called Reborn Records, which was supposed to be used 45s. I mean they came in and said—I remember the guy telling me, “Yeah, we’re just carrying like—we’re going to carry vintage R & B 45s.”

And I’m like—I didn’t say it to him, but I’m like, “Bud, I—I’m the originator of vintage 45s of R & B. I know more than you’ll know and you’re never going—that’s never going to succeed. So you’re going to open up the store” and then in six weeks they had gone all punk and new wave, which I already was doing. And just—they saw where the money was—the money. We never made any money at all. But anyway, it was just like—and that’s when I said, “God, it’s just too much. This is overkill.”

When there were like over five stores in the market, little did we know what was down the road with the internet and stuff? That wasn’t even—that there would be no record business. So go ahead.

CAITLIN: So then you ended up closing?

JERRY: I closed in May of ’87.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And I did it—by then CDs had—one problem was—one problem was you had to—with the changeover to CDs you had to order your stuff. Billy Joel—the new Billy Joel. A better example is Madonna. All right I’m going to get a hundred LPs and I’m going to get 50 CDs and I’m going to get 25 cassette tapes. You didn’t know what—so your money. I used to be a [inaudible] guru. Like I’d know exactly what’s—I know what that’s going to sell. I know what that’s going to sell. This was like, oh god now my money’s getting spread out. I need to just—I couldn’t do it.

So finally somebody—and CDs back then used to be sold in six by 12 because they were afraid of theft, so they would ship them in cardboard with more art on them, but like that. And I was doing inventory one day and—Billy Joel. I can’t stand Billy Joel and I flipped Billy Joel and was whoa and the cardboard thing, I just lifted it up and the CDs had been gone. Somebody had like razor bladed the CDs out of the bottom. I said, “I want to carry Billy Joel, but I’m not going to have someone steal Billy Joel from me. I cannot. I quit. This is the end.”
CAITLIN: That was the last straw.

JERRY: Any all right. Go ahead.

CAITLIN: So would you say that there was like a friendly rivalry between Wonderland and you guys—did you know each other and—?

JERRY: After it was all said and done, I—Larry, who—a guy named Larry. He just died a couple years ago. Larry—it was an Italian name. Larry Fenza, F E N Z A. He had a partner who was a miserable guy, but Larry was a very friendly guy.

CAITLIN: And they were with Wonderland?

JERRY: And they were with—they owned Wonderland. Right. And they were old deadhead hippies, that’s where the drug paraphernalia came from, that kind of stuff. And so they were—Larry was always friendly pretty much. I mean we—we—we—we got more distant as we were in competition. And then when we closed down, then as the years go on, I’ve gotten to know Larry better and he got more into folk music and so did I and so it was fine.

But we were competitive. We were always—they did on the nines, and we did on the fives. So if they—if they moved their price to $6.99 for an album, we were $6.95. So, that kind of stuff.

CAITLIN: That’s good.

JERRY: And they didn’t do 45s very much at all.

CAITLIN: Did you sell any local bands?

JERRY: Always. Yeah, sure.

CAITLIN: Always, okay.

JERRY: Sure and one reason I was able to—I don’t want to be too cynical about things, but one reason I was able to display all those 45s in this book is that the band would never leave. It was always a minimum order at the pressing plant. I guess it was a thousand 45s or something like that. So every band would come in and say, “Can I put my CD—or my single on consignment here—on consignment?”

And we’d say, “Yeah, sure, give me five copies. And I’ll see.”

And he goes, “How about 25?”

We’re not going to sell 25. “No, take 25.”

“All right, I will take 25.”

So when we finally closed down there’s like three copies of every single ever made. So right.
CAITLIN: What were local bands that you really liked? Did you listen to any on your own?

JERRY: Well, we’d go out and see them all. [Inaudible] when you start I remember Craig had a band called Rudy Baker and the Vegetables, which was supposed to be a pun on rutabaga and the vegetables, which nobody ever got. I got it—like 20 years later I got the pun. So I remember seeing that band.

CAITLIN: That’s hilarious.

JERRY: He’s a character. He’s a real character. Craig Smith.

CAITLIN: Yeah, he’s like right in our—because I asked, “We should talk because I know you’re involved with the music scene.”

And most people are like, “Oh, okay. Do you want me to come in? We’ll do a phone call.”

Like, he apparently is writing this novel or something. He keeps on being like “I’m still writing, I’m still writing. I’m writing pages and pages.”

I don’t know what’s going to happen.

JERRY: He was always—he was in the rock—when I first came down to Delaware in the early ‘70s, we were just starting in ’79, so—

CAITLIN: No, ’70.

JERRY: All right. Okay. Fine. Okay, good. Well when I came in the ‘70s, Don Challenger, who they would be my roommate and partner in the record store and a member of the Commotions, was in a band called Nashville East. And they were—now we’re going back ten years, so it’s a totally different era now, the early ‘70s, they would cover like Buffalo Springfield and Neil Young and that stuff. That was starting then if you look at rock as a family tree or something.

CAITLIN: Do you remember—okay, so since I’ve been trying to track some stuff, I found this one band that apparently was only around from ’70 to ’72 called Mark the Lid. Do you remember that band?

JERRY: Mark the Lid. I remember that name really well. And Scott Birney should be able to tell you about Mark the Lid I think. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mark the Lid I think was just—it was just a story—I got a feeling of a famous attorney in town named Jeff Bode. I think the story is—check if you have access to the New Journal archives for the last two or three, four or five years, he got a diagnosis for cancer or heart or something like that and decided to go back into his old band’s tapes and stuff and reissue some stuff. I think that was Mark the Lid.

CAITLIN: Okay.
JERRY: So Jeff Bode. I mean, the history—there might be some history of that in the News Journal over the last—B O D E. He’s still—I think he ended up doing pretty well I think. I think he still survives. Whether he’s practicing or not, I don’t know. But [inaudible]

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: Ask me some other things. I’m good at that really.

CAITLIN: Let’s see. Who was—I wrote down who I’ve been talking to. Ed Shockley from Jack of Diamonds.

JERRY: Late ‘70s, right.

CAITLIN: The Hooters, I’ve talked to them.

JERRY: Right.

CAITLIN: Jerry, I can’t—from Dakota, I can’t pronounce the last name. Hudslick.

JERRY: Hudslick or something like that, yeah.

CAITLIN: And then Steve Roberts from Snake Grinder and Tom Larson. And that’s about it so far. It’s been hard to try to track people. I’ve been through old issue Fine Times and trying to look at like—

JERRY: Right, I was just going to say. That’s what you want. Right. That’s what you want. Do you have a good collection of that?

CAITLIN: Yeah, we do. We went to—all the issues are at the library of Delaware. Margaret and I went a couple months ago and went through every issue and copied every page.

JERRY: Okay. University of Delaware Library?

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: Then might—you want to know more about this book and maybe even get a copy of it.

CAITLIN: They’ll have it there?

JERRY: Rebecca Melvin Johnson was the—

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: She was the—I’m sure she gets credited up here as—and she is a deadhead, but I don’t hold it against her. But there—there—there she is there. She edited this book. And—

CAITLIN: You think she’s still there?
JERRY: Oh yeah. This book's only two or three years old.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: ’07. It’s five. Okay, but believe me, it probably came out in ’08, so it doesn’t seem that old.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And Shawn Mullen, the other editor of the book. He lives out in Landenberg or something. His—his sister was the girl who did the needlepoint and smoked pot and burned down my house.

She didn’t. I’m sure it was me.

CAITLIN: It’s so easy to blame it on her.

JERRY: She wouldn’t leave anything in the ashtray. Anyway. All right. All right. If you know what I mean.

CAITLIN: Do you remember going to any live shows that still stick with you?

JERRY: In Delaware?

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: Yeah, let me—let me see where I can start. It’s funny talking about punk and stuff, I remember one—in the Balloon. The Balloon started out as just having cover bands, like Corduroy and all those kind of bands. That’s all the Balloon would have. But then Stevenson—and you might want to interview Stevenson, although—I don’t think he knows jack shit about music at all. He had a night club all those years. He didn’t know what was going on. He just didn’t know what was going on. He would—by chance—I mean, he had Springsteen there. He just had connections and stuff. But as far as trying to describe music or something to him, he didn’t know what he was talking about.

All right. So the Balloon started to expand a little bit once we got into the ’80s instead of playing these stupid cover bands all the time. So they had David Johansen come down once from the New York Dolls and he later became Buster Poindexter and had the hit “Hot, Hot, Hot.” And he’s just well-known. And he—but he had a couple funky but chic—I don’t know if you would know. You sound like you might like some of his stuff. But anyway, he came down. He was almost like a [inaudible] person, but he just walked the stage and he had a great—he had a real powerful band so he could walk the stage and he put on a great—he put on a great show.

All right, let’s see. Who else? Now it’s going to get muddy in my mind. Great shows. I mean, I saw Ray Charles there. I saw Chaka Chan there. Near the end they were getting really big names like that and just pack it, breaking all fire laws and putting people in there. My favorite quote
from Ray Charles that time was somebody yelled out “Georgia on My Mind” and he said, “Honey, if we do requests we’ll be here all night.”

Everybody else would say, “I’m going to get that later on or yeah yeah.”

But Ray’s like, “Look, I’m Ray Charles. If I start play requests you’ll never get out of here.”

All right. Who else did I see there that was really good? I actually saw the Neville Brothers there, they were good. There was a crowd of about four people in there I think. I got to dance with my wife to “Tell It Like It Is” on a totally empty dance floor. It was kind of weird.

CAITLIN: What about—did you go into Wilmington to listen?

JERRY: The greatest shows I ever saw were in Philly. We’d go to the Academy of Music. We’d go to the Spectrum. If you want to see the Rolling Stones, you had to go to the Spectrum. At the Academy of Music I saw Van Morrison and just people in their prime.

In Wilmington—in Wilmington. You know there really wasn’t—in the ‘60s the Armory would have people like Mitch Rider and the Detroit Wheels and also James Brown and stuff like appear. The Armory now is like the old folks housing next to St. Anthony’s parish up around like 10th and DuPont Streets or something like that. But it used to be like—like a National Guard kind of thing, but they put shows in there.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And that was kind of before—I wasn’t—Wilmington was too rowdy for me back then as far as my mother was concerned. I was too young.

Oh, this is terrible. I’ve seen so many great shows, but how many have been in Newark or Wilmington, that’s a good question.

CAITLIN: Well you can think about it and then email me. So okay, now back to the Commotions. I don’t remember—did you play what did you—

JERRY: Can I steal a piece of your paper, okay? Sorry.

CAITLIN: What did you play in the Commotions?

JERRY: I played—

CAITLIN: Oh, that has—

JERRY: Oh, I’m sorry. Oh I am so sorry.

CAITLIN: No, it’s okay.

JERRY: I thought I was going all the way in the back for it.
CAITLIN: No, I write random.

JERRY: Okay. Sorry about that.

CAITLIN: No, it’s totally fine.

JERRY: Make sure this is clean. We totally—I played keyboards, but I did play piano and organ.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And—and one kind of neat thing that I brought to it is—see if I can find—[inaudible]. Here’s George Thorogood’s first girlfriend through high school. Anyway. Here’s—here’s—oh this is—this is—right—this is stuff I gave Becky—Becky Melvin. These are the 45s—

CAITLIN: The 45s.

JERRY: So let me not look here then. I want to look here. I just grabbed this box because—so Becky has already done this stuff. I did bring some Commotions buttons in case you see.

CAITLIN: Oh nice.

JERRY: It’s not like a M.T.V. button. That changed the whole world when M.T.V. came along, maybe not for the better. And a couple old set lists from the Commotions here. Like [inaudible]—and what’s [inaudible]? I don’t know what that song is or anything, but just [inaudible]. And the words to “When You Were Mine” by Prince. So one of my big vocals was Prince. We also covered Prince. Anyway, we’re getting ahead of ourselves. I’ll leave that stuff out.

But what did I say? I want to do the—so I played keyboards. I’m sorry.

CAITLIN: No, it’s okay.

JERRY: And I played an organ by Rheem. You might go in your basement and you might have a water heater by the Rheem company R H E E M. But for a short while they put out keyboards and this is—and if I can—the [inaudible] that’s exactly what I played. I have it up in my—I have it up in my—I had it down. But I would love to find—and I just saw it about 20 years ago, was my father gave me the receipt—this is another era story, but he went with me to some place—I think it was the drum shop on—there was a music store on Delaware Avenue, not far from here. And I went through these things and he’s got—he’s got five kids and he said, “Do you have a bad looking organ I could play in a band?”

Let’s go look at them. So we dicker about this and buy this and I think this was probably like $150.00 or something like that. This was 1968. He’s got a family of five. And so we talk about that and plugs in and everything. And he thinks we’re done and then he says, “Well now you need an amp.”
You have to plug it in here. And he goes, “I just bought this thing that plugs into the wall for $175.00 and it won’t make any sound?”

Anyway, it’s a change in your [inaudible]. These days, you’re parents already know that all together, but that’s—that’s an interesting period piece.

There was another band in town that used a Rheem. The—they were called the Channels. The Channels, I never liked the Channels. You might like them but they also used a Rheem.

The most—basically the genre you would say from bands like in the—in the ‘60s that played, they tried to imitate the Stones because they were garage rock.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: And they almost always had a cheesy sounding keyboard like this, mainly you’re hear Parpisa was the most popular. They’ll say, “Oh, he had a Parpisa.” Like “96 Tears” or whatever songs you might know with this—“Louie, Louie” probably has it. We’ll all songs of “Louie, Louie.” What was your question?

CAITLIN: If you played a keyboard.

JERRY: Right, right, right. My brother and both played keyboards. So we had a piano on one side of the stage, an organ on the other side of the stage and there’s a good looking Don Challenger there. That’s the State Theatre actually. And my brother’s back there on—he’s playing piano. We had a kitchen chair that we could sit on. And—these were all gigs here at the—there’s—there’s Jimmy playing the Rheem. I’m over here playing the piano in this particular song. There’s Don singing lead. This was a place called the Cellar between Eighth and Ninth or Seventh and Eighth on Market. Drummer—

CAITLIN: Yeah, where—where did you guys play?

JERRY: Yeah, the venues. That’s a good question. God, that was our first hint of the passage of time because our venues were all gone within ten years. There’s a place called the Salad Cellar, went through names changes. It might just be called the Cellar, and that was on Market I think. That would be in Fine Times also. [Inaudible] a place called Sheryl’s—Sheryl’s Sky Lounge, we would play there.

CAITLIN: So did you mostly play in Wilmington or—?

JERRY: We mostly played Newark.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

[Crosstalk]
JERRY: But we would come up. Don would find us work in Philly. Don talked about that in the thing. We played J.C. Dobs on South Street in Philly. That was the hip place for most. That’s where Thorogood got his first break.

In Newark we played at—also at Wilmington we played at the Barn Door, which we often called the Darn Boor. And you could not get to the restrooms without walking through the band, so you met everybody at the gig. “Hi, how you doing?”

Of course the Deer Park. We were—we were the kings of the Deer Park. People would be lined up—it sounds so corny to say. People would be lined up outside and—because there was never a cover at the Deer Park, so you just would come in and we’d play in the back and that’s—again, that’s where if you read Don’s thing closely again, he talks about how it felt like a freight train or something, and of course if you know the Deer Park, the freight train is right there. There it is. And would play and the place would be so crowded and we would play and we’d be done with a set and we’d just go back through those two fire doors there, just meet outside. “Hi, how you doing?” Because we just played really—we played [inaudible].

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: And—and then the train would go by and we’d just be like, “Wow this is insane.” And I think Don says someplace in the article, he says “I knew—I at one moment at that time knew I would never forget this. I just would not forget. Playing in a band and—Don gets really—I’m going to cry or something here now.

CAITLIN: Wait, someone else starting crying—it’s okay, people have cried with me during their interview.

JERRY: Okay, okay. Fine. Well, you know, in a way, I mean—

CAITLIN: Sure, I’m glad, I’m excited that these are things that people have never talked about or haven’t thought about in years. And that’s what the Museum is recognizing.

JERRY: Well I married one of my fans, so we’re always kind of—it’s terrible to call her a groupie, she’s a very accomplished—she’s—where is she today? She’s a hospice nurse, but she’s mainly—she doesn’t do so much hospice hands on nursing anymore. She does—she’s an advocate—she’s involved with politics through me and—anyway. But she also used sing a band called Swing Samba Soul, but in the beginning of 2000, not back then. Right.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: Anyway. So how did we get onto to that? Oh, so Don—so Don just said one night—or else he wrote this later, but he said, “I’ll never forget this experience. Just playing for all these people who just were having the time of their lives.”

I mean they’re all drunk and they’re all dancing, which is—is part of going to college.

CAITLIN: Yeah.
JERRY: And then—and then we’d come back outside and just get air and a train goes by it’s like, you couldn’t write this stuff.

CAITLIN: Do you have a recordings of—?

JERRY: Yes. Wow, I didn’t bring them. I have—I can—

CAITLIN: It’s okay.

JERRY: Okay.

CAITLIN: I just want to know they exist if I can get them later on.

JERRY: Okay, what did you say—you said, okay, greatest, favorite live shows.

CAITLIN: Oh yeah.

JERRY: I’m just going to try to write down things I should remember.

CAITLIN: All right. WSTW. STW was really late to the game as far as—STW is still—now you know who STW is, but it’s 93.7. It’s Delaware, it’s got a huge signal. But they were late to the game. It was like ’74, ’75, ’76 guys that I knew that I lived with and hung out were like—they were all working DDM and submitted, “Oh they’re going to try to make STW like an FM station.”

It’s like, oh big deal. It would become the cash cow, the whole operation, you know what I mean? But in the early days they did a local album and submit your tape and stuff, and so we were on that. We were with the guys from Bad Sneakers. Have people talked about Bad Sneakers?

CAITLIN: Oh yeah. I—yeah.

JERRY: They’re easy to find.

CAITLIN: I’ve been—I emailed them—


JERRY: But that’s why—I will interject here, the Watson Brothers—I want the Watson Brothers to get some credit here because they were players—they could play and they always had interesting groups and they—they would be like—they came from psychedelic rock and then into more bluesy rock and stuff like that. Don’t—don’t ignore them because they were—

CAITLIN: I won’t.
JERRY: Another band—

CAITLIN: Are they—I don’t know if I’ve been able to find any contact info. Do you know?

JERRY: I think Wayne Watson—Scott Birney—Scott Birney has had—

CAITLIN: Will he know how to—?

JERRY: Right, right, right.

CAITLIN: Then I’ll just talk to him about that.

JERRY: Another band not to forget is Lisa Jack and the Boys in the Back.

CAITLIN: I’m trying to find her, too.

[Crosstalk]

JERRY: My old guitar player—I played another band in the late ‘80s, early ‘90s and I can—I can—

CAITLIN: Can you try to—?

JERRY: Yeah.

CAITLIN: Do you know what she’s doing now or she’s still—?

JERRY: She’s starting—she’s starting—you’re going to see her name somewhere in the entertainment pages. She’s starting a band again with my old guitar player from—I was in another band called the Newer Street Ford right in the early ‘90s. Late ‘80s, early ‘90s. Anyway, there’s getting back together because he had played with her—he was one of the Boys in the Back. He had actually played with George Thorogood in high school.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: It’s only three counties in Delaware. And really it’s only one county.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: I shouldn’t say that. Kent County has always been a wellspring of good musicians. I’m serious. And Sussex County, too. But as far as the bands that really get the publicity and stuff, it’s New Castle County. So, get Lisa Jack’s number. I’m pretty sure I can do that. Look for her in the paper, too.

CAITLIN: Okay. Definitely.

JERRY: She’s a little—she’s—she feels funny about things. I mean her husband was my bass player later on and he left me so it got kind of nasty, so she’s—
CAITLIN: Should I not mention your name?

JERRY: She’s a little shell shocked.

No, you can mention it. [Inaudible] I’ve spoken with her in the last six months or year twice, and I don’t know if she really knows what I did.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: She’s all right, though. She’s got a very powerful voice. She’s got a very—she’s the best white female singer in Delaware.

CAITLIN: Well then I have to find her.

JERRY: Okay, so right. So where were we?

CAITLIN: Why did you end up breaking up? Just life?

JERRY: Every band lasts for two years. We—god, we drank like fish. We were really—it was bad. It was bad. Meanwhile at this point we were like 30 and 31. We’re playing—part of living in Newark is like in a fantasyland where everybody’s always 21 years old, but—

CAITLIN: Don’t I know it.

JERRY: How old are you now?

CAITLIN: I’m 22.

JERRY: Well, hell. [Inaudible] I’m 61 and I’m like, “Oh yeah, all my friends are like 21.”

So—you know we stared recording with E.B. Hawkins, you’ll hear his name probably. E.B. Hawkins. His family owned WILM AM and he was a good guitar player.

CAITLIN: That’s still around today, right?

JERRY: ILM is a Clear Channel station now. It’s kind of—John Watson is—oh look I’m so excited I just broke my sunglasses.

Yeah ILM was an AM. It was also news talk. And it was pretty good. And then Clear Channel bought it. Clear Channel is the villain of American radio. They buy stations, script out the—fire as many people as they possibly can, syndicate Rush Limbaugh and things like that and just try to get—try to produce with four people what they used to use—

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: So the Hawkins family owned it for years and E.B. therefore was a dial twister. He knew all the stuff. He had in his home, which was across from St. Ann’s in Wilmington, he had a studio and so he was going to record us. And we just—live we were fun, but we weren’t that
good of musicians. Studio is another whole—another history of rock and roll is that the bands, when they get in the studio, you have to really be able to—depending on what kind of music you’re doing, but you got to be able to play because the tape doesn’t lie. The digital recorders don’t lie. So we get in there and we’re all flubbing things up and things like that and then all the petty things come out and so we broke up.

CAITLIN: So life happened.

JERRY: And we—and then we had a reunion like a year later and that’s—there are tapes of that somewhere and you would have to have the patience of Job to listen to them, but you know—you know. Don—Don was the jokester of the band. He would—he would just [inaudible].

So anyway we just broke up, no reason why we broke up really. We—we had come—let’s just talk about music for a minute. So there’s another band you should to find [inaudible] is The Zippers. The Zippers were strictly a U of D band, but Tommy Conwell was in The Zippers. That’s where he first got his exposure. And Tommy Conwell kind of went on to be a minor star.

CAITLIN: Yeah, he didn’t answer my email either.

JERRY: Really? The last time I saw him—he used to come—

CAITLIN: I don’t want to harass these people.

JERRY: Right. Well you could use my name with Tommy Conwell.

CAITLIN: Maybe I’ll do that.

JERRY: Say I’ve been talking to Jerry Grant. He might give you an extra ten seconds on the phone. [inaudible] I think he teaches elementary school now. But he—he was playing at Ninth and Orange in Wilmington up until about two years ago, called Ameritage, and they closed down. They would bring him down. He was doing like a—like a dinner—like a supper club kind of thing. Here’s the guy playing the guitar while you eat, but he was totally cool.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Which is totally cool. He was doing like Tony Bennett. He was doing stuff before our time. Your typical lounge music. And then every once in a while he’s say, “Hey, who was alive in the ‘80s? Do you remember the ‘80s?” And then he’d do one of his own songs. He had like three or four good sized hits in the ‘80s and he’d go back to playing the lounge—but the lounge stuff very well done. He was excellent.

God, that was two or three years ago. His wife was pregnant. I mean Tommy; he’s got children all over the place. He was popular. He looked like Elvis Presley. He was—these guys were—they managed the zippers anyway. We were all—we were all. But [inaudible] talk about music, though.
Because music—so when the new wave came—when new wave and punk came, we were hip to it. Me and B.J. went up to CBGB’s, which was the legendary club up in New York. We—they—CBGB’s had just put out a double album of—of—of bands that played at their club. None of—the big groups had just signed. The Ramones had just signed, Blondie had just signed, Talking Heads had just signed. Everybody but the bands that hadn’t signed yet, they got on this double album. We bought like 20 copies of that album to bring it back to our store so we could resell it. Because “Hey we’re hip. Here’s a punk store.”

And—so—so when we started a band, it was like we’re going punk, stuff like that. So then we’re mixing—when we played, we played like a third Elvis Costello, Ramones, Joe Jackson, and a lot of obscure punk bands and stuff. We did a third just oldies that we like. And we would often run them together. We would play a song by Neil Diamond called “Cherry, Cherry.” Neil Diamond is the corniest person who ever walked the face of the earth, right?

CAITLIN: [Inaudible].

JERRY: Right, right, right. We started, he was cool. He put out like three cool records.

[Crosstalk]

JERRY: And then—the thing was it sounded a lot like “What I Like About You” by the Romantics, which has turned out to be the most overplayed song of the last 30 years on [inaudible] and everything, but there was a time, believe it or not, when “What I Like About You” had just come out.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: So we played “Cherry, Cherry” and then we went into “What I Like About You” and kind of making connections between the old and the new, that kind of thing.

CAITLIN: Did you do any of your own stuff?

JERRY: Yeah right. The other third was Cliff, mainly—Cliff this guy here could write—he could a good pop song. So you’ll see on a lot of collections there’s a song—oh and Hangnail’s site there’s a thing called jump up and dance, that was a big—we ended with that song a lot of times. And Regina—he could write—he could write good stuff. And that was—that gave us some credibility with—we didn’t just copy other songs.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: But we loved to copy. There’s nothing wrong with copying others’ songs, but you’ll never get your cred that way. So yeah—so Tommy—so and I’m sorry. So, meanwhile on campus there’s this band called The Zippers. You got to go see The Zippers. And The Zippers were doing the same thing we were doing. They were doing a—they were ten years younger than we were, so until we—they loved punk. They loved—they came from that. They discovered stuff
like “Do You Love” like always—like oldies. What was current to us and then brand new to us, to them was way ancient history and—

CAITLIN: Yeah. No, no, no.

JERRY: Age difference, but we both—but immediately we loved each other. It’s like, “Oh you guys are cool.” “You guys are cool” that kind of thing.

CAITLIN: Yeah. That’s great.

JERRY: So Tommy—use my name with Tommy maybe you’ll get somewhere.

CAITLIN: I’ll definitely shoot him another email. Okay, let’s see. You did—you mentioned earlier today, Bob Ross and he was in the Christian Snipers, right?

JERRY: Right. Very short-lived.

CAITLIN: Do you remember anything about them? Because when I went to George Stewart’s house; he showed Margaret and I footage of Bob playing in a Girl Scout uniform.

JERRY: Throwing a [inaudible]. Yeah. That’s what I remember. I would react, yeah. They—Tommy—Tom was the drummer for the Snipers, but that was a little one off for him. He just thought Bob was funny. I’m sure he had all guitars with Bob because Bob was—*guitaire*, as we say, guitar maker and repairer and so Tommy—that was a little slumming for Tommy. But—and a guy—a keyboard guy, I always see him all the time. I don’t think he’s playing anymore. But anyway they were really short-lived. They probably played—if they played 12 gigs, I’d be—I’d be flabbergasted, but that was legendary. I just thought that performance was great. Yeah.

CAITLIN: It was just great. And what was he throwing out—you expected tampons, but what was he throwing out? Popcorn or was it Stayfree?

JERRY: I don’t remember.

CAITLIN: I forget now.

JERRY: “Stay Free.” I mean it was just so funny. Those were back in the days of Rocky Horror and the whole state there was just weird stuff going on in the State Theatre.

CAITLIN: Do you know whatever happened to him or—George says he think he might live in Maine because he had to go to rehab or something.

JERRY: Yeah, yeah. He went down to the—

CAITLIN: I’m sure—was he involved in other bands in university, or what was that—was he mostly the guitar—
JERRY: He was—I mentioned earlier about—yeah, right he was playing with Don and he’s the guy who was also the heroin addict with Bob. Bob Total-Loss Ross. Bob could never really get it together to really have a full-time band. His would be one off things. He would go up in his attic. He had a shop in the attic of the State Theatre and there’d be a party and Bob would be there with two or three—and it would always be interesting.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: But it wasn’t meant to last, you know what I mean? Bob was addicted to something, I don’t know what. He went down to Rehoboth and was—he went in—I think he’s a chef these days—Rehoboth to the Blue Moon or something and then he—right, he went with somebody male or female, I have no idea. New England—

CAITLIN: And no one’s heard from him.

JERRY: I think Don might—Don would love—Don Challenger is somebody I could give you his number for sure.

CAITLIN: Yeah, definitely.

JERRY: Don might know where Bob is. Don would probably have the last sighting of Bob.

CAITLIN: Yeah. George mentioned that you were the manager at the State Theatre at some point. Is that true?

JERRY: Well, I was the night manager. I mean, after I closed the—I guess the statute of limitations has run here, it was an under the table, cash—Barry’s business—Barry’s businesses were always kind of cash. Barry is also at death’s door these days. Barry’s not doing well.

CAITLIN: I know. That’s way I called him and left him a message because George told me that I should call him sooner than later and then he never got back and I don’t want to really push him if he’s not feeling well.

JERRY: Right. You know I—his wife would probably—Annie is a wonderful woman, but she’s got her hands full these days. You should just go visit him at his house. Just say, “I can come see you” and maybe he would say yes.

I just saw him at a funeral service on Sunday.

CAITLIN: Oh really?

JERRY: I was amazed to see him. In fact, someone say, “Oh Barry’s back there” and I walked back into this room of different people and I said, “Excuse me” to this one person looking for Barry and it was Barry. He’s lost so much weight.
But he’s a good story teller. He’ll go—he’ll be like me. He’ll go off on a tangent and stuff, but he—he has—we were involved with—I guess George was telling you we were involved with John Waters and Edie the Egg Lady and all that kind of stuff. Have you seen any of his movies?

CAITLIN: No, but I’ve learned all about them because I’ve been researching—well I guess it started with how Rob Jones—do you know, does that name sound familiar?

JERRY: From the comic book store?

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Okay.

CAITLIN: And how he owned Fifth Street Gallery and then they did the comic book store with Tom Watkins and Joyce Brabner and all that scene. So that’s also a part of—I didn’t know you were involved with that. I would have asked you about that.

JERRY: Just a little bit. It’s funny you say that because this morning, and I have more—I’m going to find more stuff, I’ll just drop it off to you or something.

CAITLIN: Yeah, that’s fine.

[Coughing]

JERRY: Well I found a note from Joyce—a funny note from Joyce that said—it was so typically Joyce because it said—it was a note to the bouncer, I think it was up at J.C. Dobs in Philadelphia and it said, “Give this to the singer—Give this to the singer. I couldn’t stay for the whole show. Sounds good. Thanks a lot. Sorry to create a scene”—and she’s writing across [inaudible]. “Sorry to create a scene.”

I think she went up to the place and said, “Well I know the singer.”

Have you seen the movie with Joyce?

CAITLIN: Uh huh. American Splendor?

JERRY: American Splendor, right. I’m sure she went to the door and said, “I know the singer. I’m here to see”—

And they’re like, “Well, yeah $5.00.”

CAITLIN: Don’t you know who I am?

JERRY: Right, exactly. She would expect—the point of that movie was Joyce has never changed. But anyway, right, right. So that’s another whole story. I can’t—I was on the fringe of that stuff. The—the—the brightest two moments of that stuff for me was when they had a Sleaze Convention and—and—
CAITLIN: Did you attend that?

JERRY: Yeah, yeah.

CAITLIN: Yeah, tell me about that. Because I have—I’ve been talking to—let’s see who did I talk to about that? Steven Leech. Do you know him?

JERRY: Oh yes—

CAITLIN: Oh yes, you’re—at the radio station with you. John Holmstrom.


CAITLIN: Because he wrote—and they have like a pamphlet from the Sleaze Convention and there are a bunch of different articles and stuff and he wrote one of the articles. And he told me all about how he did the album art for the Ramones and everything and I was like, “That’s so cool!”

JERRY: Right, right, right, right, right, right, right.

CAITLIN: That’s what I was talking to him—I talked to Chris Stein from Blondie because apparently him and Debbie came down—

JERRY: I don’t know if he came because she—it was pre-Blondie. I’m pretty sure I have my years right. It was before—but she was in the Stilettos.

CAITLIN: Yeah, yeah. And, yeah, he said he and Debbie came down and he gave me a few paragraphs about what it was like for them and stuff like that.

JERRY: Right, Debbie came down and an Asian woman.

CAITLIN: Yeah, I—oh, I forget her—

JERRY: I looked up Debbie’s dress because there were no places to sit. The upstairs of this place was like this. So we’re sitting down, talking about it, here comes the weird band from New York. They got fishnets and stuff and it’s like, “Oh now I’m looking up her dress.”

That’s how crowded it was. Well we—what did we—what did we supply for that? We had the store at that time. We had cardboard cutouts of a Navy man and woman going like, “Hi.” Life size. Which these things travel, we were thinking about getting a house—I was in bed with my girlfriend one night—

CAITLIN: Decorate?

JERRY: Oh god, no. [Inaudible] Anyway, so—so we supplied those cutouts. You’ll see them at some of the shows from the—are there photos from—
CAITLIN: That’s what I’m trying—George said that he thinks that he has footage somewhere of it, but we haven’t been able to find any images and I’ve been trying to track down Tom Watkins and no one knows. He just disappeared.

JERRY: This guy’s—Lou Angeli, A N G E L I. Don’t use my name, I don’t think he particularly like me, but Angeli was working for somebody back then—George would know this. But this guy’s name was Tom Mitten and he actually works for Clark County Executive now, and he’ll be on radio once in a while, he’s like the voice of the fire department and the EMTs and stuff like that. I mean, part of the group we ran around with were people that practiced their radio voice all the time. But anyway, I’d love to know—this night they were taking video of us for something, and it’s like—I’d kill to see that.

So but he—George is—George has been—speaking of who’s still talking to whom, but George has worked for a couple of the video companies in Wilmington like Sharon Baker, who’s kind of a straight arrow she has—it’s called Teleduction I think or something like that. Or Serviam or something like that. She probably—Sharon would probably disavow just about every connection with punk music, but I think she—I think she might have been there.

CAITLIN: She was there.

JERRY: She might have been there. Right, second thing, so, you’re art. So I keeping thing you’d be interested in the sleaze and stuff. I’m trying to think of—in Fine Times also, this is an aside for I Like It Like That, that we all—we always had entertaining acts for our store. It was almost [inaudible]. And that’s Don, too.

CAITLIN: Yeah, I definitely should talk to him.

JERRY: All right. What else? Just that it was crowded up there. I forget exactly what was going on, we had Rondo Hatton—it was called the Rondo Center and the Rondo Happening. I’m sure he explained all this stuff to you. So I think we sat through some Rondo movies up there. And so as far as actually the Sleaze Convention, I don’t recall—and another thing—and here’s another period piece here is I think after the Sleaze Convention, there was a gay disco like up around—

CAITLIN: There was.

JERRY: Ninth and Orange, right? Ninth and Shipley.

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: And that was the after party up there and it’s a funny thing—these things never came up and we’re up there, “Oh we’re going to the disco after party. Yay, it’s free. Just give your name at the door.”

So it was—it was a club, so you had to—I don’t think you paid, but it was after 1:00 a.m., so it had to have a club license. So I’m staying with a friend of mine or two, and he [inaudible]. And he goes, “Are you going to give your real name?”
Yeah, I’m going to give my real name. It’s a gay club. [Inaudible] come in an arrest us? When was that? That was ’78.

CAITLIN: Yeah, late ‘70s.

JERRY: Yeah right. Just as a period piece. Sure, what the heck. Anyway, so—if you told me some more stuff about it, I would probably remember some other things, but George should be—he should—I mean he kind of organized it a little bit.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: George is a funny—George is an old friend of mine, but he’s a funny character. So I say he organized it, him and Joyce probably [inaudible]—

CAITLIN: See that’s why I would love to talk to him and he said I should really talk to Joyce about it and I’ve been trying to find her information because he said he doesn’t have a current phone number or address or anything like that and—

JERRY: Huh.

CAITLIN: He said, “You should try to find whoever was the agent for Harvey Pekar.

JERRY: Yeah, Pekar.

CAITLIN: And then do it that way, but he’s passed. It’s kind of hard to find who his agent was.

JERRY: I don’t know if George told you, but there’s some dispute there that I think some younger woman, as seen by Joyce at least, as kind of moving in on Harvey near the end.

CAITLIN: Oh.

JERRY: So it gets—

CAITLIN: Complicated.

JERRY: And there was the whole fight about rights or something, too, because the younger girl was doing a biography or I don’t know what, so there’s some bad blood there. He stays in touch with the—

CAITLIN: And then well she has a sister, right, Wendy Brabner.

JERRY: Right, yeah. Joyce’s—

CAITLIN: And I wonder, is she still around here? Do you know?

JERRY: I don’t know. That was a big family. Joyce’s family is a big family actually. Ion Brabner, there was two or three boys and at least two—three girls. I think there were six kids I think. You could just randomly look for Bradners in the phone book, I guess.
CAITLIN: Call them, “Hi.” 

JERRY: Watkins—nobody can find Watkins. That’s kind of weird. 

CAITLIN: No one has seen him. 

JERRY: Do you know who was also around in those days was Sue Rosenberg, who’s— 

CAITLIN: Yeah, talked to her. Flash. She was great. 

JERRY: She’s very friendly. Yeah, I haven’t seen her in years. 

CAITLIN: Yeah, she’s in New York now. 

JERRY: Yeah, she’s a—she just had a big deal—big project with the library—the New York Public Library. 

CAITLIN: I think so. I forget exactly what she told me. 

JERRY: Yeah. She’s a character. Her brother drums for a group called Wale, which these days is—some of them are in a band called the Big Package Band, they were always the best horn band around in the ’70s and ’80s and they were do Tower Power and just horn—if you want a big horn section. So her brother drummed for them. I don’t know—[inaudible]. I think he wanted to be a doctor or something serious. 

Yeah, that’s all I can tell you about the Sleaze Convention really. 

CAITLIN: Oh, that’s okay. 

JERRY: Clifton Market was just interesting. I have a lot of Joyce—this morning I saw this Joyce stuff and god, I can’t believe I have this much stuff from Joyce. When she—I can’t really [inaudible], but this is how Joyce was. She was artist. Joyce was a frustrated artist. 

CAITLIN: Uh huh. 

JERRY: But she—I had an invitation—she lived on—that whole Fifth and Shipley—those buildings there between Shipley and Market on Fifth is the way you got into them, but then George and Joyce—or maybe it’s Joyce by herself maybe lived over top on Market in there somewhere in a home. You had to walk through a million hallways and stuff and [inaudible]. It was right there on Market Street. It was kind of cool. 

And she invited—and she was trying to conduct her social life after she and George broke up, assuming they had a social life when they were together. And this said, “I’m having a Bird’s Eye Meat Party.” I don’t know if—Bird—Bird’s Eye sandwich— 

CAITLIN: A brand? Yeah.
JERRY: And they would make little frozen meat pies and we were supposed to bring a meat pie. It was a cool idea. Yeah, but that was like Joyce, “We’re having a Bird’s Eye Meat Party.” It was—

CAITLIN: I heard she’s—she’s interesting.

JERRY: I mean she was. She just was—god, she just was so miserable, but if you could just pierce through it. She was—she should have just relaxed and enjoyed things and stuff. And she met Harvey, she corresponds—that’s all in the movie. That’s all true. We were there and [inaudible]. It was all true. That movie as far as I could tell was true. Go ahead, I’m sorry. Go ahead.

CAITLIN: I guess my last one is what do you believe is the biggest difference in the music scene between Newark and Wilmington, if there is one?

JERRY: Whoa. What was the Wilmington scene anyway? Well, well I—you’d have to—you’re from a different era. One thing I noticed early in the game is that those of us poor souls who live south of Wilmington aren’t amplified quite as big as the guys who live north of Wilmington. It was like an early little economic lesson that, “Oh gee, the rich people are in Wilmington and north and we’re like in blue collar land down here.”

That just became clear to me then and then as the years went on, like—yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Then again, it’s—it’s—it’s [inaudible] for someone to blame the size of their amplifiers—you’d do to these battles of the bands—again, the battles of the bands were—they were like the gigs and you’d go there and somebody’s coming in wheeling these huge amplifiers and you think, “Oh god.” They’re just going to sound better, so what can we do?

What’s the difference? Well, I think the kids did have more money and more leisure time up north of Wilmington and they were—I think they had come maybe from some more liberal households I guess or so, so there was maybe a folk—some of their parents might have been like Peter, Paul and Mary fans or Joan Baez fans or something like that. Whereas those of us south of Wilmington were more blue collar and we listened more to dance music and stuff, so I think that kind of—I think those two strands kind of—so you’ll get heavier stuff north of Wilmington. Like the psychedelic bands would be—a lot of them would be from north of Wilmington, do more explorations and have—they’d say that The Color of Your Mind and that kind of garbage. Whereas we’re like I’ve Got to Dance to Keep from Crying or something like that. Just we would do soul, vocal harmonies and things like that.

The scene—Wilmington’s always been struggling to be born. I mean for as long as I can remember. We used to come into Wilmington, Fifth and Market in the early ‘60s at the Dry Goods Store, at the big—again, this is where George and Joyce ended up living across from, but it was the—it was the holdover from the ‘40s where you would go in for a variety store in Wilmington. Fifth and—Fifth and Market and—and they had a great record department in it, which we learned later on those stores were like—a merchant would rent that space. So the guy that sold records rented that space from Dry Goods and he sold the records there.
Sir—I used to be able to—his name was Maurice A. Pomeroy and he had—he had monogrammed shirts. We’d go in there to buy records. And I went to Holy Cross and one day I went in with a Holy Cross shirt and he goes, “Sir, I heard you’re attending Holy Cross.”

I’m like, “Yeah, it’s on my shirt.”

And [inaudible]—I remember somebody in front of me was buying a Ray Charles record and he’d say, “Madame I saw Ray Charles last week and he was wonderful.”

CAITLIN: Oh my gosh.

JERRY: Great records. And the records were packed—these were all the albums—now albums so they’re packed in there and—and you had to like—they’d have gospel and stuff. And really these records were like a window to another world. Like, black records—gospel records. People dressed in gowns and—there was no gospel on the TV all the time. It was like, what are they doing? And just the whole black experience, we just came to it through records, through—not through these frigging CDs with nothing on them at all. An album—you would read the back of the album and think, who are these people? Where’s Muscle Shoals, Alabama? Just like—it was an education.

I’m sorry, so that was part of Wilmington in the early ‘60s, was going to buy your records at Dry Goods because they had the best selection. Another formative experience for me for—for Wilmington versus New York, was our band Overdose, we went up to—there’s a place—now it’s where 495 is now, but it was along the river going up towards Claymore, and it was called—an adult club called the Brown Derby. But they lost their—they lost their liquor license, so they reopened as a teen club until they could get back—so probably for three months or six months they would invite teens up and so the teen bands—otherwise it was probably just a cheaters bar or whatever it was. A neighborhood bar—it was a club.

And so we went up there and that was when there was a—we called “Bards.” And who was in the—break the Bards down, but the Bards had—the bands would play behind the bar. So there’d there’d be the bar and the bartenders would be up here like this and there’d be like a bathroom behind the bar and the band would be back there like this with the bartenders—the bartenders probably all went deaf, you know or something like that.

And then they’d let little bands like from Newark who didn’t know what the hell they were doing be able to be over in the corner, like away—like where people sat and we would plug into the wall there and then when the big band took their break and we’d get to play. And then supposedly if they liked us—we never got to be behind.

CAITLIN: You didn’t get behind the bar.

JERRY: No, no. And I— the singer for the bar went outside and there he is sitting in a convertible with some blonde or something and I’m thinking, “Gee, that really is that way.”
Anyway, so difference. It’s hard to say, just a regular economic differences. We were tied down to the Catholic schools, but I think in North Wilmington, it’s not that far, but everyone went to the same place. Everyone went to Sally’s Dance on Saturday night. To St. Elizabeth’s dance on Friday night. The fire halls—that was one cultural difference was the fire halls—we weren’t allowed—my mother would say you can’t go to those fire halls because that’s where the bad kids hang out.

CAITLIN: Where the bad kids hang out.

JERRY: So there was the Claymont Fire Hall, the Elkton Fire Hall and that was usually—the Philadelphia radio stations would come down and do the dances. This Saturday at Claymont Fire Hall. They’d bring the—here’s show business—I’m sorry. Here’s show business from the ‘60s, they’d bring the groups down that had hot records to come down to the—to the gym where the dance was—the fire hall and they would lip sync their record. And guess what, if the crowd really liked them, they’d come out and lip sync it again. That was the level of show business. Nobody was live at all.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Meanwhile, we were playing live in bands when these guys would come out, but people you wouldn’t even know. Fantastic Johnnies and Patty Drew and Billy Horner and I never saw anybody that went on to be a monster star, but all these local level stars. You would see them—

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: There it is. There’s the Fantastic Johnnies. Anyway. Is there anything else I wanted to say here?

CAITLIN: Yeah, that’s about it for me, but if you want—more.

JERRY: I’m trying to think of more visual.

CAITLIN: And if you think of something two weeks from now, give me a call or shoot me an email.

JERRY: Yeah. Right, right, right. Yeah I might send you some thoughts or—

CAITLIN: The exhibition is not until 2015, so we have a while.

JERRY: Maybe this story be called—

CAITLIN: I have no idea what it’s going to be called.

[Crosstalk]
CAITLIN: But we’re—it’s about just briefly about art and music and within the art scene we’re going to do dance, theatre, fine arts and then with the music we want to have Newark, Wilmington, stuff like that so—

JERRY: Right, right, right.

CAITLIN: And just how—it’s interesting for me to find that there’s a lot of the art openings, they would have musicians play for them and vice versa or like—do you know the sculptor Rick Rothrock? Does that name sound—?

JERRY: No.

CAITLIN: No? He’s from Newark. He did a piece with a woman named Deb Loewen who started a dance company in Newark back in the ‘70s. So they did a piece out in—what’s that road? 896, there was Carpenter Park or whatever it is. They did a dance at like 8:00 at night in moonlight amongst his sculptures and stuff. So it’s just like cool how everything really comes together. Everyone knows each other.

JERRY: Yeah, yeah. I’m trying to think. We played a dance once where—I think it was here. Was it here? I don’t know, we’d adventure up—we played somebody’s graduation in Westover Hills. This was the Commotions.

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: But the rich people who had—they’d set up tents in their backyards and stuff for—it was like, “Oh man.”

I mean—I mean you’re not looking for any Marxist interpretation of this, I guess, so, I won’t get into—I will say going down to New Castle. Johnny Neil’s from New Castle and there were always lots of good—

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And they were more—they were more—it was more like southern rock kind of trailer park kind of stuff.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: But there were players over there. They could really play and somebody should at least nod towards that.

CAITLIN: Definitely. Yeah, we don’t want to leave anyone out.

JERRY: That’s right. That’s right. Yeah, I would say that.

CAITLIN: Yeah, so if you think of other people I definitely should talk to, let me know because really all I have to go on is looking through Fine Times and what people tell me.
JERRY: People that were there. People that were definitely there. No—there was a small record label in Wilmington. Well, a number of different labels owned by an older gentleman named Vince Rago, R A G O. And you should probably talk to John Rago who loves to talk. He’s the mayor’s spokesperson right now. John Rago is his name. He’s an old WDED alumnus. He’s got a radio voice. He’ll always be the emcee for the Clifford Brown Festival. He’s got a real radio voice.

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: And—now—I’m going on two tangents there. John Rago might just be able to tell you about radio and stuff in the ‘60s and ‘70s. This record label—there was a group called Friends of the Family—well no, that was the second band. The first band was called The Infields. I’m sure someone’s brought up the Infields to you yet.

CAITLIN: I never heard of them.

CAITLIN: E N F I E L D S. I think Infields, I believe I got their name. And they were kids with money up north of Wilmington, but they had records that played on WIMS and—but Vince Rago would just—he would—the way he made his living, I think. He’s an older man from in town, Wilmington, he would go around listen to these bands and sign them up for record contracts and they would be exclusive contracts, so he would press copies of a record and then if the record got popular in Wilmington, other companies would come with nibbles and he’d have the group under exclusive contract, so he would do the dealing. Because you have to distribute your record. You have to get with one of the majors to get distributed if you want somebody—somebody in Detroit to buy your records in Wilmington; you have to get the record out to Detroit.

So he would sign up bands. So it was the old story where the groups wouldn’t get paid very much money, but the belief was that Vince Rago would get paid. I don’t think that Vince Rago got paid a lot of money. The record business is just everybody ripping off everybody else, especially for one shots. The trick was always if you get—you could have two or three hits in a row, then you could—then when the boys said, “Oh I need that record. I can sell 10,000 copies of that record,” you can say, “You never paid me for the last ones. Pay me for the last ones.”

So Vince Rago would have—if somebody could have a collection of Vince Rago’s 45s that would be interesting. I don’t think anybody does. But he would record a lot of well-known musicians in town early when they were young. I—I did—I’m going to send you some stuff that I did. I did an interview with one of the Infields later on like in the ‘80s.

CAITLIN: Oh, okay.

JERRY: For the News Journal. I used—my brother when he was feature editor would—

CAITLIN: Let you do—

JERRY: Once in a while, so something you mentioned earlier that I forget that I did—oh the Hooters. I did a Hooters show up in Philadelphia. So I can get that stuff together.
CAITLIN: Yeah, definitely, that would be great.

JERRY: Stuff like this. Here’s the Klu Klux Klan marching down the Main Street in Newark in—

CAITLIN: Oh fabulous.

JERRY: In—this was the ‘80s. This was Shawn Mullen who was one of the editors who—Oh, it’s ’93, I’m sorry. Okay, not your time. All right and let’s just—I’m sorry—can we just—I know you’re trying to run.

CAITLIN: No, no, no, take your time.

JERRY: So these are all—

[Crosstalk]

JERRY: I tried to help a guy promote shows at the Logan House for a while and it was called Tough Luck Productions and he’s an insufficient funds check returned to me from this guy. He died later on and I could really have some fun with it. And there’s an article about God’s going out of business in 1996.

CAITLIN: Oh yeah.

JERRY: “Hold My Hand”, “Kiss Me Night”, “Hold Me Tight”. These are all—bridge, “I’ve Got Flowers in the Spring.” This is me and a girl singing “I’ve Got You Babe” at somebody’s wedding. These are just the kind of tritest. There I am, I had hair, possibly drunk. These are all from the Salad Cellar I think. There’s the Rheem there and Cecelia playing bass. There’s Cecelia playing bass. It looked like somebody’s rec room.

CAITLIN: And where is she now?

JERRY: She married Don, had a happy ending and she became a professor of Journalism up at Utica College, up in Utica, New York. And he writes for the—

CAITLIN: So he’s in New York now?

JERRY: He’s in New York, too. They just bought a house down in Lewis a couple years ago. I think they’re going to retire in Delaware. But—but that—she’s from New York originally, but he’s got deep Delaware roots.

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: That’s my old—that was in the book. My [inaudible] was another band I was in. That’s Lisa Jacks’ ex-husband there. Nothing—nothing worthy of anything there as far as—these are all old surveys. Somebody should—you can probably get—Joyce might turn you on to a guy named Brian Lee, an old gentleman who’s just a pain in the ass, but these were the—these were the
surveys that radio stations would put out like, *Hey, Hot hits*. This is a WIMS survey from Wilmington. This is ’67.

CAITLIN: So it lists all the bands?

JERRY: People of—

[Crosstalk]

JERRY: Here’s the Supremes, Aretha Franklin. This is all national. You want—you want mainly local, right?

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Okay, right. And these are just—I won’t even leave these. There’s going to be [inaudible]. We all listened to Philadelphia radio and 560 AM was the big—the big station up there then. I think we were all kind of listening to that, but that’s not something you’d be interested in. And these were the black stations, WBAS and WHAT, which were my favorites. And here’s more black stations there.

All right. My show, I mainly played black music is what I played—

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: I mean, I—I varied and stuff like that. Let me see if I brought anything else that was super-duper interesting. This is all from her. All right, so this is all things [inaudible]. This we’re in the record store getting James Glare to work for me. In the record store behind the counter. There I am at the [inaudible] UD. That made it into the book I think. There’s me and B.J. That made into the book. Here’s our old business license. I mean, I don’t know what they’re—what they’re—this is where everybody hung out. It was called The Greasy Spoon and was—

CAITLIN: Yeah [inaudible]. Yeah.

JERRY: Yeah, yeah. It’s great. Just remember I’m showing you these. Oh, there’s one of the—there’s one of the Commotions there. There’s Don hiding back there, Cecelia, my brother Jimmy, the drummer, Mark and Steve the songwriter. B.J. again in the store. Commotions again in front of soft focus period there.

CAITLIN: I love the clothes.

JERRY: There’s also—there’s also—somebody could do an exhibition someday on bar entertainers, like guys like this guy. Billy Werts would travel from Charlottesville, Virginia and go up and down the East Coast and do really interesting—they were bar shows, but they were—he was a comedian. He could have made it on the TV at some point. And then he would do some covers, some originals—

CAITLIN: Was he really a reverend?
JERRY: No.

CAITLIN: No.

JERRY: He was—he was [inaudible]. But I’ll send you an article—I did an article on him, too.

CAITLIN: Oh yeah, there’s—

[Crosstalk]

CAITLIN: There is it.

JERRY: Do you have—

CAITLIN: I have that, yeah.

JERRY: Good. Okay, good. There’s XPR when—’87 there. I don’t know, should I leave this stuff with you?

CAITLIN: If you want to, it will be in very good hands. We will not lose it. As soon as you want it back, it will be here.

JERRY: There used to be a cool magazine called Cream. It was a national magazine. And anyway—and they would do these fake—those Dewers profiles, what gentlemen did and then they would do beer profiles. There’s George. They did use this stuff. I can’t believe they used this stuff. This is—this is totally weird. A guy who—a black guy who sang in some bands down in Newark named Lonnie White and then he changed his name to Snuky Pay, S N U K Y and he had a record and George will know this record, it’s called, “He’s the Groove, He’s the Man, He’s the Pope in the Vatican.” And it actually sold some copies.

Anyway, he moved up here and we would see him up in New York, he’d be selling Rolexes. He was just eking a living by. And then in ’93 when—this was the first on they—the terrorists tried to bomb the World Trade Center and they started in the basement and it didn’t work.

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: And here they’re looking for the blind sheik. And the blind sheik, it says here, “We need to talk Mr. Ali Hassan suddenly announced to his surprised roommate Snuky Pay.”

Snuky Pay made the New York Times. He was rooming with terrorist. It was probably some flophouse. It was a terrible thing.

CAITLIN: Oh my gosh.

JERRY: Here’s one at the Rondo Center after—the story I always tell is that George hates—I just [inaudible]. People would—husband and wife—one man and one woman would be sitting in the living room talking and they actually would move like to the dining room talking. So we
said, look, there’s these two old black movies called—these were live shows starting around ’64 with the Rolling Stones, The Supremes headlining and stuff. The Beach Boys and stuff like that. And they’re around and Barry had the State Theatre and—and so we said, maybe we can order these through George and they cost—I remember I think they cost $80.00 a piece and showed them, projected them up at the Rondo Center and charged $2.00 whatever, $3.00 and make some money. And they did.

And we saved the Rondo Center, although George will say I’m full of shit. But anyway.

CAITLIN: Oh no, that’s great.

JERRY: So that might be something that you’re interested in there. I know you’re up to provisional here. I don’t this—this didn’t make the book. The Greasy Spoon, that’s the menu. As my wife—

CAITLIN: Oh, I would love to see that.

JERRY: My wife—my wife ended up working there. A lot of our girlfriends ended up working there.

CAITLIN: Yeah, so then were you familiar with Kurt Wayne and—

JERRY: Oh yeah, sure. Yeah. Oh, well it’s all going to tie together. I say—I sang “I Got You Babe” with Kathy Hauck another waitress there. Kurt Wayne did a little—if you know Kurt Wayne, he did a little napkin series.

CAITLIN: Yeah, the napkin.

JERRY: One had Captain Gumo and Captain Gusto. I don’t if you—I don’t know—

CAITLIN: I don’t know. I’ve been trying to track them down and people have been trying to look for them, but do you have—do you remember if you have any of his napkins lying around?

JERRY: I have to take a look.

CAITLIN: Or would they be in this box?

JERRY: They wouldn’t be in this box. No, no, no, no, no. My wife Sheila was Captain Gumo and Kathy Hauck who—who we just were out to her daughter’s play at the Wilmington Drama League like two—two weekends ago, she was Captain Gusto. And he—and they were like two waitresses and it was their adventures.

CAITLIN: That’s so funny.

JERRY: He would sit there. He’d sit there all day and just do these crazy things. Our Lady of the Spoons—
CAITLIN: Yeah and then they had that exhibit, so yeah—

[Crosstalk]

CAITLIN: Let’s see. John Gatti. Does that name?

JERRY: I remember that name.

CAITLIN: Bruce Burrs?

JERRY: Bruce Burrs, I remember Bruce Burrs, oh yeah, yeah, yeah. These guys have a painting of Bruce Burrs in their kitchen. Steve Crawford—Dr. Crawford.

CAITLIN: I’ve been trying to track him down.

JERRY: Oh god. He’s old and his wife’s older. He married like—I think he married—typical Steve Crawford he married the secretary to the department except she was like 15 years older than he was. But they—they’re still in town.

CAITLIN: Are they? Okay.

JERRY: John—it’s under John Steven Crawford—

CAITLIN: Okay.

JERRY: Is his name. So yeah, if you want to talk about spoon art. Who else would do that? Anybody in the art—you were art major, I guess, right?

CAITLIN: I was an art history minor. I actually was a fashion major.


CAITLIN: Conservation?

JERRY: Yeah, down in Baltimore at [inaudible] and then one of her summer internships was at the Supreme Court, there’s pieces of artwork—[inaudible] by the Supreme Court’s art, they have all this great art. The Supreme Court. I forget what she’s doing now. But anyway, so—yeah so—who to write down then?

CAITLIN: John Stevens Crawford.

JERRY: The art department, who else is down there? John Brice? The woman, Martha—isn’t there Martha—what’s her name, Martha—I used to kind of be sweet around her many, many years ago.

CAITLIN: And you don’t remember?
JERRY: Yeah. Martha—Martha—those people I think they would all hang out at the Spoon. I’m sure they would. Yeah, all right. If you can—I might take this book.

CAITLIN: You can—if you feel—if you feel comfortable taking it out that’s fine.

JERRY: I don’t want to get rid of these things, either—

CAITLIN: I promise. I have a bunch of people’s stuff that they have left with me and it is in very good hands.

JERRY: Right, right because I didn’t write anything up of how many things I’m giving you, but I might confirm it with an email. I do have legal training.

CAITLIN: That’s fine.

JERRY: I’ll say, “I’m just confirming I gave you a boxful of photos and a”—

CAITLIN: And the deluxe luncheonette menu.

JERRY: Menu, right, right, right.

CAITLIN: Can’t lose that.

JERRY: That’s good. I’m glad. Now you kind of opened up a little bit more. I have some more stuff that has more—

CAITLIN: Oh great.

JERRY: I was looking for strictly band—

CAITLIN: I didn’t even know that you were involved with other things.

[Crosstalk]

CAITLIN: I mean, once again, everyone did everything back then and was involved in everything.

JERRY: I remember Kurt Wayne coming out to some of our gigs. He would like laugh, the Commotions, ha, ha, ha. One thing is we drew a lot of girls and so we drew a lot of guys. We just drew big crowds. He had a couple—my brother and Don Challenger, they were the lookers and the girls would come out and then the guys would come out. That’s the secret of making great music.

CAITLIN: Uh huh.

JERRY: I’m being facetious. But I mean it was a big social thing. And all kids were having—I mean, clumping was really coming, so a woman named Ellen Getz, who was a real character in town, she’s a lawyer up in New York now. She went straight. She supposed ran for prom—
something as a lesbian or the University of Delaware Homecoming Queen and she had the first mohawk—she was—she was—I have to tell you she was Asian American, so she looked a girl from China, but she had the first mohawk. She was out for shock.

Are we running out of time there?

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: So that was another whole thing. She was the first person who saw a punk band at our pizza on Academy Street and we’re sitting there and this band was called Youth in Asia, that’s what they’re called. And Ellen’s sitting there and the singer was also Asian and after a couple songs she goes, “Fucking Koreans.” It was my first insight that other—other—what’s the word? Nationalities—

CAITLIN: Yeah.

JERRY: Could hate other nationalities. You know what I mean? What do you have against Koreans anyway? Sorry.

CAITLIN: Well, it was great meeting you.

[Crosstalk]

JERRY: I know you want me out of here. [Inaudible]

CAITLIN: It’s wonderful.

JERRY: You know B.J., my friend B.J. out in LA, but we just—we had not stayed in touch that much and he—he’s—he might have something to add.

CAITLIN: Yeah definitely

[End of Audio]

Duration: 115 minutes