

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center
for
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

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Arkansas Memories Project

Earl Franklin Cate

Interviewed by Scott Lunsford, Eric Johnson, and Bob Cochran

April 19, 2010

Sonora, Arkansas

Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio files, video highlight clips, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center Web site at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu>. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, in addition to the transcripts, to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
 - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds, such as a doorbell ringing;
 - annotations for clarification and identification; and
 - standard English spelling of informal words.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

Citation Information

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Scott Lunsford, Eric Johnson, and Bob Cochran interviewed Earl Franklin Cate on April 19, 2010, in Sonora, Arkansas.

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Okay. Great. Well, Earl, thanks for [*camera clicks*]*—uh—*bein' with us. Uh—today we're talking with—uh—Earl Franklin Cate. And—uh—my name is Scott Lunsford. We are at Earl's place out here—out in Sonora . . .

Earl Franklin Cate: Sonora.

SL: . . . Arkansas. It's just outside of Springdale. Uh—it's—uh—what's the county road?

EFC: Three ninety-nine.

SL: Three ninety-nine, just before you get to the—uh—Beaver Lake—uh—bridge out by Sonora. Um—the—uh—today's date is April the nineteenth . . .

EFC: Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . two thousand ten. And—um—we are—uh—here for the Pryor Center. We're doing a high-definition audio and video recording interview with—uh—Earl first. We'll do Ernie here in a few days. And then we'll [*camera clicks*] try and get y'all together after that. Um—we're gonna take this recording, and it's gonna be archived [*camera clicks*] at the University of

Arkansas in the Special Collections Department in Mullins Library, Fayetteville campus. We'll preserve it forever. We'll give you a DVD of all the raw footage of this recording. Uh—we'll scan what photos we have from your family photo albums and artifacts that you've got around the house here. Uh—you'll get copies of that. That'll be on the DVD, as well. Uh—we will transcribe this interview, so you'll have a printed transcript that we'll send to you for your approval. And if there's anything in this interview that you don't want the rest of the world to know, [*laughter*] we'll take it out.

EFC: All right.

[00:01:37] SL: Or if there's something that isn't . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . really clear . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . about what we're talkin' about and we want to clarify it, why, we'll clear all that with you, and we'll . . .

EFC: Okay.

SL: . . . make sure that you're comfortable with what we're doing. When all that's said and done, we'll—we'd like to—uh—post this interview—uh—in its entirety, printwise, as far as the transcript, and audiowise. But we'll also—uh—put some

highlights of this video—uh—on the web of this interview.

And—uh—all that will meet with your approval.

EFC: Okay.

SL: If all of that's okay with you, Earl, [*EFC laughs*] then we're gonna get started on this interview.

EFC: All right.

SL: If it's not, we'll stop and wait for lunch. [*EFC laughs*]

EFC: Okay.

SL: Is it . . .

EFC: Let's go.

[00:02:19] SL: All right. Let's go. All right. Um—well, the first thing we have to start with is when and where you were born.

EFC: Well, [*clears throat*] Ernie and I were born in Marshall, Arkansas. That's Searcy County. Uh—it was December 26, [19]42. Uh—that was at my grandmother's house there where we were born. And then Dad was in the service at the time, and he didn't make it up in time when we were born but—uh—yeah. And both grandmothers were—my dad's mom was there, too.

SL: So was it a home birth? Was it . . .

EFC: Yes. It was at Grandmother's . . .

SL: You were born in the house.

EFC: . . . house, and they—and they didn't know she was—that Mom was gonna have twins. [*SL laughs*] They delivered me first and the—in fact, the doctor was packin' his stuff up and gettin' ready to go, [*Eric Johnson laughs*] and my gran—one of my grandmothers said, "Well, somethin's just not right here, you know—uh—there's somethin'—you know, she's not doin' right." So he—well, I'll be darned if they didn't find Ernie. [*Laughter*] In fact, they even put him in the oven overnight 'cause it was in—cold in the wintertime.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: 'Cause he was a little underweight. I mean, they didn't have the gas on, but [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . I mean, it kept him, you know, like an incubator. [*Laughs*]

[00:03:33] SL: So this is . . .

EFC: He was smaller.

SL: . . . this was at your grandparents' house.

EFC: It was at my mom's mother and father's house in . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . Marshall.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:03:41] SL: And what was your mom's maiden name?

EFC: Brown.

SL: Brown. And so . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . her grandparents' names were?

EFC: Her—her folks—well, you know, Stacy was her mom's name and—and W. E. Brown, he was a barber in Marshall. He had a barbershop.

SL: And what was your mother's name?

EFC: Florence.

SL: Florence Brown.

EFC: Mh-hmm.

SL: Did she have a middle name? Do you . . .

EFC: Almeda.

SL: Almeda? That's neat. How do you spell that? Do you know?

EFC: *A-L-E-M-E-D-A*, I guess. I'm—or *A-L-M-E-D-A*. I'm not positive about that. [*Laughs*]

SL: We'll look it up. [*Laughs*]

EJ: That's an Arkansas name.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:04:15] SL: Um—so—um—the oven, was that a [*EFC laughs*]
gas—was that a gas stove? Or was it a woodstove?

EFC: Yeah, you know, I don't know. That's just a story I've always heard, you know. Now . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . whether it's, you know [*laughs*] . . .

[00:04:31] SL: And—uh—so Marshall is not too far from the Buffalo River, right?

EFC: Right. It's just the other side. It was—it was—yeah, I guess it still is the county seat of Searcy County.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: So do you remember much about Marshall? How long were y'all there?

EFC: Not too much 'cause we never lived there. It was just, you know, my mom went down to her folks 'cause, you know . . .

SL: They were visiting.

EFC: My dad was in the service, you know, so . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . she—and, you know. That's where they—and when she was pregnant with us, that's where she would stay there until we were born. And she eventually took us to Texas where dad was at. San Marcos.

[00:05:08] SL: So where were your—where was your mom living

before you—I mean, she was visiting . . .

EFC: They lived—I guess they lived up here.

SL: Up here?

EFC: Yeah.

[00:05:16] SL: Uh-huh. And your father's name?

EFC: Lloyd.

SL: Lloyd . . .

EFC: He didn't have a middle name.

SL: He didn't—Lloyd Cate.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: And he was a barber?

EFC: No. No. My dad was a farmer.

SL: Oh.

EFC: My grandfather on my mom—my mom's dad was a barber.

SL: Oh, that's right. Okay.

EFC: He had the old-fashioned barbershop.

SL: Okay. Okay.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:05:34] SL: So—um—pretty much you just got born in Marshall,
and then you went . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . came back up to Springdale, I guess . . .

EFC: Soon as we were old enough, she took us to Texas where he was in the service, in the air corps, as they called it then.

Yeah.

SL: What did he—uh—do in the air corps?

EFC: He was a plane mechanic.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Yeah. But he and my brother—I've got a picture of 'em there.

[Points to picture] And his brother, I mean, Leon.

[00:05:59] SL: His brother. Okay. Um—so did your folks—um—had—how long had they lived in Springdale? I mean, was that . . .

EFC: Well, my dad's grandfather Abraham, way I understand it, moved here from, I think, from Minnesota or someplace el—they were all German. In fact . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . my daughter's got the family—been studyin' the Internet stuff that the family originated in Germany. But they moved to—to the—Pennsylvania in the, like, 1700s or somethin' like that. It wasn't the name then. It was actually Rohm in Germany, *R-O-H-M*. But there was a son named Michael that had moved to the states, and he used his mom's name. Was Katz, *K-A-T-Z*, or somethin' like that. Anyway, and then they

ended up migratin' to Ohio and Minne—and Minnesota and stuff and changed the name to *K-A-T-E*, I think it was, or somethin' like that.

SL: Like . . .

EFC: Anyway, it all got changed all around, and Abraham, when he first came here, it was *C-A-T*, I think. Or *K-A-T*. I'm not positive about that. So then they added a *e* to it so it'd be Cate. [00:07:09] But Abraham lived down the road here. And then his—then Stewart, which is my grandfather, lived just this side. And that's where my dad was born.

SL: Here on the same . . .

EFC: Yeah. Down this road, actually. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: That's cool. Well, so the—um—changing names, is that because they didn't want—uh—they—they . . .

EFC: Well, people had a hard time, you know, which one—they made fun of the name Cat, too, you know what I mean. It was like . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . nobody wanted that [*laughs*] name but, yeah.

[00:07:41] SL: But the—uh—um—was it—uh—was there any animosity toward a German name . . .

EFC: Nah, I don't think . . .

SL: . . . back then?

EFC: . . . it was that they even thought of it as a German name . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . when they moved here . . .

EJ: Ah.

EFC: . . . from Minnesota or wherever, and by then it was *K-A-T-E* or
somethin' like that. It wasn't . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . it wasn't the *K-A-T-Z*, you know.

SL: Right. Right. And the . . .

EFC: I mean, you know, this may not all be true. My daughter's
been really studyin' that . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . stuff. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, that's okay. You know . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . there aren't any real mistakes in oral history. [*Laughter*]
[00:08:08] It—it's all fallible, you know . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . so—um—um—so you were in Texas. Where in Texas did
your mom . . .

EFC: San Marcos is where they was at the last part.

SL: Do you remember . . .

EFC: I think he was in Lake Charles before that. I can vaguely remember bein' there when I was just a baby. I can se—sorta remember it bein' real hot. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

[00:08:33] SL: So—um—he made it through the service okay?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Didn't get hurt . . .

EFC: He didn't have to get . . .

SL: . . . or didn't . . .

EFC: . . . he didn't have to go overseas.

SL: He was never out there fightin' . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . but he was maintaining the planes. Did he . . .

EFC: He got to taxi the airplanes. [*Laughs*]

SL: Uh-huh. Well, did he get shipped overseas? Did he . . .

EFC: No, he didn't never had to go because it was all on-base . . .

SL: . . . he—it was all here in the states, in Texas.

EFC: . . . airplane mainten—maintenance.

SL: Man, that's a blessing.

EFC: Like I say, he used to run 'em out on the runway and drive 'em around and stuff, [*laughter*] but he never took off. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, that's good, though.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Um—yeah, he's . . .

[00:09:03] EFC: Then when he came back, I guess they—there was a place on down the road here on the curve there on the side of the hill that we lived. And I think that was their first place that—like, couple of acres or somethin', but I vaguely remember livin' down there before we moved up here. We lived in this building out there first, the small gara—garage.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: That's where we lived while they were buildin' this house. I remember that sorta, you know.

[00:09:27] SL: And so, your father actually built this house.

EFC: Yeah, him and his brother.

SL: He and his brother.

EFC: Yep.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: They did all of the stonework themselves. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Wow.

EFC: A lotta work.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It all came from the White River, and that was before the lake was in.

SL: I won—I wonder if they knew the Kelly Brothers at all.

EFC: Well, I'm sure they did.

SL: They were doin' rockwork, too.

EFC: Probably did.

[00:09:46] SL: Yeah. Um—so do you [*camera clicks*]*—um—uh—the first house you lived in—um—do you remember anything about it?*

EFC: Yeah, a little bit. I was really young. I remember we had a saddle hang—in the ba—on the back porch or somethin'—and I re—and—uh—I fell off and hit my head one time, and it was bleedin' really bad, and the mailman came by, and my mom grabbed him and took me to the doctor or somethin'. [*Laughs*]
I can vaguely . . .

SL: Well, that probably . . .

EFC: . . . remember that.

SL: . . . that probably explains everything for the rest [*EFC laughs*]
of your life.

EFC: That's what happened. Yeah. [*SL laughs*] Yep.

[00:10:22] SL: Well—um—so was there—do you member if the house had plumbing and . . .

EFC: No. The one down there didn't, no.

SL: So that was a real kinda pioneer stuff out there, then . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. This was . . .

SL: . . . early.

EFC: . . . the first house that had real plumbing.

SL: When they built this house, they actually . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . had plumbing in it.

EFC: We didn't have it in the pu—in the little house.

SL: Was it—was it on a well? There wasn't city water out here, so it had to be a well.

EFC: Nah, it was a well. There's two wel—it was, fact, three wells out here but, yep.

SL: Um . . .

[00:10:50] EFC: But this place used to be—I mean, they—he had—there was no houses there, and there was a huge barn. And Dad had white fences everywhere. And he raised cattle and—and had horses. We even had a little rodeo kind of arena with a bucking chute out here. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Oh, really?

EFC: Yeah. We used to ride. You know, drive the cattle in. Drop in the chute and ride 'em. [*Laughs*]

SL: You did?

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: So you were a cowboy?

EFC: Sorta, yeah. We had horses and—yeah. Always had horses.

SL: How big a herd did your dad try to raise?

EFC: You know, I don't know how many. It wasn't huge. And he later on started workin' for Farmers Mutual Insurance Company . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . in Fayetteville as a rural adjuster, you know, all farm property.

SL: Right.

EFC: But he always had hogs and cattle. And we had sheep at one time. A lotta sheep. Yeah.

SL: So you—uh—you had to do chores.

EFC: Oh yeah. We had to milk the cows before we went to school.
[Laughs]

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:11:47] EFC: Our first school was the—at Sonora was the grade school. It went to the sixth grade. It was a two-room school, three grades in one room and then the other three. But we'd walk to school. And the hi—the pavement used to end right there. And it was—and then it was a gravel road to Huntsville.
[Laughs]

SL: Yeah. Think I can remember that. So . . .

EFC: You probably can.

SL: . . . so the—um—I'm tryin' to think, now. Uh—you were in grade school when y'all were living in this house, then.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

[00:12:20] SL: And—um—uh—so your grandparents lived . . .

EFC: They lived . . .

SL: . . . next door . . .

EFC: . . . down the road. Yeah.

SL: Down the road.

EFC: Yep.

SL: And for a while—did you ever know your great-grandfather?

EFC: Oh no.

SL: No.

EFC: And barely remember Grandfather.

SL: Do you . . .

EFC: I remember stayin' and spendin' the night with him, you know, but I was real—we were small. I think seven or eight years old . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . when he passed away.

[00:12:41] SL: So—um—how—uh—do you remember much about

his house?

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: Was it—did he have a sleepin' porch?

EFC: It's—it was way o—yeah. [*Clears throat*] You know, wood, white, two-story-type house.

SL: Oh. That's pretty—uh . . .

EFC: You know, typical.

SL: Uh—two stories is a pretty big deal.

EFC: Yeah, it wasn't big and huge but . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:13:03] SL: And—uh—did he farm, as well?

EFC: Yeah. He had a smokehouse and would smoke ho—the pigs, and then he would butcher hogs and stuff. [*Laughs*]

[00:13:13] SL: Okay. Let's talk . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . about hog day. I mean—uh . . .

EFC: I don't remember much about that but . . .

SL: You don't?

EFC: I do remember it, but vaguely, when I was real, real small.

SL: It was a pretty big deal.

EFC: Yeah. And, like, there's a couple of pictures there with Ernie

and I. We're, like, two years old. It was at that house [*unclear words*] with the birthday cake was at that house.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:13:31] SL: Do you remember much about your granddad?

EFC: Nope. Very little. I just remember drivin'—he had that—the old car, and I remember he sat me in his lap and let me steer the car down the road.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: I remember that, vaguely. [00:13:44] But my grandmother Elizabeth, she lived to be in her nineties.

SL: You remember—you had some . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . times with her.

EFC: Yeah. There's a picture over there of her when—uh—yeah. She lived in the little house for a long time, and then they moved into Springdale. She moved into Springdale. She had a couple of rent houses in Springdale.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: She—yeah. She was Little Granny.

SL: Was she—was she a little—little . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . little lady?

EFC: Really small and always had a garden. That's about all she ate was stuff from her garden. That's probably why she lived to be ninety-five or ninety-six [*unclear words*]. [*Laughs*]

SL: How many kids did she raise?

EFC: Let me see. There's four—four boys and a girl. Five, but there was two that died, so there was probably se—I think seven altogether.

[00:14:29] SL: Now, is—you—wou—is—did she come down from Minnesota? Is that . . .

EFC: No, she was a . . .

SL: Or was that your great-grandfather?

EFC: No, she was from here. She was a Fink. I mean, her dad's name was Fink. But I don't know that much—now, there was—ac—actually, the ancestors are black Fink, from what I understand [*laughs*] on the family tree, somehow, from Kentucky but—'cause most of the people around here came from . . .

EJ: Mh-hmm.

EFC: . . . you know . . .

EJ: Kentucky and Tennessee.

EFC: . . . you know, Trail of Tears, whatever you call it. I mean,

they came from . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . Kentucky and stuff, unless you're Indian. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: And actually, my grandmother on Mom's side was half Indian.

Yeah.

SL: So do you remember her at all? Did you ever meet her?

EFC: A little bit. I member her funeral more than anything 'cause I was—I was so small. Yeah, I remember that they kept her in the house and stuff, but she was little, thin, dark hair, [*unclear word*] black hair.

[00:15:21] SL: But you do—you do remember the funeral.

EFC: I do remember her, yeah.

SL: So was that a home funeral? Did they . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . have her in the—in the house? Did they . . .

EFC: Yeah, overnight. Yeah.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Just like they used to.

SL: Did they—uh—do you remember how they—did they put ice around the body or . . .

EFC: No.

SL: . . . cold . . .

EFC: No. No, I don't remember that.

SL: . . . cold wat—you don't remember that?

EFC: Nuh-uh. I just know they had her casket in the living room . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . the night before the funeral.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: I remember the flower—a lotta flowers and stuff, but.

SL: And—uh—was it a wagon? Was she . . .

EFC: No. No.

SL: A cart?

EFC: Yeah. I don't remember. You know, I don't remember too much about that. I was real small.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:15:59] SL: Okay. So—um—is there—was there any—do you remember any conversations that you had with your grandparents at all? I mean—um . . .

EFC: Not really. I can't remember. I just know the granddad, he, you know, he liked the twins. You know, they'd . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . every chance they get, they'd take us home with 'em.

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Spend the night.

SL: Um . . .

EFC: But he was tall.

[00:16:22] SL: Were there—were your—uh—grandparents or
parents, were they religious at all? Was church . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . a part of their . . .

EFC: Pretty much.

SL: . . . deal? Wh—what—uh—do you know what church your . . .

EFC: Baptist.

SL: Baptist.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:16:33] SL: So—um—did you guys kind of practice that, too,
growin' up? Did your mom and dad . . .

EFC: Not too much. I mean, I act—I actually played piano a little bit
in—for church when the piano player didn't show up. And
our—my uncle—my—well, my great-uncle at—my grandfather's
brother, Stanley, he was the song leader at the church down
here.

SL: Is the church still standing?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: And so, it's just—uh . . .

EFC: It's the same church. They've added to it and stuff. Yeah.

SL: But it's—uh—what? S—Sonora Baptist . . .

EFC: Sonora Baptist.

SL: Sonora . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . Baptist Church.

EFC: Yeah. Yep.

[00:17:08] SL: So—um—did you all—uh—go to Wednesday night services? Did you hang out . . .

EFC: Not that much. It was mainly Sunday.

SL: Mainly Sunday.

EFC: Sunday school and church. Yeah.

SL: And did you have one set of Sunday clothes that you . . .

EFC: No, not really. [*Laughs*]

SL: Not really.

EFC: We didn't dress up too much.

SL: Lot—lotta of folks would just have one nice . . .

EFC: Yeah. That's right.

SL: . . . set of clothes . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . that they would . . .

EFC: 'Cept Easter, you'd always have to . . .

SL: Mh-hmm. Mh-hmm.

EFC: . . . dress up. [*Laughs*] Have a little suit and tie.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:17:40] EFC: Yeah. There used to be a spinet—I mean, a upright piano right there [points to wall] for years, you know. And that's kinda what, you know, Ern—we kinda learned to play keyboard a little bit. Ernie s—s—he was playin' guitar at first, you know. So that sounded good to have the piano, too. But I remember we used—every time we'd come home from church, that's the first place we'd go, and we'd play [*laughs*]
—go straight from church to playin' rock and roll [*laughs*] on the piano.

SL: Is that right? I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . I mean, in the house, I mean, did someone else play the piano in the house? Is—did your . . .

EFC: No. No.

SL: No one else played the piano.

[00:18:09] EFC: My dad played banjo a little bit, but he never could quite get it—get it [*laughs*] right. He always wanted to. Yeah. Way back by—I remember my grandfather had a fiddle, I think,

when I, I mean, I must've been, like, six years old. I—I would—we'd always make him take that fiddle outta the case, you know, 'cause I was intrigued by it.

SL: Did he—did he play it for you?

EFC: He'd play a little bit. Yeah, he would.

SL: A little bit.

EFC: Anyways, somewhere back in the family, there was some music, supposedly. Yep. [*Laughs*]

SL: Um . . .

EFC: We just kept practicin' till we could play a little bit. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Huh.

[00:18:42] SL: So you all didn't have any lessons or anything? You just . . .

EFC: Not really. Well, there used to be people in the community, and they'd have square dances, right?

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: So—and they had square dance here one time. Take out all the furniture . . .

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EFC: This—these are hardwood floors under here.

SL: Uh-huh.

[00:18:59] EFC: Anyway—uh—yeah. And we'd play with some guys

named the Baker Brothers that played, like, a fiddle, guitar.
And I played banjo then. And Ernie played guitar. We'd just
kinda play along with them. That's kinda one of the ways we
learnt.

SL: Yeah, this is when you're in grade school.

EFC: Yeah. Pretty much, sixth . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah, I mean—um . . .

EFC: . . . seventh grade.

SL: Uh . . .

EFC: Sixth grade.

SL: Seventh and eighth grade. Well, let's—let's . . .

EFC: No. No, actually, it was sixth or seventh, [*laughs*] probably.

[00:19:28] SL: Let's—uh—let's talk a little bit about your mom and
dad.

EFC: Okay.

SL: So your dad was basically a f—a farmer . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . after he got . . .

EFC: Pretty much.

SL: . . . out of the service.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And—um—uh—had not a huge farm, but pretty good size?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Um . . .

EFC: Enough.

SL: What? Twenty, thirty head of cattle?

EFC: Forty.

SL: Forty.

EFC: Yeah, usually about that.

SL: Yeah. And so, y'all were probably pretty self sufficient . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . I bet.

EFC: Big garden and plenty of beef and pork [*laughs*] to eat.

SL: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

EFC: Yeah.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:01] SL: Did—on those hog days, did everyone—did the neighbors come? Did y'all—do you remember the . . .

EFC: If I'm not mistaken, at my grandfather's place I remember that, you know, there'd be, like, neighbors that'd bring their—that's where they'd butcher the hogs and had the big boiler thing, you know. You know, scald 'em.

SL: But you never had to mess with that? You never . . .

EFC: Oh, hm-mm. No.

SL: [Laughs] Lots of people we talk to did, so . . .

EFC: The only thing that I didn't really care much for was in the wint—you know, er—you know, like in the fall when it started gettin' cold, he'd take—run the cows, and he'd pick out one of the h—big steers and shoot it to butcher, right? And I didn't like that, [unclear words] you know, my dad shootin', the ca—you know [laughs] . . .

SL: An animal . . .

EFC: . . . animal in front . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . you know, that you kinda got attached to those animals, you know.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. [Laughs]

SL: Well, sure. You probably had names for some of the . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . cows, I bet.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:20:54] SL: So was there a smokehouse? He had a smokehouse?

EFC: No, not—my grandfather had one.

SL: Your grandfather did.

[00:21:00] EFC: See, we had chickens, too. Like, there's that chicken house that's right there. I remember when we were raisin' chickens for Tyson's, [*clears throat*] and Don Tyson was the chicken doctor, right? And he was out there. He'd just graduated from the university, or he was still at the university. In fact, I've mentioned it. He remembers it, you know. He said, "I didn't know what I was doin'." [*Laughter*]

[00:21:24] Trey Marley: What would he do? Would he come out here and . . .

EFC: You know, like if they was gettin' sick or somethin', he'd come out, and he was the chicken doctor, right. Yep. [*Laughs*]

SL: So I guess viruses, and . . .

EFC: Yeah. Right.

SL: . . . you'd lose . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . you'd lose chickens and . . .

EFC: They'd give 'em—put somethin' in their water or whatever and . . .

SL: Uh-huh. Some antibiotic, probably.

EFC: Like he said, "I didn't know what I was doin'." [*Laughter*] He did when it come to money [*unclear word*].

SL: Yeah, he's a pretty smart guy.

EFC: Yeah, he is.

SL: So do you member?

EFC: What?

SL: Don comin' out and . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . messin' with the chickens?

EFC: In fact, we, Ernie and I, had to feed the chickens every day and clean out their waters and all that stuff. It was just one house. And then my uncle had the adjoining farm. He had three houses and one humongous house that we worked for him, too, but. Oh yeah.

SL: So how much'd it pay?

EFC: I don't even remember. Not much.

SL: Yeah.

[00:22:19] EFC: My dad used to—in the summertime he didn't like it if there wasn't anything to do. So he would ha—in the middle of the summer, he'd have us go out in the field and pick up rocks. You know, clear the field off. [*Laughs*] "You guys been settin' around too much." [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, that's good.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: That was probably good for you.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:22:40] SL: Well, let's see. Back then this was just the White River down the road.

EFC: Yeah. Right.

SL: So I bet you spent some time on the White River.

EFC: Yeah. There used to be a Head's Ford. It's called Head's Ford. It's down that road. A cave down there with a spring in it. That's where people would go on Sundays to cool off 'cause there was no air-conditioning back then. There was a couple of good swimmin' holes down there, too.

SL: Uh-huh. [00:23:07] Did they do the baptisms down there?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Do you remember those?

EFC: I actually do remember a few of those . . .

SL: Did you get baptized in a river?

EFC: Nope.

SL: Nope. But you saw some . . .

EFC: Baptized in Springdale.

SL: You did?

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: So did you see some folks . . .

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: . . . see some baptism stuff?

EFC: Mh-hmm.

SL: Were there—can you talk about that? Do you remember much about it?

EFC: I don't remember too much about it. I was a kid—just a kid then. I didn't take it that seriously, [*laughs*] I guess. I don't know.

SL: Well, did they sing when they were . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: Do you remember what they sang? Do you remember any songs?

EFC: Well, not really.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I think that "Bringing in the Sheaves" and "Amazing Grace," you know, all those regular songs.

[00:23:52] SL: So you know, the Baptists weren't too fond of dancing, were they?

EFC: [*Laughter*] I don't think so.

SL: Well, you know, you've got a piano sitting in the house. You've got plumbing in the house, in this house that you grew up in. And we're in—we're actually in that house . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . right now, by the way.

EFC: Amazingly enough. Yeah.

[00:24:15] SL: I don't know if I mentioned that earlier, but we're in the house that you were raised in. And so, I'm assume—did you have electricity in the house . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . at first, too?

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: But now, the older houses, your grandparents' house . . .

EFC: They didn't have it.

SL: . . . they didn't have electricity . . .

EFC: Huh-uh.

SL: . . . or won—running water.

EFC: Huh-uh.

[00:24:36] SL: Did—I assume you probably had radio, then . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . if you had electricity. Do you remember earliest radio programs you listened to?

EFC: We used to have a—one of those big, wooden radios . . .

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EFC: . . . like a Zenith or whatever.

SL: Console.

EFC: It used to set over there, and I remember Ernie and I used to sit in the floor and listen to the *Grand Ole Opry* on that big, old radio. And you c—it was—it'd get—that twelve-inch speaker or whatever, you could actually hear the bass fiddle.

SL: Sure.

EFC: [*Laughs*] That was cool.

SL: Yeah. It was way cool.

EFC: And then we had ano—mom had a—one of those little radios on top of the refrigerator. And I don't remember what—that woulda been a few years after that, but every day at noon when it was time to have, you know, lunch, well, they'd have it tuned in to Tulsa. I don't remember if it was KRMG or KVOO. But John—you know, Bob Wills had a noontime show. You know, you hear it every day, every, you know, every noon you'd hear Bob Wills or Johnny Lee, too, [*laughs*] you know what I mean.

[00:25:35] SL: So now, your dad picked a little banjo, is that right?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Not a whole lot but . . .

EFC: He always thought we shoulda stayed with the country music.

[*Laughter*]

SL: Well, you did. [*Laughs*] What isn't country music anymore?

[Clipboard falls to floor]

EFC: That's right.

SL: Oops! Oops!

EFC: Uh-oh. Go ahead.

[00:25:51] SL: So I'm tryin' to think. What about your mom? Was your mom musically inclined at all?

EFC: Nope.

SL: Nobody singin' around the house?

EFC: No, Dad played the harmonica and sang and stuff but . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Well, were there ever any—I mean, a house with a piano is kinda an open invitation for folks to come along and . . .

EFC: Well, that's why they bought the piano for us, you know.

SL: For you all?

EFC: Yeah.

[00:26:17] SL: Did you all ever have any lessons, piano lessons . . .

EFC: Not really.

SL: . . . or you just pick it up?

EFC: We had a schoolteacher, now, that was a piano player. You know, she had some little books and stuff but learned a little bit from that. It was pretty much by ear. Yeah.

SL: Did anyone ever—did they ever ha—you—are you talkin' about square dancin' here, right?

EFC: Mh-hmm.

[00:26:36] SL: I mean, were there musical gatherings here at the house by other folk or . . .

EFC: Yeah, maybe a few. I don't remember too much, but I mean, dad would take us to over to the—one of the Baker boys' house, or there's another guy that lived a way around on the other road that—banjo player. He'd take us over there sometimes just to play, you know, play with him so we'd learn.

[Laughs] He was always tryin' to get us to learn more, you [laughs] know.

EJ: It sounds like you . . .

SL: Learn more music, is that right?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: I wonder what he—what his thinking was on that. That . . .

EFC: I mean, he . . .

SL: I mean, he—apparently, they both, your mom and dad, both loved music or . . .

[00:27:16] EFC: Yeah. Yeah. Well, if—I remember the first guitar. It was like acoustic guitar. He traded a log, a walnut log, for an old guitar. [Laughs] And I think it only had, like, one string on

it. And I was playin' around on that one string, and he said, "Well, he's kinda makin' music. Well, I better get him a real [*laughs*] guitar." So he got a—you know, and the first guitar [*unclear words*]. The next one wasn't very good either but . . .

EJ: How old would you have been around then?

EFC: Probably about twelve, maybe.

EJ: Bout twelve . . .

EFC: I don't know for sure.

EJ: . . . when you got that first guitar.

EFC: I'm not positive even but [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Well, let's get back your earliest—let me ask you this. And this is one—this is a question I ask a lotta people. [00:27:57]
What is your earliest memory?

EFC: Earliest memory.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Man, I don't know. See, like I say, I vaguely remember, but my mom don't think that's possible, bein' in Texas, you know, which would have been a year old [*laughs*] or, like, one or somethin' like—I can vaguely remember the heat, how hot it was, and swimmin' in the cree—you know, put—settin' us in the creek or somethin' to cool off but—and I remember livin' down there. But I don't remember too much. You know,

[*laughs*] it's too far back.

[00:28:29] SL: So when you were five, did you all start goin' to kindergarten then, or did . . .

EFC: No.

SL: You just went to first grade?

EFC: We started school when we were five.

SL: You did? In first grade?

EFC: Down here, yeah.

SL: And so, it was a two-room schoolhouse?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: First through third and third through six.

[00:28:50] EFC: Yeah. And the third-through-sixth room—like, the old schools always had a stage, right? And a curtain.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And they put on—they had plays. They would do like little mini musicals. They did the—oh, what was it? Well, it would've been called—what—actually, we did blackface.

SL: Wow.

EFC: You take charcoal . . .

EJ: Wow.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . and make your face black, and we'd do like the Negro

minstrel-type . . .

EJ: Right.

EFC: . . . show, like "Shortnin' Bread." Ernie and I sang "Shortnin' Bread" in the show.

EJ: And y'all did that in school?

EFC: That was, like, fifth grade or whatever. Like, that was probably our first, fifth or sixth grade, first public deal. [*Laughs*]

[00:29:29] SL: So were there—was there one teacher or two teachers?

EFC: Two. One for the, you know . . .

SL: Yeah. Okay.

EFC: They were actually sisters. Kilgore, their last name was Kilgore. In fact, they lived in Fayetteville.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: Yeah. And I don't remember—I think they've both dea—gone now but . . .

SL: So Jack Kilgore. I remember Jack Kilgore in Fayetteville.

EFC: Well, that might've been related.

SL: And his . . .

EFC: You know, I can't remember what her name was. The older one was the, you know, third th—you know, third through sixth. I don't remember. I used to see her once in a while.

That's been a few years back but, yeah.

SL: The teacher?

EFC: Spent the night with her one time in Tulsa when we were in
sc—grade school.

SL: In Tulsa?

EFC: No, I mean in Fayetteville.

SL: Oh, in Fayetteville. On Rush Drive?

EFC: 'Cause I remember I had—I can't remember where they lived
in Fayetteville. Huh?

SL: On Rush Drive?

EFC: You know, it could've been. [*Laughs*] You know, I can't
remember.

SL: Just off Mission? Yeah.

[00:30:21] EFC: See, that does sound kinda like it. I remember—and
they had a son that was about our age. Let me think of his
name. I remember I had a bike wreck. [*Laughs*]

SL: He did?

EFC: I did.

SL: Oh, you did.

EFC: [*Unclear word*] on a bicycle and hit a tree, and so I had to
come to school the next day with a knot on my head.

[*Laughter*]

SL: Out here you had a . . .

EFC: Yeah. Well, I had the wreck in town . . .

SL: Oh, I see.

EFC: . . . on her son's bicycle, you know, but. [*SL laughs*] Then I had to come back with them to school the next day and had a bump on the head. And I was wantin' to see my mom pretty bad. I remember that. [*Laughter*]

[00:30:57] SL: Well, tell me what—what do you remember about the first through third grades, that room that—do you . . .

EFC: I don't remember too much about that, really, except they had a big outhouse outside, you know.

SL: Now, big outhouse, you mean . . .

EFC: For the school.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Two-holer, three-holer, or just one . . .

EFC: Two.

SL: Two-holer.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: [*Laughs*] I was with John Paul Hammerschmidt the other day, and he was showin' me—he's restored his . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . homestead. They had a three-holer.

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: [*EJ laughs*] I'd never seen a three-holer so . . .

EFC: I don't think I have either. [*SL laughs*] I do remember one time. I think it was when we were in the fifth or sixth grade. For some reason at lunch break, one of the kids said somethin' about—they said it was okay if we go down the road, so we walked down the road, that road that goes north. And we walked half a mile down. There was a creek or somethin'. It was the whole class walkin' down there, and we weren't even supposed to go. We got in big trouble. [*Laughter*]

SL: Uh-oh.

EFC: You know how it is when everybody's followin' everybody else.
[*Laughs*]

[00:31:58] SL: So you basically walked to school.

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: It was close enough to do that.

EFC: Yeah. Then when we went and started the seventh grade, rode the school bus.

SL: Yeah. So . . .

EFC: I member the first—I think the first day went to school in Springdale, Ernie and I were wearin' overalls, and kids made

fun of us. We come home and said, "We can't wear these overalls." [*Laughter*]

SL: Do you—did you have any favorite subjects that you liked when you were in grade school?

EFC: I can't—you know, I don't remember that much. I always liked music. [*Laughs*]

SL: Is that—I mean, early on, you think that's from the *Grand Ole Opry*?

EFC: Yeah. Yes.

SL: Listenin' on the radio.

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

[00:32:48] SL: Did y'all have a—di—our radio was also a turntable, but did yours have a turntable in it?

EFC: No. Hm-mm.

SL: No. Do you remember when you all—did you get your first record player when you were livin' . . .

EFC: I remember havin' the turntable, but it was just a con—you know, single thing with a speaker or whatever it was. Yeah. So 45s. Yeah.

SL: And was that when you were in grade school or later on?

EFC: Probably, yeah, probably grade school. Yeah.

SL: Do you remember some of the records?

EFC: Ah, golly. Well, I just remember the rock and roll, you know, Elvis and . . .

SL: So let's see. You were born in [19]42.

EFC: Yep.

SL: So by the time you were in junior high, it was startin' to happen . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . wasn't it?

EFC: Rock and roll was startin' to happen, yeah. Yeah.

SL: And were your parents comfortable with rock and roll?

EFC: Yeah, they—I don't know. They—I'm not sure if they were or not. [*Laughs*] Yeah. It's a little wild.

SL: And you mentioned that your dad thought you should just stick with country music.

EFC: Oh yeah. Rock and roll was a little bit wild.

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] It was.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:33:57] SL: It was. Well, let's—what about homework? Did you ever . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: Who—did your mom or dad help you with your homework?

EFC: Yeah, some. But we used to have a—there used to be a divider here. [Gestures to indicate position of divider] The dining room was here. [Points offscreen] They had a big dining room table, and they would—they'd make us sit down there and do our homework.

SL: As soon as you got home from school or . . .

EFC: Yeah. Or sometime. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:34:24] SL: What about the meals at home? Did anyone say grace?

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: Did the kids take turns doin' that, or was that always a dad or a mom thing . . .

EFC: Some. Not a lot, but some.

SL: Mostly dad?

EFC: Yeah. My dad and mom. Mainly mom. [*Laughs*]

SL: So what about Bible studying? Did—other than Sunday did you—was it Sunday school or just . . .

EFC: Not much, but I mem—I remember . . .

SL: . . . Sunday—or just church service?

EFC: . . . Vacation Bible School. I remember that. [*Laughter*]
Yeah.

SL: And you went to the church for that.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: But there wasn't any really studying here at home with it?

EFC: Mh-hmm.

[00:35:06] SL: Now, did you have a telephone here to begin with?

Do you member when you got a telephone?

EFC: [*Sighs*] I remember the crank phone. Well, I had one [*unclear words*] somewhere. I think my sister took it, the one of 'em we had. Know where you ring?

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: Everybody had one ring or two ring or three rings. Yeah.

SL: So it was a party line out here.

EFC: Party line, exactly. Even when it . . .

EJ: Ah.

EFC: . . . went to regular phone, it was a party line. Yep.

[00:35:34] SL: So let's see. Bout the time that you were hittin' junior high school, TV came along, too.

EFC: Oh yeah. My mom, [*laughs*] she—there was a cafe at the sale barn in Springdale, right? And she took over the cafe, right, so she could make money to buy a television 'cause my dad didn't want a television, right. He thought it could—was dangerous. It'd cause a fire or somethin', you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: It—well, actually . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . there was a lot of amps in that thing.

EFC: Yeah. Anyway . . .

SL: A lotta watts.

EFC: . . . she worked the restaurant for, you know, like a seven or eight months and made enough money to buy a TV and a antenna, right. [*Laughs*]

SL: And that . . .

EFC: Black and white.

SL: . . . that was a big deal.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: Puttin' that up, the antenna and . . .

EFC: And the rotor. You know, you had . . .

SL: Yes. Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Yeah.

EFC: Do you remember that?

[00:36:24] SL: Yes, absolutely, I do. So now, let me think for just a moment. Let's—I wanna talk a little bit more about your dad.

EFC: Okay.

SL: What was he like?

EFC: He was pretty stern. Oh, well, you know. But he had a big heart, you know. He loved kids, and he was always helpin' his neighbor do stuff. But he was—he didn't show his emotions

that much. You know, back then men didn't. [*Laughs*] You know what I mean.

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: So he never seemed—he seemed kinda a little, you know, what do you call it? Not mean, really. Not mean at all. But stern, you know. He never showed like, you know, a ten—not much tenderness, 'cept towards kid, you know, little kids, of course.

SL: Uh-huh. [00:37:08] Now, how many kids did your parents have?

EFC: Just three. You know, we still have a sister.

SL: But you've lost your sister? Your sister . . .

EFC: No. No. She lives in ben—in Fort Smith.

SL: Oh, she does?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Okay. Good.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And was she older than you?

EFC: Younger.

[00:37:23] SL: Younger. So your father pretty much spent [*camera clicks*] most of his time doing farm stuff.

EFC: He was a hard worker. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. It is hard.

EFC: Yep. Yep.

SL: Your mom did the garden.

EFC: Yep.

SL: And your dad did livestock.

EFC: She was always a housewife. She never drove a car or . . .

SL: Never learned to drive.

EJ: Never drove a car.

EFC: Nope. Never learned to drive.

[00:37:48] SL: Do you remember the car that you had when you were livin' here? The family had?

EFC: Well, I remember a [19]55 Chevy and a [19]57 [*laughs*] Chevy.

SL: But nothin' earlier? That's—uh . . .

EFC: Not really. I remember several 'cause dad traded cars a lot. He was kind of a mechanic, too. He could work on [*laughs*] stuff. But I can't, you know, I can't remember, like a [19]48 . . .

[00:38:11] SL: Did y'all . . .

EFC: . . . Chevy.

SL: . . . did y'all have horses, too?

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: And you . . .

EJ: [*Unclear word*]

SL: . . . you liked ridin' the . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. One of the favorite things to do. [*Laughs*]

EJ: There's that picture, sorry, there's that picture of you and Ernie sittin' on the saddle on the hood of the car. [*Camera clicks*]
You know what car that woulda been?

EFC: I think that was a—my grandfather's car, if I'm not mistaken. I think so.

SL: So . . .

EFC: There—I have some pictures in there of us, Ernie and I, on horses or whatever. [*Laughs*]

[00:38:49] SL: So your mother was the homemaker.

EFC: Mh-hmm.

SL: Did she do canning and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . all that? Did y'all have an orchard at all? Did you have apples or . . .

EFC: Well, no. We didn't . . .

SL: No?

EFC: . . . ever.

SL: So she'd can vegetables, then.

EFC: Yeah. And Dad had strawberries. Quite a few different years, he'd have strawberries. Yeah.

SL: So you guys never went hungry.

EFC: Oh no. [Laughter]

SL: Well, that was—that's the advantage of . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . farm life. I got through—that got people through the Depression. [00:39:26] Did your parents ever talk about the Depression?

EFC: They actually met in California during the dust bowl days. Whatever you call it. *Grapes of Wrath* [laughs] or whatever.

SL: Okay. Now, wait a minute.

EFC: They met—they were pickin' fruit in California, and I can't remember if it was—who introduced 'em, but there was some other person that, you know, they—he was from here, and she was from Marshall, but they met in California 'cause somebody that my dad knew knew her or somethin', and they got 'em together. And that's where they got married, and they were livin' in a tent.

SL: In California.

EFC: Pickin' fruit. Yeah.

SL: And they—and so, they married in California.

EFC: Yep.

SL: So they were like migrant farmworkers.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: But everyone was.

EFC: Peep—they—everybody went.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: My dad used, when he was growin' up, he used to go to Iowa every summer and work on the farms up there, you know. Make money to get through the winter. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's corn up there.

EFC: Oh . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . a lotta corn.

SL: Lotta corn.

EFC: Yep.

[00:40:18] SL: So how much horse ridin' did you do?

EFC: Oh, quite a [*laughs*] bit.

SL: In the summer you probably rode . . .

EFC: Oh . . .

SL: . . . quite a bit.

EFC: . . . oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: Did you herd cattle a little . . .

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: . . . with 'em?

EFC: Yeah. Roped calves. Yep.

SL: How bout branding? Did you brand stuff?

EFC: No, we didn't have to brand [*laughs*] 'em.

SL: Didn't have to brand anything.

EFC: I did—we did have a horse. This one horse we had one time, we—this mare that was trained for cutting horse . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . had been trained. I could get on her without a bridle or anything and go back in the pasture and bring the cows up to the barn.

EJ: Ah.

EFC: She just . . .

SL: That's cool.

EFC: . . . knew how to do it. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, she did.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:41:07] SL: So let's see, now. Your dad had a brother.

EFC: He had three brothers.

SL: Three brothers. Were they all here?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Around here?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: So the Cate family . . .

EFC: It's all stayed here pretty much.

SL: . . . had—and had quite a bit of acreage out here.

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: I mean, did each brother have his own . . .

EFC: Well . . .

SL: . . . farm or . . .

EFC: . . . Leo, who's the only one that's still livin', he had the farm next to us, but then he ended up buyin' a bunch of different farms and turkey bi—I mean, he did a lot and owned a lotta real estate and stuff.

SL: So he was a shrewd investor, then . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . in property.

[00:41:49] EFC: Oh yeah. Done well. Fact, he owned the Dart Room at one time there in Fayetteville.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: He bought it . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . and ended up sell—finally sellin' it again, yeah. [*Laughs*]

Yeah, he's pretty cool. He's, like, eighty-seven now but . . .

SL: It sounds like an interview we oughta get.

EFC: Yeah. You could get one. He could tell you a lotta stuff that I can't remember. He kne—he found out that Ernie and I had been born with twins before my dad knew.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: 'Cause he was on his way up here on the bus. And he got the wire down there. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: Leo Cate.

EFC: Yeah. Leo and Lloyd.

[00:42:28] SL: And Floyd was . . .

EFC: No, Lloyd was . . .

SL: Lloyd.

EFC: . . . my dad. Leo was the youngest. And then he had Lawrence and Louie. Lawrence was in the grocery business for years in Springdale.

[00:42:47] SL: I'm tryin' to think. I feel like we haven't really talked about that two-room schoolhouse enough. I don't . . .

EFC: [*Laughs*] I don't know what else to say.

SL: I mean, you spent nearly, what, eleven years there, right?

EFC: Nah, it'd be six, so we went to the sixth grade.

SL: Oh, that's right. Six . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . six years there.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: How many kids were in that—would've been in a class in one of those rooms?

EFC: I'd have to guess. Maybe thirty, twenty-five, thirty, maybe. I don't even know if they ever . . .

EJ: Twenty-five or thirty . . .

EFC: Maybe not that many. I don't know.

EJ: In each room or in the whole school?

EFC: Yeah, each room, probably.

EJ: Each room.

SL: That's pretty big.

EFC: I never thought about that that much.

[00:43:23] SL: So was it only a schoolhouse, or did it function as a community place, too?

EFC: Kinda. There was another place called the Grange Hall that was down there. They just tore it down this year. It was right on down from it. It was originally a church, but it kinda became the community building more so than the church

whenever all the functions—well, the Grange itself, you know. Then it became the RCI, Rural Community whatever, building. But it was real dilapidated. They finally just—fact, we s—me and my uncle went—'cause my mom was the secretary. I was the only one that was—ended up with most of the paperwork on the property, so my uncle and then a fellow named Jake Perry that was also on their board of directors, we ended up givin' it to the church, the property. And they have the fire station down there.

SL: That's nice. That's good. So . . .

EFC: And gave 'em what money was in the bank. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. [00:44:26] Do you member—give me a typical school day in that schoolhouse. What time did it start?

EFC: Probably eight, I'm guessin'.

SL: And so, by eight o'clock you had done what here at the house? I mean, you had already . . .

EFC: Well, I went—we probably went more, like, later, a little later on before we're doin' the full-chore thing. Like, we'd have to go down and milk the cows in the morning and feed the chickens before we went to school.

SL: But that was later on?

EFC: And then do it when we got back. Yeah. And then when we

got out of school, it was the same thing, you know. Yeah.

SL: But your mom got you all a good breakfast to start . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . start of the day. And did you come home for lunch or did . . .

EFC: No.

SL: . . . you take a lunch?

EFC: We'd take a sack lunch. [*Laughs*] Usually peanut butter sandwiches.

[00:45:17] SL: What did y'all do for recess at school?

EFC: Just go out and play in the—I remember playin' in the yard, you know, schoolyard or whatever.

SL: Was it four square? Dodgeball? What . . .

EFC: Yeah, a little bit of all of that. Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Any . . .

EFC: Scufflin'. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . any bullies that you had to contend with in that . . .

EFC: No, not really.

SL: They were all pretty well behaved.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: That's good.

EFC: It's hard rememberin' most of that. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, I'm pretty tough on you. [*Laughs*]

EFC: You remember yours? [*Laughs*]

SL: I do remember my grade school . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . pretty well, [*EFC laughs*] but I was in grade school when the Beatles came out, so . . .

EFC: There you go.

SL: . . . I blame them for everything, so. [*Laughs*]

[00:46:07] EFC: Yeah, I kinda blame the Everly Brothers for everything, you know.

SL: Yeah?

EFC: 'Cause that's when we really all at once [*unclear words*] because the two of us, "We can sing this." And that really got us goin', you know. Before that we were doin' mostly country music.

SL: Well, that's what you heard on the radio.

EFC: And then, course, some Elvis and Ricky Nelson. And then the Bo Diddley and Buddy Holly and stuff.

SL: So did you hear the Everly Brothers before you saw them on TV? I mean . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: So were you . . .

EFC: I think the first time I ever actually heard the Everly Brothers, it was in Memphis, and we'd taken a field trip from high school. FFA, we were in the FFA. We took a field trip, and then when we'd stop at this rest—burger joint or somethin', and it was a jukebox in the—"All I Have to Do Is Dream" was on the jukebox. "Man, that is cool."

SL: Pretty, pretty song. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:47:04] SL: So back here at the house and listenin' to the radio, you rem—do you remember the acts that you heard on . . .

EFC: Well, yeah, like, I remember Bill Monroe and, well, Minnie Pearl, and all the people [*laughs*] who were on the *Grand Ole Opry* back then. Yeah, and the Louvin Brothers.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And then Johnnie & Jack and—what was the other one—duo that were, like, comedians? I can't remember now.

SL: Well, of course, there were those comedy shows. There's, I guess, *Lum and Abner* and . . .

EFC: Yep. I remember hearin' them on the radio. Great Gildersleeve and . . .

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Yeah. Did y'all ever pick up the Chicago station?

EFC: Yeah, later on.

SL: Later on.

EFC: Jack—what's he, Luja—Larry Lujack?

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. And then also—what was the one? Del Rio with—Del Rio, Texas. Wolfman.

SL: Wolfman.

EJ: Oh, heard it—it's the X, right?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: "Heard it on the X" is the . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . about the . . .

EFC: And then I remember—course, this was later on aft—we used—when we were goin' back and forth to Norman a lot—that would've been in the [19]60s. We could pick up WLS—no, not WLS. WLAC. I mean, WLS was the country—I mean, WLAC was country, too, in the daytime, but nighttime it was R&B. It was doctor—it was—what's his name? [00:48:39] John R., a guy named John R. that did an R&B show, and I always thought he was a black—was black because he sounded like—but he was a white guy. In the daytime it was all country. At night it was, you know, like Otis Redding, Slim Harpo, and you

know, blues, and then we used to try to pick that up, you know, 'cause we really liked that stuff. [*Laughs*] And I remember—well, we're not even up to that yet so . . .

[00:49:04] SL: [*Laughter*] Well, we'll—so are you guys messin' with music at all when you're in grade school? I mean, is it—what's . . .

EFC: Oh, like . . .

SL: . . . what are the . . .

EFC: . . . yeah, like I say, they'd have those little plays. That's kinda—we'd—you know, they'd let—have us sing a couple songs. We were just startin' to learn, you know.

EJ: Did it seem like y'all were singin' more than other folks? I mean, were you . . .

EFC: Yeah, probably. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Probably.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: Other kids in the class?

EFC: Well, yeah. They're twins. You know, it's kind of a novelty. [*Laughs*] Yep.

[00:49:35] SL: Was your sister involved at all in music . . .

EFC: Nope.

SL: . . . early on. Just you two.

EFC: She never did.

[00:49:41] SL: And do you remember some of those music shows, the names of 'em that y'all did or . . .

EFC: No, I can't think. Like I say, they were like pl—kinda like minstrel show kinda. They'd have songs and group songs and then singles and—like a play—in a play, sort of.

[00:50:01] SL: What about revivals when you were growin' up? Did the church ever have any?

EFC: Well, I remember a few, but I never did get really involved in those.

SL: You never went to the . . .

EFC: I think my dad, he was like, you know, a member of the church and everything, but he was never, you know, what you—I don't know. I mean, what's the right word.

SL: Wasn't much of a Holy Roller or anything.

EFC: No—he—no, not at all. [*Laughter*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Well, I just know that sometimes those revivals would—you know, they'd have some . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . pretty big music stuff happening and . . .

EFC: Yeah, I don't remember much of that.

SL: You don't remember any of that?

EFC: Nope.

[00:50:31] SL: So in the church, though, were you—when you were—before you got to junior high, were you involved musically with church much?

EFC: Not too much. We did a little. Not too much.

[00:50:45] SL: So you talked about your father taking you over to one of his brothers maybe and . . .

EFC: No, it wasn't his—well, it was the Baker Brothers, they were called.

SL: Baker Brothers.

EFC: One of 'em lived—in fact, one of 'em used to live in my grandfather's house. [*Coughs*] And then there was another one that lived on down the road there.

SL: Was this bluegrass stuff or . . .

EFC: Sorta, yeah, and a little bit of Hank Williams and, yeah.

SL: And you and Ernie really enjoyed those . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . outings . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . and gettin' glimpses of that.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: 'Cause other than that and what you heard on the radio . . .

EFC: That was it.

SL: . . . and the hymns on Sunday, that was basically . . .

EFC: That's about it, yep.

[00:51:30] SL: So let's see. Tryin' to think if there's anything about the technology, early technology, that really got you, other than the radio. I mean, the radio is . . .

EFC: Well, electric guitar.

SL: Yeah, but that didn't [*EFC laughs*] happen till . . .

EFC: It was later, yeah.

SL: . . . late [19]50s, probably?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Early [19]50s. So by the time that you get to junior high school, you and Ernie are startin' to pick a little bit.

EFC: Oh yeah.

[00:52:08] SL: And you said that you started out pianowise.

EFC: Well, I mean, I—we both kinda started the same time, but I've, you know, probably learned a little faster than he did or somethin' but I, you know . . .

SL: Has he always been a little bit slower than you? [*Laughs*]

EFC: No.

SL: I'm just kidding.

EFC: He's a little—quite faster now.

[00:52:24] SL: Yeah. So what was your first gig?

EFC: You mean payin' gig or [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Oh no. No, just in public, the two of . . .

EFC: Probably act—well, at the Grange Hall, probably, besides the plays and grade school. The Grange Hall down there, they'd have functions, and we'd get up and play a few tunes.

SL: Is that the building next to the . . .

EFC: Community building, yeah.

SL: . . . next to the school.

EFC: And then we were actually in the Pet Milk Grand Ole Opry contest one time, and we won in Springdale. I don't have any of the press on it or anything, [*laughs*] but we actually won it. We were supposed to get to go to the *Grand Ole Opry* or somethin', but it never happened, but.

SL: What'd you play?

EFC: You know, I don't even remember what song we played. I don't remember if we were into the Everly Brothers then or not. I really don't remember.

[00:53:22] SL: Was it the two of you on guitars?

EFC: Well, early on I was playin' the banjo, and Ernie played guitar,

you know. Yep. [*Sings*] "Y'all come, y'all come, y'all come see us when you can." [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: That kinda stuff.

EJ: That would've been what y'all did at the Grange Hall, too?

EFC: Yeah. Pretty much. Yeah.

SL: So I bet you can still play the banjo.

EFC: Nah, a little. I don't do it much anymore. I've got two or three of 'em.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

[00:53:51] SL: So how long was it like that, where you were on banjo?

EFC: Well, when we started in junior high, we, you know, we went and did FFA, right. And there was . . .

SL: Okay.

EFC: . . . a guy named Junior Watson, and he played guitar, and we put this little band together. So I played banjo, and Ernie played guitar, and he played guitar. And his nephew, Lonnie, who's still around, Lonnie Watson, played mandolin. And we kinda had a country bluegrass kind of a deal for a year or two. And then later on, Lonnie started playin' bass, so then, you

know, just graduated [*laughs*] to rock and roll, acoustic.

SL: So it was electric.

EFC: 'Cause Junior didn't do rock and roll. He just did [*EJ laughs*]
serious country music . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . like Webb Pierce and Hank Williams and stuff like that. But
soon as he graduated, we said, "That's it. We're gonna play
rock and roll." [*Laughs*]

SL: Really? I mean, you guys . . .

EFC: Pretty much.

SL: . . . are really—you really like that . . .

[00:54:50] EFC: Then I started playin' guitar. I always played guitar,
but I mean, for that deal the banjo worked good, I guess.

SL: And the bass that you first played with, was it an electric bass,
I mean, that the guy brought, or was it a . . .

EFC: Well, yeah. Lonnie had—he'd rented this one from Bill Hatcher.

SL: Bill Hatcher.

EFC: Remember Bill Hatcher?

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EFC: And it was an old Kay bass, but the strings were really dead.
You know, just one j—string would jump out real loud, but it
still sounded cool to have the bass.

SL: Sure.

EFC: Then he ended up buyin' a new Precision Bass from Guisinger. And then we were off, then. We finally had a bass. 'Cause nobody did. We used to play—just Ernie play guita—electric guitar, and I'd play elec—be two guitars and a drummer. That's what we did, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And we did it all. We did Bo Diddley and Ronnie Hawkins, all that stuff with two guitars and drums. [*Laughs*]

SL: Okay. So you guys are gettin' your chops together in junior high school, really.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Startin' to really approach it.

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

[00:55:49] SL: What about the girls? [*EFC laughs*] I mean . . .

EFC: That wasn't for a couple of years later, [*SL laughs*] you know.

SL: You didn't go out and serenade the girls?

EFC: Not that much that I remember.

SL: All right.

EFC: I remember when we went—we got into high school, well, like, tenth grade or whatever, we'd play a lot of the school assemblies and stuff. And there used to be this guy named

Gene Ware that would play with us, and we'd have these red suits and stuff. You know, them girls would scream like the, you know . . .

SL: Sure.

EFC: . . . you do Elvis or whatever, [*laughs*] you know what I mean, Elvis song or somethin'. The girls would scream. [*Laughs*] That's pretty funny.

[00:56:23] SL: Was, early on, was Ernie the main singer, or did you all . . .

EFC: Yeah. Pretty much.

SL: . . . split those chores or . . .

EFC: We did a lot duet, you know . . .

SL: Duets.

EFC: . . . duet stuff back then.

EFC: That was kinda the—how we got invol—what we got known for 'cause we did—we used to do al—every Everly Brothers song almost that they come out with, we'd work it up immediately. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: Well, that was pretty safe . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . safe music.

EFC: Yeah.

[00:56:49] SL: So the older crowd . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . the parents liked it . . .

EFC: That's right. Yeah.

SL: . . . you know.

EFC: Didn't rock too hard.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: "Bird Dog" was probably about . . .

SL: It wasn't Little Richard.

EFC: . . . "Bird Dog" was probably about the most rockin' song they did.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: But you guys were already . . .

EFC: And "Claudette" wasn't—was—yeah, it rocked a little bit, I guess.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Roy Orbison wrote that, didn't he?

SL: I think that sounds right.

EJ: I think so.

EFC: Yep. Yep.

[00:57:12] EJ: But you guys were tunin' into rock and roll already?

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yep. I remember hearin' Ronnie Hawkins's

song at the swimmin' pool in the summer. I guess it was [19]59, maybe. I don't know if I'm right about the dates. Out at the swimmin' pool, you know, in summertime swimmin' in Springdale, they had a jukebox, and it played all the current rock and roll. And I heard this song "Forty Days." I thought, "Man, that's cool. I really like that song." But I didn't have any idea that he was from here, [*laughs*] you know what I mean. I didn't know Ronnie Hawkins from here. And finally somebody said, "Oh, that's Ronnie Hawkins. He's actually from Fayetteville, but he's playin' in Canada [*unclear word*]." Yeah.

[00:57:49] SL: So what kinda music did you get to go see when you were a kid? I mean, other than the jam sessions with the Baker Brothers . . .

EFC: Quite a bit. I mean, well, I say quite a bit. Actually, when we were in high school, we were gettin' ready to get out of high school, I remember going on the junior-senior prom. I went to the banquet. Instead of goin' to the dance, we went to the men's gym and saw the Champs.

SL: The Champs.

EFC: "Tequila," remember?

EJ: Oh yeah.

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EFC: And Jimmy Clanton. Remember that guy?

SL: Huh-uh.

EFC: [*Sings*] "Just a dream, just a dream."

EJ: Yeah, I remember that song.

EFC: Yeah. And then we saw Jimmy Reed.

SL: Whoa.

EJ: Did he play here? Where did he play?

EFC: Played at the men's gym.

EJ: Really?

EFC: Yep. Yep.

[00:58:36] SL: So instead of goin' to the prom . . .

EFC: Went to the—yeah.

SL: Did you sneak off to do that? Did your folks not . . .

EFC: Nah. They didn't care.

SL: They didn't care.

EFC: We actually got back to the prom bout the time it was windin' down. Everybody was drunk, and we were sober. [*Laughter*]
We didn't drink then, so.

[00:58:52] SL: Well, you know, that's a—what about the local music scene. I mean, did you ev . . .

EFC: Well, in Springdale there was a place called the WAC. Not the Walton Arts Center . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . but—no. YAC, not WAC. YAC. Youth—it was like a young people's place, but it was a pretty cool, little building, and they had a jukebox, and they had a little stage, and we'd play there like on Saturday night. And they'd pass the cymbal around. Collect money.

SL: Cymbal.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Off the trap set.

EFC: Mh-hmm. Yeah.

EJ: And that would've been high school?

SL: I've never heard of that.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I've never heard that.

EFC: Really? Well, we did. Yeah. And then at the old swimmin' pool in Springdale on the roof, they had a metal fence thing around it. Summertime, we'd play on the roof, and they'd charge a quarter for kids to get in. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It'd be just, you know, me and Ernie and a drummer, you know. Yeah.

SL: Well, a quarter back then, though, was . . .

EFC: It was . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . yeah. We'd make three or four bucks apiece.

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Sure.

EJ: Who woulda been the drummer then?

EFC: This guy named Gail Page most—did a lot of it. And then Randy Favorite, who ended up playin' with us later on, you know, as a—Del-Reys.

EJ: In the Del-Reys?

EFC: Yeah. Him and Lonnie Watson. Yep.

TM: We should probably stop the tape.

SL: Okay.

[Tape stopped]

[01:00:22] SL: Earl, let's talk a little bit more about—I just hate to—you know, I've got this fo—this belief that we're pretty much given the tools that we live with really early on in our lives. And I'm lookin' for, you know, really, those first five or six years where you can hardly remember anything about what happened.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: But I'm look—what I'm lookin' for are any conversations or any story that you heard from your parents or your grandparents

that made an impression on you. Or was there an event that—
I mean, you've got this—obviously, you and Ernie had this
great affinity for music. You were attracted to music from the
get-go. But I'm just wondering how that got started [*EFC*
laughs] and . . .

EFC: It may've been from the radio. You know, I don't know, you
know. It may've been from the *Grand Ole Opry* or . . .

SL: Well, but your father had a banjo, right?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Or a fiddle. Was . . .

EFC: Well, nah. He—my grandfather had a fiddle.

SL: Had the fiddle and your . . .

EFC: But my dad didn't have anything until, well, you know, it kinda
started to seem like we were interested in music [*unclear*
words] . . .

SL: I see. Uh-huh.

EFC: Bought an old guitar, and then he found a banjo 'cause he
wanted me to play the banjo. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, that's a great instrument.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

[01:01:48] SL: But so, the piano—was the piano always here? Do
you always remember havin' the piano or . . .

EFC: No. Not—early on we didn't have it. I—you know, it was probably in the [19]50s, you know . . .

SL: Oh, okay. So you . . .

EFC: . . . when we got the piano.

SL: . . . you were grown. You, I mean, you were still a kid, but . . .

EFC: Yeah. Gettin' up there.

SL: . . . you weren't . . .

EFC: Right. Wasn't a little kid.

SL: . . . an infant or . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . you know, an—so . . .

EFC: But I remember bein' in grade school, and they had a piano in the big room and the—what wa—forget the lady's name, but she was kinda like the mu—a teacher and a music teacher, sort of. And I remember bein' kinda fascinated with the piano 'cause I didn't have one at home, you know. It was, like, never did get much chance to pound on it, you know, 'cause you get in trouble but [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Well, a piano is a pretty loud instrument.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Was then.

[00:02:41] SL: So I'm tryin' to think, now. So they taught some music in that . . .

EFC: Well, sorta. She was a music teacher, I mean, at her house. She taught piano. I th—I actually wen—I think we went to her house a couple of times [*laughs*] and got bored with it.

[*Laughter*] You know, learnin' basic, readin' music piano, you know.

SL: Right. Right.

EFC: Didn't have the patience.

SL: Well, you—did y'all ever learn to read music growin' up . . .

EFC: I did . . .

SL: You did.

EFC: . . . some, you know. It's been a while. Yeah.

[01:03:18] SL: Yeah. Well, how—give me a conversation that—a couple of examples of talks that you had with your dad. What was he—I mean, he was, of course, a farmer . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . first and foremost.

EFC: Well, mainly it was just talk—you know, talkin' about horses and cattle and some about music. He just liked, like I say, he liked country music and bluegrass and stuff. Yeah.

SL: Well, did you ever think that you would—wanted to be a farmer

or be like . . .

EFC: No, not really. [*Laughter*]

SL: You didn't wanna do that stuff.

EFC: No.

[01:03:59] SL: Was there anything that you imagined that you would grow up to be other than a musician?

EFC: Well, I mean, early, real early on, we were kinda into the rodeo stuff, you know, Ernie and I were. [*Laughs*] Ridin' and ropin' and stuff. We could—kinda thought maybe later on might do somethin' like that, but we never did.

SL: Calf ropin'?

EFC: Yeah, and stuff like that, but music kinda took over.

[01:04:23] SL: Well, now, you did say that you in—once you started goin' to Springdale schools, you were in FHA.

EFC: FFA.

SL: FFA.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And so, what was that like?

EFC: So they had—we were actually in—I was president and treasurer of the FFA later on in high school, but they had talent contests. Like, they'd have federation, district, and state. And we won the state one time in the FFA. The last couple of years

in high school, we—it was—were straight ahead rock and roll, you know, in those contests. We started off as country, and so, it woulda been three years—no. No, four years. No, that'd actually be even more than that 'cause seventh grade you're still in the—so it'd been about six years of FFA. I think we're about the eighth grade when we did our first talent contest.

[01:05:18] SL: So you graduated in [19]60?

EFC: [19]60.

SL: You graduated the same year my brother Gary did from Fayetteville.

EFC: Pretty close, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: We were a little—because we started when we were five, we're about a year younger than most of the kids in the class, but.

[01:05:35] EJ: So you said you started out playin' country and ended up in those same contests playin' rock and roll by the end of it?

EFC: Yeah. 'Cause, you know, back then the Top 40 or whatever you call it, I mean—a lot of cross—what they'd call crossover. I mean, like the Everly Brothers were country and rock, and Marty Robbins was country and pop. You know what I mean. Just . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . everything was cross. And course, Nashville was doin' rock-and-roll-tinged stuff, too. [*Laughs*] Tryin' to think of some others examples of it.

[01:06:03] SL: What were some of the other bands that were playin' around when you were in high school? You're tellin' me that you were pretty much doin' rock and roll later on in high school so . . .

EFC: Yeah. Man, I'm tryin' to remember. From out of town, it'd be like the Pacers and . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . course, Ronnie Hawkins. I remember Ernie and I on Saturday night drivin' to the Rockwood Club. We weren't old enough to get in. Fore we ever played there 'cause we played there when we were seventeen, but pull around back and listen to the bands play. We'd hear Jerry Lee Lewis and Ronnie Hawkins or whatever. [*Laughs*] Yep. [01:06:44] I'm tryin' to think of some of the local ?bar?—there was the Emcees, you know, the McClelland Combo. That was really, probably, the first, I thought, really good . . .

SL: That's . . .

EFC: . . . band from Fayetteville.

SL: . . . Tommy McClelland.

EFC: Yeah. Troy Brand was the sax player. And Melvin was the drummer, Melvin McClelland, and then his brother Leon played keyboards. I'm tryin' to think who else. [*Laughs*]

SL: Now . . .

EFC: Chalky Dearien played guitar.

SL: Were the—and what was the name of their band?

EFC: McClelland Combo was . . .

SL: McClelland Combo.

EFC: . . . was the three brothers.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Tommy's the only one that's still alive, but.

SL: So what about Buddy Hayes?

EFC: Yeah, I vaguely remember Buddy. I think I might've heard him one time. I didn't, you know [*siren in background*] . . .

SL: Was he . . .

TM: Could we wait just one second for this siren to go by?

SL: Sure.

[Tape stopped]

[01:07:46] SL: So sixteen, seventeen years old, you're hangin' out at the back door of the Rockwood Club.

EFC: Yeah. We started playin' there when we were seventeen. We

graduated from high school—a friend of ours, actually, I think it was Curly Combs, said, "Boy, the Rockwood Club, you oughta get—y'all guys oughta play down there." So that was before Ronnie owned it, right. And so, we actually went down and played our first nightclub gig there. Seventeen.

SL: So you're—that's [19]59, I guess.

EFC: [Nineteen] sixty.

SL: Yeah. [Nineteen] fifty-nine, [19]60.

EJ: [Nineteen] fifty-nine, [19]60.

SL: And . . .

[01:08:26] EFC: And Ronnie bought it. I guess it was [19]61, I guess. Him and Donnie Stone bought the Rockwood Club.

SL: Donnie Stone.

EFC: You remember him?

SL: Now, Donnie Stone was a football player, wasn't he?

EFC: Yep.

SL: Big guy.

EFC: They bought the Rockwood Club. Yeah.

SL: And I always heard that Dayton Stratton never had any fear of Donnie Stone or . . .

EFC: Oh.

SL: . . . any football player.

EFC: Of anybody. [*SL laughs*] In fact, they had ano—well, I don't think Ronnie owned it, but Dayton had a place in Norman, too, a club. Norman, Oklahoma. Yeah, and Dayton ran the Rockwood for a long time. Yeah, he was a tough guy. [*Laughter*] Man. Tell a lotta stories about him.

[01:09:04] SL: Well, let's talk a little bit about Dayton, then. Why don't we?

EFC: Well, those days was like—the Rockwood was the, you know, the place to go. I mean, you know, and that's where all the college kids went, too. And like, after a home football game, all the football players would go out to the Rockwood. And there was always a fight. Always a fight.

SL: Well, back then fighting was kinda fun. [*Laughter*]

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Wasn't it?

EFC: I guess so.

SL: I mean, people kinda enjoyed . . .

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . getting in a fight . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . so . . .

[01:09:36] EFC: I know Ronnie—when Ronnie would come to town,

sometimes we wouldn't have any notice 'cause we'd be booked there for the weekend. "Well, Ronnie's comin' in." And it'd be like Monday or Tuesday. Cancel us . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . 'cause, you know, he'd play, and since it was his club, [laughs] you know what I mean.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. But it was cool. That was the first time I ever heard the, you know, The Band. Well, when Robbie was still with 'em.

[01:10:01] SL: So . . .

EJ: [Unclear words]

SL: . . . do you remember when Robbie came to town?

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: Now, I've always heard he came by bus.

EFC: Yeah, the first time, I know he did. [Laughs]

SL: And he got off the bus. He was all in black leather. And he was maybe . . .

EFC: I remember [unclear word] . . .

SL: . . . he was, like, fifteen years old or somethin'.

EFC: He's the same age I am.

SL: Oh, he is?

EFC: Yeah. I remember the first time I ever met Ronnie Hawkins was in [19]61 or [19]62. Down on Maple Street there was a big two-story house there. And I think Dickie Pool might've even lived in that house. But this guy that was singing with us, Ken Owens—you know, it was Ken Owens and Del-Reys. Anyway, he sorta knew Ronnie a little bit. So we went down to see him. It was on the afternoon. There was this white Cadillac and the teardrop trailer . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . behind it. ?We went down those?, and Robbie was sittin' on the porch, and I thought it was just some kid that was hangin' out with him, you know. He had a Hawaiian shirt on, but. Anyway, Levon comes out and Ronnie, you know. They got on these black silk-skin pants, you know, [*laughs*] and pointed-toed shoes. And I said, "Never seen anything like that before." And they'd played the night before or somethin', but. Yeah. Then I heard 'em play at the Rockwood. It was pretty cool. [01:11:17] And then I remember when they brought Richard down from Canada. We were there at the club when they were rehearsin'. 'Cause Stan had got mad . . .

SL: Stan Szelest?

EFC: . . . and went back to Canada. Stan Szelest. Fact, Robbie and

Levon took Ernie and I down to the D-Lux and ate one day, and they tried to talk us into goin' . . .

EJ: Goin' to Canada?

EFC: . . . back to Canada with 'em, and he wanted me to play bass and Ernie to play the keys and sing, you know. But we didn't wanna go. [*Laughter*]

SL: How old were you then?

EFC: We were about nineteen, eighteen or nineteen. We didn't wanna go. [*Laughs*] We're afraid. [*Laughter*]

[01:11:55] SL: Well, the—let's talk a little bit about the Rockwood Club, then, as you remember it.

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: I've heard that Don Tyson was a doorman.

EFC: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: And I believe my brother Porter was one of the bouncers out there.

EFC: Sure was. And . . .

SL: Gary, too?

EFC: Gary worked there, too. Yep.

SL: And so, it was pretty much the place for the college kids to go, other than when the county fair came to town.

EFC: [*Laughter*] Yeah.

SL: It was, pretty much.

EFC: Yep. The place to go drink, and then a little later the old Shamrock was there, too, but . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: So first of all, do you remember what the cover charge was back then?

EFC: Was probably a buck. Wasn't over two dollars, I know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: In fact, Terry's Cagle's mom used to run the door there at the Rockwood, [*laughs*] far as I know. I can tell you another funny story. We were playin' there one night, and Ken, this guy that was singin', you know, he was kind of a front-man guy, you know, kind of a crooner but, anyway . . .

[01:13:11] SL: Now, this is the Del-Reys?

EFC: Yeah. Del-Reys.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And we're playin' this ballad, and we wasn't payin' much attention. We knew it was some kind of a scuffle in the back, you know. I guess it was a fight goin' on or somethin'. Anyway, we looked at Ken, and it was like it was tears comin' out of his eyes. Like, "Man, he's gettin' into that song, you

know." And then all at once, our eyes started gettin' funny.

But Bill Affus had shot off a tear gas. They had these little pen things that looked like a . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . pen you just pushed in your pocket, and it's tear gas. He'd set it off right at the top of the stair, and you had to go down the stairs to the bar. But he'd set it off, and by then it was comin' back there. And so, everybody had to leave the club 'cause we couldn't stand it. [*Laughter*] And then Dayton used to do—I saw him do that in Norman one time. He went to a guy, right in his face, you know, 'cause he wouldn't leave.

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Out of control.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Bring 'em to their knees pretty quickly.

EFC: It's been a long since I've seen fights like that. [*Laughs*]

[01:14:11] SL: So the Rockwood Club, in the bar part of it was—it was a kind of a split-level thing, wasn't it?

EFC: Yeah, when you walk in, you're—you walk down the steps, and you're down below, and there's the bar, and it's where you pay to get in, and you walk up the stairs to the club. Then there was another buil—section that was called the Steak House, which actually was a steak house at one time. It was

adjoining, but you couldn't really see. It was a separate room.
Couldn't see the band that much. Yeah.

SL: So what time did the show start out there, usually?

EFC: Seemed like, I think, seemed like it was pretty much eight to twelve. It wasn't real late. Not like it was later. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: So it was pretty much always packed?

EFC: Yep.

SL: On weekends, anyway.

EFC: Yeah. On weekends. Yep. I remember seein' Conway Twitty there before he went country. [*Laughs*] Jessie Ed Davis was playin' guitar with him.

EJ: Wow. [01:15:13] Who else do you remember playin' out there?

EFC: Well, was that other guy—there was a guy, Jerry Fisher. I remember a guy named Jerry Fisher from Oklahoma City that did the Ray Charles. He ended up singin' with Blood, Sweat & Tears on a couple albums. He's—I think he's in Dallas now. But back then he played a Wurlitzer, and he did the—he had real thick glasses, but he sounded just like Ray Charles. And that was his whole spiel, you know.

[01:15:41] SL: What about—where did John Tolleson fit in with . . .

EFC: Well, that was the one that—the guys I remember that was playin' when we were still in high school. 'Cause I remember goin' to some function at the UARK Bowl, some kinda banquet, when I was in high school, and he played, just played piano and sang "Great Balls of Fire." "Man, this guy's good."

[Laughs]

SL: He was good, wasn't . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . he? I mean, from all I've heard it . . .

EFC: Back then. I mean, now [*unclear words*] . . .

SL: . . . back then he was kinda the . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: It was either he or Ronnie, as far as . . .

EFC: That's right. Yep.

SL: . . . who was doin' what.

EFC: But those song—I remember some of the tune "great big idol with the golden head." You remember that song?

SL: Huh-uh.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I member he made a . . .

EFC: He did a lot of Jerry Lee.

SL: . . . he had a—kind of a hit with "Tennessee Stud," as I remember.

EFC: Yeah, that's the other one. I forgot about that. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

[01:16:30] EFC: He was noted for that. Yeah, and then Chalky Dearien played with him. Chalky was from Springdale. And then after that, Bill Lafferty, the Jokers . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . was another college band. Then there was another guy named Johnny Roberts.

SL: Absolutely.

EFC: You remember him?

SL: Sure. Yeah. He's in Little Rock now.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

SL: Yeah, he was popular, wasn't he?

[01:16:55] EFC: Yeah, he was. Those bands all played the Rockwood and the Shamrock. I remember the Shamrock, which later become Mhoon's Club, right?

SL: Mh-hmm.

EFC: They'd have Friday happy hour, right. And it was, like, I think it cost a quarter to get in or somethin' like that. But I remember playin' there. You'd have to play, you know, like,

six to seven or somethin', you know. It was early. There'd always be dog piles of those frat guys. That's all it was was frat guys. [*Laughs*] And they would be hardly any women. Just be all guys. They'd get in a big dog pile on the dance floor and stuff. [*Laughter*] Just bein' rowdy. Yeah.

[01:17:38] EJ: I remember you tellin' me about shows at the Victory Theater in Rogers one time.

EFC: Yeah. That's right.

SL: Was that around the same time?

EFC: Yeah, prob—well, it'd been in the early [19]60s.

EJ: Early [19]60s.

[01:17:47] EFC: First time we did that, Jerry Lee was—Lewis was supposed to play, and he didn't re—think about the ferry that crosses at bulls—Norfolk Lake or whatever, so he was late. And it was showtime, and he wasn't there, right. So I forgot the guy's name that ran the theater. He knew that we were there with Ken Owens. And he had—they had a music store across the street. So they went over and got this equipment, and we played to hold the crowd till Jerry Lee got there. And he wasn't too happy about that. [*Laughter*]

SL: How late was he?

EFC: Oh, about a hour, probably.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: But we were playin' when he got there. He didn't like that.

[*Laughs*]

TM: What'd he do?

[01:18:36] EFC: I remember him sayin' somethin' to the crowd, like after his first song, "Hope you enjoy the rest of the show as much as you did that—this other part." [*Laughter*] Or whatever. And we played there with Ferlin Husky.

EFC: Ah.

SL: Ferlin Husky.

EFC: Yep. And I saw Jim Reeves there.

EJ: So was it more of a . . .

EFC: Fats Domino.

EJ: . . . country and rock-and-roll thing?

EFC: Country and rock and roll, yeah.

SL: Well . . .

EFC: Ronnie Hawkins played there. [*Laughs*]

[01:19:03] SL: Tell me about Ronnie's act. What . . .

EFC: Pretty wild.

SL: Well, what . . .

EFC: He was the first guy to do the moonwalk, you know.

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] He called it the camel walk, didn't he?

EFC: Yeah, camel walk. That's right. He was an entertainer, you know. [*Laughs*] He knew how to pick musicians.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Right. Yeah.

SL: But it was pretty risqué, wasn't it. [01:19:23] It was like . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . it's like one of those late-night Rambles that . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . Levon talks about where it got kinda racier and . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . and he was also quite an athlete, wasn't he?

EFC: He was originally, as far as I know. He was a high diver. I think—well, I shouldn't be sayin' it, but some of the stuff in his book's a little bit exaggerated. [*Laughs*]

SL: No. [*Laughter*] Not possible.

EFC: I think he said he did a triple backflip on stage. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, now, I had heard that he did backflips.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: But I don't think he did a triple on stage.

EJ: You'd need a high ceiling for that.

EFC: Yep. Or [*laughs*] a trampoline.

TM: True.

[01:20:03] SL: Now, there was another name that came to mind, and it may've been with the McClelland Brothers. What about a guy named Jerry Yount?

EFC: Jerry, he played with the Emcees.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. He lives in Bella Vista.

SL: Yeah, now, he's kind of an early rock-and-roll . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . guitar player.

EFC: He was a great player. He was one of the—one of those guys, you know. Him and Robbie back then, there was, like, somebody to look up to. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

[01:20:31] SL: So when—but when Robbie first got here, was he really that good of a guitar player?

EFC: I don't remember him bein' that—anything fancy. He did do a blues thing that didn't—lotta people weren't doin' around [*laughs*] here, you know what I mean. Just he had the overdrives, distorted sound, you know. I dug that. But I mean, that band, I mean, the Hawks, was probably our biggest influence as far as music back then. It was like—I mean, we

liked all music, but bein'—gotten to know 'em and bein' around 'em, we really, you know, inspired by their playing and, you know what I mean, and their sound or [*laughs*] whatever. Yep.

[01:21:14] SL: So let's see. Robbie came in to Fayetteville, and was Garth already with 'em when . . .

EFC: No, not with Robbie.

SL: That happened in Canada, didn't it.

EFC: Yeah. This—Stan was . . .

SL: Stan was the guy.

EFC: . . . the first keyboard player, and then this guy named Rebel played bass. Yeah.

EJ: Rebel Payne?

EFC: Rebel Payne, yeah, from Buffalo. [01:21:41] And I remember when they came—first time they came to town with Garth, and I thought, man—and Stan, right. Well, actually, before that, Stan had one of these attachments for the piano. What were they called? It's just a bar. Then it's got little pins that drop down, and it has an organ sound.

SL: Now, that's strange.

EFC: I never had heard one of those . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . before. Then later they came back with Garth. And at first

I was thinkin', "I don't know if I like this or not. Sounds kinda like a skating rink, you know."

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It didn't fit rock and roll, the organ, for some reason. But then later on, oh yeah. [*Laughter*]

[01:22:17] SL: Yeah, well, it was not—he wasn't playing your typical . . .

EFC: No, he wasn't.

SL: . . . B3 stuff. I mean . . .

EFC: Oh no.

SL: . . . he wa . . .

SL: He was playin' a Lowrey organ with a distorted Leslie.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It was wild. I mean, it really was. I never heard anything like that [*laughs*] before.

[01:22:29] SL: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Now, what about Richard Manuel? You remember . . .

EFC: You know what? It's funny that, you know, Richard used to tell this story, which was true, that he met the Cate Brothers before he met Rick Danko. It's a true story.

SL: Where'd he meet you guys?

EFC: You know how that happened? Well, there was a band called

the Revols that da—that Ronnie sent down here from Canada. And Richard was the piano player. And they had a guitar player named Garth. And they had a—the singer's name was Doug Rhodes, I think, or somethin' like that. I can't remember all the guys' names, but anyway, Richard was the piano player. And they were just kids, you know, like our age, just kids, you know, and they were good. He did Fats Domino, a lot of Fats Domino and stuff, but anyway, he ended up playin' with 'em, you know, with The Band. But he hadn't met Rick, you know [*unclear words*]. You know what I mean? He had . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . never met Rick when he met us. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Isn't that wild? And they're both from Canada. [*Laughs*]

SL: So was he also singing . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . when y'all first met him?

EFC: Oh yeah. He was the singer.

SL: No kiddin'.

[01:23:33] EFC: And then when he—I remember [*clears throat*]

when—then Stan quit. They brought Richard down. And we

were out at the Rockwood watchin' 'em rehearse one day. And they were doin' the Ray Charles stuff. And Richard, he had it.

SL: He nailed 'em.

EFC: Man. What a singer.

SL: Man. He could. Yeah.

[01:23:47] EFC: Yep. Rick didn't sing that much back then. He did sing harmony a lot. But when they fired Ronnie, I guess you'd call it fired him, you know, but they came to town, the Hawks. Like, some people didn't dig it. They thought they was a little bit too laid back. There wasn't no—there was no front man. They was just playin' music, good music. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: But it—you know, people thought it—this is not—they were used to the rock—Ronnie, man, just rockin' it out, [*clapping sound*] you know.

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EFC: And these guys were playin', like, Ray Charles and Bobby "Blue" Bland and . . .

[01:24:21] SL: Yeah. And Ronnie . . .

EFC: ?Taste is? music.

SL: . . . Ronnie engaged the audience quite a bit.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: I mean . . .

EFC: That was the whole deal. Yeah.

SL: . . . he could . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . he had a shtick.

EFC: They didn't know what—people didn't know what to think about it. Yeah.

EJ: It sounds like you guys liked it.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: I'm guessin'.

EFC: Huh?

EJ: It sounds like you guys liked it, I'm guessin'.

EFC: Right.

[01:24:40] SL: So now, were—they split up, I guess, when Ronnie got married. Is that right?

EFC: Mmm . . .

SL: Or shortly after . . .

EFC: Maybe. Yeah, I don't remember the details. I just know they decided they [*laughs*] didn't need him 'cause [*SL laughs*] they had plenty of singers and . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . and they—I—he—I think he kinda—well, you know, I

shouldn't even be sayin' it. I think they felt like he was holdin'
'em back a little bit 'cause he controlled the money. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, of course he did.

EFC: You know what I mean.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

[01:25:09] SL: He did have the ability to pick good musicians,
though.

EFC: Oh heck, yeah.

SL: And still to this day.

EFC: You know, David Foster played with him one time.

SL: No, I didn't know that.

EFC: You didn't know that?

SL: Huh-uh.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: He—I mean, even when he brings his bands down here, they're
always hot players.

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: Kids, too.

EFC: He's always been good [*laughs*] at that.

[01:25:35] SL: So did you ever get to—did you ever play with
Ronnie at all?

EFC: Yeah. We did one year. We did the King Biscuit Blues Festival. We did the riverboat concert. The year before we did Levon, and the next year we did Ronnie. So we played—you know, we were his band. *[Laughter]* It was funny 'cause his daughter Leah was, like, was with him, you know, and she was singin' backup and stuff. And she says—you know, 'cause he had had that heart attack or somethin'. She says, "We better not do 'Wild Little Willie' 'cause Dad gets too excited." *[Laughter]* And we did—we didn't do it. We did "Forty Days," though.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: What were—I'm sorry . . .

SL: Go ahead.

[01:26:15] EJ: Okay. What were you guys playin' in the set back when you were playin' the Rockwood Club? What sort of material?

EFC: First started off we were still doin' a lot of Everly Brothers stuff. But then we got to doin' some Ray Charles and—man, I have to think back about that. And then when we first came—we used to go—when we first—in [19]62 we played six nights a week in Joplin.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Then when we came back to town, we brought the sax player

with us, and we did a lot of Ray Charles, Bobby Blue Bland stuff.

EJ: I've heard you guys both mention Ray Charles a lot as a big . . .

EFC: Yeah. He was big influence . . .

EJ: . . . kind of a . . .

EFC: . . . yeah.

EJ: . . . turning point when you guys first discovered him.

EFC: I remember the first time I ever heard a B.B. King record was at the Rockwood Club. It was on the jukebox. I said "Man, who is that?" [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. No kiddin'.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. I liked it.

[01:27:11] SL: So you're playin' the Rockwood Club, and you're just still in high school, I guess, or gettin' . . .

EFC: Or just graduated.

SL: Just graduated from high school.

EFC: Seventeen. We're ac—the first time we played there was seventeen.

SL: And you're gettin' to see all kinds of good . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . good bands come through. So Ronnie and Donnie Stone

and . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . Dayton kinda facilitated that, I guess. I guess I didn't know that Donnie was a part of that partnership. I always . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . thought it was just Dayton and Ronnie.

EFC: Far as I know, he was—they were in it together. [*Laughs*] Bill Affus stayed here for a long time. You member him?

SL: Vaguely.

EFC: He was kind of the band's mana—road manager guy or whatever. But he stayed here for a little while and ran [*laughs*] the Rockwood. And Ronnie's wife . . .

SL: Wanda?

EFC: . . . Wanda, she stayed here. Ronnie was in Canada, and she was here. [*Laughs*]

SL: Wow.

EFC: Takin' care of the club. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: I heard her voice the other day over the phone.

EFC: Yeah?

SL: I hadn't seen her in a long, long time.

EFC: Yeah, me either.

[01:28:22] SL: So yeah, I always—seems like maybe it was in Levon's book where he talks about how Ronnie says you can't have—no one can get married.

EFC: Yeah. Right.

SL: Can't really have . . .

EJ: Can't have girlfriends.

SL: . . . a steady girlfriend . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . 'cause they always—they're always the reason why bands break up, and I . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . I just always assumed that when Ronnie decided to marry Wanda that that was probably—[EFC laughs] that was probably it . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know, and they couldn't justify that.

[01:28:49] EFC: Levon used to tell this story that Ronnie always had Cadillacs, you know. And Wanda had these little Chihuahuas. They'd always have the little sweaters on 'em and stuff. This Chihuahua used to ri—like to ride up behind the seat in the Cadillac. So he said that Levon and Robbie or somebody got in

his car one day, his Cadillac, drivin'. His dog was in back of that—hit the brakes, [*laughter*] and that dog would do this.

[Earl stiffens arms in front of body] [*Laughter*] And just play with it. Fact, when we played the riverboat one—or they'd brought the RV down, right?

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: She had the little Chihuahuas with the sweaters on. [*Laughter*]

SL: Still.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:29:29] SL: Wow. So I'm tryin' to still hold on to your youth here before we go have our lunch, but when you were bustin' out of high school and startin' to play the Rockwood Club, what were your folks thinking? What were your mom and dad thinking?

EFC: Well, they didn't seem to oppose it that much, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: We're not—we weren't drinkin' or [*laughs*] anything.

SL: Well, now, there is that. I mean, you know, the Rockwood Club was pretty notorious for how wild it was.

EFC: Yeah. I remember when first time I walked in the place, I thought, "Man, it smells bad," 'cause it smelt like beer.

[*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: But it was not just beer. I mean, it was hard liquor, too, right?

EFC: Well, yeah, I guess they did. You know, I don't even remember. I know Mhoon's Club was just setups most [laughs] the time.

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh. People just brought their own bottles or . . .

EFC: You know, I don't—now that I think about it, I don't even remember about the Rockwood. I think it was just beer.

SL: Maybe it was just setups.

EFC: I think it was just beer.

SL: Uh-huh. Well . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . that works.

EFC: Yeah. [SL laughs] Yeah.

[01:30:36] SL: So you guys were kids, and you really just didn't get involved with the alcohol side of the business at that time.

EFC: Hm-mm. We never drank when we were in high school or anything. We didn't get corrupted that early. [Laughs]

SL: Yeah. Well, I mean, was it—no drinking, was that a pretty serious thing here at the house, too?

EFC: Yeah, my dad—I remember when he made some home brew in the barn one time but, you know, but as far as—no. He—they—he didn't drink at the hou—at home.

SL: And your mom didn't, either?

EFC: No. No.

SL: Well, that's kind of a—I guess kids playing in nightclubs, I guess you held your ground and . . .

EFC: For a while.

SL: For a [*laughter*] while. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

[01:31:38] SL: The—what about how—now, didn't you also go to the university for a little bit?

EFC: Yeah, three semesters. Yep.

SL: So you weren't really just—was that to appease your parents, or did you . . .

EFC: Not really. They didn't seem to mind whether we went to college or not. We didn't stay there. We lived here and went—and [*clapping sound*] drove to school. But we were startin' to play a lot then.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You know, we started gettin' [*laughs*] all kinds of work. You know how it is. We just kinda maybe shoulda graduated, but

you know, we thought music was—you know what I mean.

You just don't think about it.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Shoulda went ahead and stayed with it.

SL: Well, maybe not.

EJ: Maybe not.

SL: Yeah, I mean . . .

EFC: I know . . .

SL: . . . I think you guys did fine. [*Laughter*]

EFC: I don't have that many regrets, I don't guess, but.

SL: Yeah. Did you . . .

EFC: Got to do what I wanted to do, you know.

[01:32:34] SL: What about—so what about your all's love lives up through high school? Were there any steadies . . .

EFC: Ernie . . .

SL: . . . or what ab . . .

EFC: No, I had a couple of girlfriends in high school, but Ernie, he married his childhood sweetheart.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: Yeah. Linda.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: They rode the school bus together.

EJ: Wow. [*EFC laughs*]

EFC: Yeah. And they're still together.

SL: That's somethin'. I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah, it is.

SL: . . . that's strong.

EFC: It really is.

[01:32:59] SL: Yeah. So what about athletics? Did y'all ever do anything athleticswise?

EFC: Not—oh, we did in school. I mean, PE class. And we always played sports but not—you know, we didn't play on the school teams. [*Laughs*]

SL: You didn't play football or basketball . . .

EFC: No. We st—we had music stuff goin' then, too. I mean, we always had stuff to do.

[01:33:22] SL: Were you in the high school band?

EFC: No.

SL: Marching band . . .

EFC: No.

SL: . . . or orchestra?

EFC: We were in the choral group. [*Laughs*]

SL: You sang . . .

EFC: You know, sang, yeah.

SL: . . . in the choral group?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: What was the name of that group?

EFC: Oh, I don't remember. I member the guy—what was the guy's name that was the choral director? He ended up bein' on TV commercials and stuff. Can't even think of his name right now. No, we were just—it was just a big group. Yeah, they very seldom broke it down that much. It was just some—one of the classes. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Well, they didn't have guitar and stuff in the marching band, [*laughs*] you know.

SL: Right.

EFC: Yeah. Like they do now.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Yep.

[01:34:06] SL: So I guess you were—guys had gotten pretty skilled by the time you graduated high school.

EFC: What now?

SL: Gotten pretty skilled with the band or with the music.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:34:17] SL: And was it—who all was playing with you at the
Rockwood?

EFC: Well, Lonnie Watson, bass player, and Randy Favorite was the
drummer. They're both still around here.

SL: And so, is . . .

EFC: The Del-Reys or whatever.

SL: Keyboard . . .

EFC: Yeah, Ernie . . .

SL: . . . two guitars, bass . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . and drums.

EFC: Organ, mainly.

EJ: [*Unclear words*]

SL: Ernie was playin' mostly organ?

EJ: Ernie was playin' organ?

EFC: Pretty much played organ. Yeah.

SL: Was Ernie pretty mu—was Ernie the lead singer, or was . . .

EFC: Yeah. Well, that guy Ken was with us for a couple of years,
and it was kinda like the Ronnie Hawkins deal where we said,
"We don't need this guy," [*laughter*] you know.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:34:53] SL: Well, you know, the music [*clapping sound*]*—*I guess we oughta start talkin' a little bit about music business 'cause you guys are in it now, I mean, as far as if you're startin' to do the club thing.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Six nights a week.

SL: Yeah, I mean . . .

EJ: It's pretty serious.

EFC: Yeah, later on it was six nights a week.

SL: In Joplin, now you're . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . deep in the music business. [*Sound of door opening*]
What do we got here? Hey, Bob!

Bob Cochran: Hey.

SL: Come on in.

EFC: There's Bob.

SL: You wanna pause?

[Tape stopped]

[01:35:17] SL: Okay, Earl. We got halfway through our second tape. We've had some lunch now, and [*camera clicks*] I'm gonna turn the next hour of work over to Bob Cochran. He's done some research and knows a little bit about you guys, and

we're gonna to talk about early music career. And so, from here for the next hour it's Bob Cochran interviewing Earl Cate. Y'all try to behave. [*Laughter*]

BC: Oh, we'll do our best.

SL: Okay.

[01:35:49] BC: Did you already talk a little bit about the very first band, the Del-Reys? Did you get the personnel . . .

SL: We've only . . .

BC: . . . when you did that?

SL: . . . we have gotten the personnel. We—it wasn't really defined where—when the Del-Reys started . . .

BC: Let's start with that.

SL: . . . and when they quit.

[01:36:04] BC: When did . . .

EFC: Kay.

BC: . . . the Del-Reys start? And most of you were Springdale High School students . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . at that . . .

EFC: I think it was, like, senior year in high school, maybe. All the bands back then, it was like car names, you know, like Bel Airs and Biscaynes and . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . Impalas. [*Laughs*]

BC: So . . .

EFC: We picked the Bel Airs.

BC: Okay.

EFC: And that wasn't a very expensive Chevy, I don't think.

[*Laughs*]

BC: Okay. [*Laughs*] So when you first started playin', you were at the school. Did you play for school functions and things like that?

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

[01:36:33] BC: Kay. So you gettin' paid at that time?

EFC: Some.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Sometimes we would.

BC: Okay. That would be the thing we'd first want to explore is that period where you go from bein' just a group of guys that like to play together to a group of guys who start to see themselves as a professional band.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:36:51] BC: So . . .

EFC: The earl . . .

BC: . . . are you playin' down in—are you playin' just in Springdale at the—or are you playin' around . . .

EFC: Well . . .

BC: . . . like, at Fayetteville or . . .

EFC: Actually, I think the first—maybe in [19]60 we did the summertime at the swimming pool upstairs. They'd had a teen dances. And then the YAC downtown. Play there. And then, like I was tellin' Scott, right after we graduated in [19]60, well—I think even that year in the sp—we played the Rockwood Club.

BC: Okay.

EFC: And I think it was before Ernie was playin' keyboard, if I'm not mistaken.

BC: Okay. ?You hadn't? . . .

EFC: And then in [19]61 was when Ken Owens joined us, and it was Ken Owens and the Del-Rays and we—he got us this gig in Joplin for the summer, six nights a week.

[01:37:38] BC: I've heard about that. You were . . .

EFC: And that's . . .

BC: . . . playin' at a steak house, right?

EFC: Lee's Steak House. And well, actually it was Ken's bar the first summer that—"The Twist" had just came out. And everybody

was doing the Twist. Yeah.

[01:37:50] BC: So you guys were doin'—at that time you weren't writin' your own material yet . . .

EFC: No.

BC: . . . right? You're doin' covers.

EFC: No. Actually, the way we got into that bar is he'd—they had a happy hour gig on Saturdays that you would play for two hours. We used to drive to Joplin and play two hours and then drive back and play the at Rockwood that night.

BC: You were a hardworkin' band [*unclear word*]. [*Laughs*]

EFC: Yeah. And all of us in one Cadillac car with . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . all our equipment. [*Laughs*]

[01:38:16] BC: Yeah. How'd you get the Rockwood gig? Do you remember—was it—was this Ken Owens? I knew about the name Ken Owens. He . . .

EFC: Well . . .

BC: . . . came over from another band, right?

EFC: Well, there was these people na—it was Pick and Beulah Peterson . . .

BC: Okay.

EFC: . . . that owned it first. And we just went down and visited 'em

one day. Or maybe we mighta—we may have auditioned. I can't remember but we, anyway, we got a gig there. And after that Ronnie Hawkins and Donnie Stone bought it. And we played pretty regular there.

BC: So by that time you'd already been in there, though, before Ronnie got it.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: Okay. So you were—did you come s—become sort of a house band there, in a sense . . .

EFC: Well . . .

BC: . . . or . . .

EFC: . . . I wouldn't—not every week.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: But you know . . .

BC: Okay.

EFC: . . . it was alway—it was just weekends anyway.

[01:38:56] BC: Tell me a little about Ken Owens. He—there—what I know about him is he came over to your group from another group called the Truckers. Is that right?

EFC: The Trebles.

BC: Trebles. Okay.

EFC: Yeah. That's the first time I'd heard him was with the Trebles.

BC: Okay.

EFC: And they were some of the guys, you know, from the college.

[01:39:09] BC: Okay. So you're startin' to expand a little bit. Do
you play . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . you start to play for fraternity parties and things like that?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: Okay. All right.

EFC: In fact, we, [*laughs*] Ernie and I, pledged the Acacia Fraternity
because they promised us we'd get a bunch of gigs. And we
weren't really into fraternity [*BC laughs*] deal, life-type deal
so—'cause we didn't stay at the house. We stayed at home.
Anyway, but we just stayed for half a year or maybe a year.
Yeah, we had two gigs out [*laughs*] of . . .

BC: Oh yeah.

EFC: . . . the deal but . . .

BC: But you were frat boys, at least . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . for a while.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And we—and main reason we bailed out was because every

time they'd get in trouble, they'd make [*camera clicks*] you wear a suit to school, you know, and we didn't get in trouble. We weren't there, you know. So screw this stuff.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: We ain't gonna, [*laughter*] you know . . .

BC: We're not wearin' a suit to school.

EFC: No.

BC: So back to Owens.

EFC: Bad enough to have to wear the army uniform.

[01:40:00] BC: Was Owens connected with the school?

EFC: What?

BC: He wasn't, was he?

EFC: Who?

BC: Ken Owens wasn't at . . .

EFC: No.

BC: . . . the college, was he?

EFC: No. He had been to Canada and played the circuit with Ronnie Hawkins. He'd been there the summer before or the— somewhere around that time.

BC: So was me—he maybe just a year or two older than you guys?

EFC: No, he was probably four or five years older.

BC: Okay.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: Good. [01:40:20] So he knew a little more at that point in time . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. He knew how to . . .

BC: . . . about the business, right?

EFC: Oh yeah. Definitely.

BC: He knew bar owners and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: All right.

EFC: And he would hustle. He'd drive all the way to Oklahoma City to try to get a [*laughs*] gig, you know. Instead of callin' on the phone, he'd go all the way over there.

BC: All right . . .

EFC: Talk to 'em.

BC: . . . so he sort of introduced you in some ways to a bigger—to the business.

EFC: Pretty much. Pretty much. Pretty much.

BC: All right. And yet—and you played together.

EFC: Yep.

BC: He became part of your band.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:40:46] BC: Okay. Tell me a little more about that Joplin gig. It

sounded kinda interesting. You were playin' at a steak house.

Is that right?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Lee's Steak House.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Am I remembering this right?

EFC: But they had live music all the time, you know.

BC: Okay.

EFC: But it—before us there, I don't there was ever a rock-and-roll band there. It was more of like a organ player, like—I don't know how you—you know, like—what do you call it. Not—I don't even know what I'm tryin' to say. Well, standards, you know.

BC: Yeah. Swing?

EFC: Swing.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Stuff like that. It wasn't . . .

BC: Dance bands . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . there. Yeah.

EFC: But it wasn't rock-and-roll dance bands.

BC: Yeah. So . . .

EFC: They only had the rock-and-roll happy hours on Saturdays, but then when Lee McGee bought it, he decided he was goin' go rock and roll six nights a week. So that's what we did.

BC: Okay. And just one band after another, huh?

EFC: No, it was just us.

BC: Just you. Okay.

EFC: And they had a house there on the property there and the swimmin' pool. There was a motel there, too. So we just stayed there . . .

BC: All right.

EFC: . . . and played.

BC: And what year would that be? I mean, you're—are you outta high school by this time?

EFC: Six—yeah. [Nineteen] sixty-two, [19]63, I think, if I'm not mistaken.

BC: Okay. So the world keeps gettin'—the circle keeps gettin' a little bit bigger.

EFC: Yeah, a little bit bigger. Yeah.

[01:41:50] BC: You know, you're movin' all out of Springdale into Fayetteville and then . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: . . . let's not shortchange Fayetteville. You're playin' at the

Rockwood. Did you ever play at the, you know, the—these other sorta legendary clubs from that period, the Shamrock, the Gaslight?

EFC: Well, yeah, at the Shamrock. We played the Shamrock, and then after that, it was the Mhoon's Club in the [19]60s.

BC: Okay.

EFC: Then there was—you know, then later after that, the Gaslight and the Library and . . .

BC: Okay. Now, I know the Library . . .

EFC: . . . the Red Lion.

BC: . . . and the Gaslight was in the old mountain ho—Mountain Inn building.

EFC: And it was the Brass Monkey after it was the Gaslight.

BC: Yeah. I, actually, I was . . .

EFC: But it burnt there with our equipment in it.

BC: I didn't know that. Tell us. . .

EFC: [Nineteen] seventy-four.

BC: Okay. See, I got here in [19]76 and I—so I actually knew the Brass Monkey period.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:42:33] EJ: Did you all ever play the—was the Cave operating then? Wonderland Cave?

EFC: I've actually played there, but that was later on.

EJ: Later on.

EFC: 'Cause they opened it back up . . .

EJ: Oh, okay.

EFC: . . . and we played there a few—couple times. Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Tryin' to think of some other places for you.

BC: Did you ever travel . . .

EFC: We used to play Norman a lot but . . .

BC: Norman, Oklahoma. [01:42:51] Okay. So . . .

EFC: Tulsa.

BC: . . . let me just ask some questions about a somewhat bigger circle now. Did you know those guys—I mean, I knew you know Ronnie, and we'll talk at some length about Ronnie. Did you know, you know, Conway before he became Conway? Harold Jenkins, did he come . . .

EFC: I've heard him play, yeah . . .

BC: Okay.

EFC: . . . before . . .

BC: You've . . .

EFC: . . . he went country, yeah.

BC: Okay.

EFC: In fact, I was tellin' Eric, Jessie Ed Davis was playin' guitar with Conway when he played at the Rockwood Club. [*Laughs*]

BC: Okay. And he was a rock-and-roll guy then, right?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Harold Jenkins and the House Rockers. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Actually, it was Conway Twitty. It was after he had did "Only Make Believe," you know.

BC: Oh, okay.

EFC: So he was a rock and roller.

BC: So . . .

EFC: He wasn't—he didn't—hadn't switched to the country deal [*laughs*] yet.

BC: Yeah. Kay. [01:43:33] What about, oh, you know, guys like the Sun guys, Ri—Billy Lee Riley . . .

EFC: I didn't know too much about 'em.

BC: . . . Sonny Burgess. Those . . .

EFC: Yeah. Sonny played in the band called the Pacers . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . that used to come up here and play all the time.

BC: And you'd go and see 'em and . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: . . . 'cause they were—I've heard they were just wild as could

be, I mean.

EFC: They were good.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. They played the Rockwood.

[01:43:54] BC: Okay. But the major figure then is, that makes the circle even bigger, is Ronnie. Is that right? I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: It's true. He was a big influence. Yeah.

BC: Yeah. When does . . .

EFC: We met him in [19]61, I think it was, or [19]62.

BC: And he owned it then? He took over ownership of that one club.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah. Okay.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: He was quite a businessman, wasn't he? [*Laughter*]

EFC: Yeah. He left his wife here to run it.

[01:44:15] BC: Yeah. Let's talk about Levon for a while.

EFC: Okay.

BC: When did you meet Levon?

EFC: Well, we met—I met Levon, I guess, in [19]61 or [19]62 when

he was playin' with Ronnie. And then in [19]65, we were playin' in Norman back and forth. You know, it was summertime. We thought, man, we need to get—do somethin' a bit bigger. Let's—we need to go on the road, so we called Levon. He was playin'—Levon and the Hawks were playin' at—in Somers Point, New Jersey, which [*snapping sound*—right across the street—I mean, across the bridge from Ocean City at Tony Mart's.

BC: That's Tony Mart. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. And I said—he said, "You guys come up here. We need some help." 'Cause they'd been there all summer kinda as the house band.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: So we went up there and played with them a couple weeks. And they left and went to Canada. Well, they actually went on the road with Dylan, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And we stayed there for two or three more weeks, and then we went to Canada and . . .

[01:45:13] BC: So you played Tony Mart's for a month or so up there.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

BC: That's a huge place, wasn't it?

EFC: Oh yeah. They had, like, thirty-six cash registers. [*Laughter*]

BC: And a lot of—several bands, I mean . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. And went—fact, right after The Band left, after the Hawks left, the next group that came in was Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels, and they had just signed a recording contract, but they hadn't released anything yet.

BC: Uh-huh. [01:45:36] So that's—now, I mean, you're really playin' on a national stage by that . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . time, a little bit.

EFC: Sorta. Yeah. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah. And these are big names in that period.

[01:45:42] EFC: And then we went to Canada, and the first gig that we played was at the Atlas Hotel. I can't remember the name of the town but—anyway, what's the guy from Blood, Sweat & Tears? David Clayton-Thomas . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . was at the club, you know. And he said, "Oh, we gonna be playin' down in Toronto this weekend with the Hawks, you know, at a matinee." And we went down and listened and saw 'em again, you know, before they left out with the—with Dylan.

[Laughs]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: So what was that like?

EFC: Yeah, Levon always helped us out.

BC: That must . . .

EFC: But he . . .

BC: . . . have been a pretty heady scene for you guys at that time.

I mean, you know . . .

EFC: Yeah, it was cool.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:46:24] EJ: Was Ken Owens still singin' with you guys then?

EFC: No.

EJ: No.

EFC: No. It was just the four-piece. It was still the Del-Reys,
though. [Laughs]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. But see, Levon, he didn't stay with the Dylan thing.

He . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . didn't like flyin' in that leased plane and all. I mean, he

wasn't have—wasn't havin' fun with it, so he . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . kinda dropped out for a while. He ended up back here.

Played with us for a few months. Then Robbie called and said, "We got a deal with Capitol Records." And so, he went back up there. They'd already did a lot of *The Basement Tape* stuff already before he went back up. He said, "My little nephew can play drums, if you'll give him a chance." I think he was like fourteen or fifteen at the time. Yeah. So he always came home, you know. His folks live in Springdale so—and I was runnin' the music store. That's the first place he'd come when he'd come to town. He'd come down.

[01:47:16] BC: Maybe we should talk a little about that 'cause you ran that—this is Ben Jack's, right?

EFC: Yeah. Yep. Eight years.

BC: Wow. That's—so that's a long, steady gig while you . . .

EFC: Yeah, it was.

BC: And all this time you're doin' your music . . .

EFC: Yep.

BC: . . . career, too.

EFC: I started off as a guitar teacher, and I's only there, like, two months, and the guy that was runnin' the store ran off with

money and a bunch of stuff. And Ben came up from Fort Smith and said, "Earl, you wanna run the store?" I said, "Well, I guess." [*Laughs*] So I did.

BC: That was probably pretty useful to have, wasn't it?

EFC: Oh yeah. It was handy.

BC: A kinda steady, background job for . . .

EFC: We used to do—we used to be the house band at Mhoon's Club. We'd—on the weekends, you know. We'd start at 9:00. It was 9:00 to 12:00. I mean, the clu—the store didn't close till 9:00, so I'd have to shut 'er down a little early and try to get outta there.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And then we started playin' the Gaslight Club. We'd play six nights a week, and I'd still work the store every day. By the end of the week, I was pretty wore out.

BC: Pretty worn out. Yeah.

EFC: 'Cause each—they'd keep you down there till 3:00 or 4:00 in the mornin' a lotta times. It was a private club. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: They didn't have to close.

BC: Yeah.

[01:48:26] EJ: Did you guys record anything with the Del-Reys lineup?

EFC: Yeah. Did with Ken Owens, as a matter of fact. Did it at Phil Eagle's studio.

EJ: Was that here in Fayetteville?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EJ: Right. Yeah.

EFC: And then we recorded some stuff in Oklahoma City. I don't—there was never anything pressed on that but . . .

[01:48:48] EJ: But the Fayetteville—the stuff from Eagle studio was pressed? Is there a . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . single or somethin', I thought I'd heard.

EFC: It was called—was it Chance Records or somethin' like that. Somewhere I've got one of those 45s, I think. Ken's got 'em, Ken Owens.

EJ: Do you remember the song?

EFC: "That's Tough" was one of 'em. It was a song he wrote. And I can't member the other one.

SL: Was Phil Eagle's studio—was it there just off Maple Street?

EFC: Yep. You member?

SL: I do.

EFC: It's kinda on the corner and . . .

SL: Yes. Maple, and the back side was Gunter.

EFC: Right.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: I've always heard that was the first recording studio in town.

EFC: I wouldn't doubt it. Wouldn't doubt it.

[01:49:31] EJ: Do you remember what the set—the recording setup was?

EFC: I don't remember too much about it. I remember there was a guy in Springdale—heck, what was his name? Pat Singletary, that sound right? That had a lathe. You could go—he had a—in Springdale he had a, like, not really a studio, but he had a nice mic and everything, and he had one of those lathes, and you could cut a 45.

EJ: Direct to disk?

EFC: Direct to disk.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Yeah. That was the first thing we ever did, really. I don't even have one of those. If I did, it probably wouldn't work.

EJ: And you guys went . . .

BC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . in and did one of those?

EFC: Be pretty scratchy.

EJ: The direct to disk recording?

EFC: Yeah. Ernie and I did.

EJ: You and Er—just you and Ernie?

EFC: Yeah. Did a couple of songs. Yep.

[01:50:18] BC: So that's what we did. We sorta tried to trace the
move from that all the way to, you know, goin' to Canada and
goin' to Tony . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . Mart's and stuff. We leave out anything important? Leave
out any big stops, playin' high school things, playin' college
things, playin' clubs, gettin' to know people like Ronnie . . .

EFC: Yeah, we just did a lot of that. Yeah.

BC: . . . and learn the business.

EFC: Yeah, we just did a lot of the same circuit that everybody . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . else was doin'.

[01:50:42] BC: How far—you said you went as far as Norman. Did
you go any further west than that?

EFC: No, not really. We did go to—see, Dallas a little bit. Went to

San Antonio one time.

BC: Okay.

EFC: And we didn't go to Memphis that much. Didn't go [*unclear word*], you know. Fort Smith a little bit, but I don't remember to—it was mainly OU and here.

BC: Okay.

EFC: 'Cause it was mostly frat stuff. [*Laughs*]

BC: Okay.

EFC: But Dayton did have the club over in Norman, too. The Sundowner Club.

BC: Okay. So . . .

EFC: And Ronnie [*unclear word*] . . .

BC: . . . there was a real circuit that you could . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . you could work . . .

EFC: Yeah. Pretty much.

BC: . . . and make—and, along with the other jobs, make a livin'.

EFC: Yeah.

[01:51:20] BC: What about family life at this point? You married yet?

EFC: Yep.

BC: Okay.

EFC: Yep.

BC: Okay. So your life must have seemed pretty busy. You said you were pretty tired . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: . . . by the end of the week. [*Laughs*]

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

[01:51:32] BC: All right. Now, the first label release is [19]70?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: With . . .

EFC: I guess it would've been [19]70.

BC: . . . Metromedia.

EFC: *Cate's Gang*.

BC: The one that looks a little—the *Wanted* album?

EFC: *Cate's Gang*. *Cate's Gang*.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Eric's got 'em all. [*Laughs*]

[01:51:46] BC: Yeah. There it is. That's the first one, isn't it?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Okay.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: So how'd that happen? Let's talk a little bit . . .

EFC: Well . . .

BC: There's a guy name Moody, right?

EFC: Mickey Moody.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: I don't, you know, I don't really know how he got up here, but we were playin' at the Mhoon's Club, and he had heard from somebody about us, you know. So he came by there to hear us one night and said, "You guys interested in recordin'?" Said, "We're in Fort Worth." I says, "Well, I guess." So they offered, you know, to bring—we didn't get paid or anything. We just go down there and cut some demos. And they got real interested and impressed, I guess, with what we were playin' so that—we did, like, probably two albums worth of material. [01:52:25] And they—there was—they had it—first of all, they had this guy from Detroit that came down—I forgot his name—from that Rare Earth—well, it was before Rare Earth records started. But anyway, they had this song. It's on one of the old *Siblings* album. Called "Born to Wander." Anyway, they had the demo of it. Well, this group, Rare Earth, came out with this song called "Born to Wander," right? And they were on Rare Earth records. They never did sign us. But they stoled our song—not the whole song, just the title, and then the melody of the, you know, the title's the same, too. [Laughs]

EJ: Oh, really.

EFC: Yeah. Anyway, then they got this guy from New York from Metromedia. What was that—what was the guy used to—he ended up workin' for *Billboard* magazine. Tom—he died here a couple of years ago. Tommy Noonan. Does that sound right?

EJ: Mh-hmm.

BC: Mh-hmm.

EFC: He was involved with Metromedia records, and they had a couple of other guys came down and heard us, and then they ended up signin' us.

BC: Okay. [*Camera clicks*]

EFC: Yep. [01:53:35] And that label didn't last, like I was tellin' Eric, because they got in trouble on the antitrust thing 'cause Metromedia owned all these radio stations and TV stations throughout America, and they said, "Whoop." The government said, "You can't have a record label and own"—you know. You know what I'm sayin'?

BC: Sure.

EFC: So they had to shut it down.

BC: So they kept the stations and shut down the label, huh?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Right. Yeah. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

[01:54:00] EFC: And then we were signed with Mickey and Huey Meaux, right? Huey Meaux. You familiar with him?

BC: Sure. I know his name. Yeah.

EFC: Crazy Cajun . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . guy.

BC: But a very successful one, right?

EFC: Oh yeah. [*BC laughs*] Anyway, Levon—when they did the Dylan tour in [19]74, they had hooked up with David Geffen and . . .

BC: Oh, that's the Asylum stuff. Yeah.

EFC: . . . Elliot Roberts, who had . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . started Asylum . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . and they had somehow got involved with them in—I think that what's his name was their manager originally. Albert Grossman at the time was still involved with 'em but—'cause Albert called me on the phone one day at the music store.

[01:54:47] Anyway, Levon—well, I had this cassette tape that

I gave Levon. He took it to Asylum. Well, he took it to Elliot Roberts, right? Elliot took it over to Asylum's office on the noon hour. And Chuck Plotkin was the A&R guy. Chuck comes home—comes to his office after lunch and sees this cassette tape on his desk. He doesn't have any idea where it came from or anything. Puts it in the machine, and it starts playin' our songs. Said, "Wow! I like that. What is that?" He called Ernie. It had Ernie's phone number on it. He called Ernie and says, "I've got a tape here I'm listenin' to I really like. I wanna know who it is and where it came from." [*Laughter*] 'Cause Elliot didn't, you know . . .

BC: Leave a card or anything with it, huh? Yeah.

EFC: No. I mean, he knew Elliot had dropped it off, but he didn't know who—you know, anything about us. So he was goin' to Muscle Shoals to do somethin'—project, so he came by here to hear us live and—but we were still signed with Huey . . .

BC: Metromedia.

EFC: . . . and it took us about a year to get outta that contract. And they had to give 'em some money and [*laughs*] stuff. Anyway, we got off that way.

[01:55:53] BC: So you got free of Metromedia and signed with Asylum.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Right? Yeah.

EFC: I mean, we were off that label, but we were still signed with Huey's for production or whatever you call [*laughs*] it.

BC: Okay.

EFC: I mean, I don't know what it was.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: To make records.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Stupid contract.

BC: Yeah. Yeah, you end up owin' 'em records, right?

EFC: Yep. Pretty much.

[01:56:15] EJ: So these two albums are all original songs?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: When did you guys start writing songs?

EFC: Ah, it's in the—well, I always wrote a little bit [*laughs*] but . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah. Probably in the mid-[19]60s, maybe.

EJ: So when the Del-Reys were playin' and you're playin' that circuit, you guys are playin' . . .

EFC: Not too many original stuff. Maybe a little bit. Not much. But that was kinda the—after we quit the road in [19]66, we kinda

decided that's what we wanted to do was start concentratin' on writin' songs and goin' from that direction instead of just playin' cover music. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah. It's—that's what you gotta do if you don't wanna be a cover band.

EFC: Right.

BC: Right?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

[01:56:57] EJ: And you guys were selling some songs to people at some . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . point, too, because Kenny Rogers covers . . .

EFC: And we were luck—we got pretty lucky there. We even got some stuff cut when we were with that label, you know.

EJ: . . . 'cause Kenny Rogers does . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . does the "We All Got to Help Each Other."

EFC: Yeah. First Edition.

EJ: And there's—this is somethin' I've wanted to ask about. It's a little thing but the—there's a song called—there's a Cajun singer that was also on Metromedia named Tommy McLain . . .

EFC: I don't—not . . .

EJ: . . . who . . .

EFC: . . . familiar with him.

EJ: One of his songs is "Stuck in New Orleans."

EFC: Oh yeah? [*Laughs*]

EJ: And I've seen it listed on the Internet with a writing credit, Ernie and Earl Cate. And I know you all have a . . .

EFC: "Stuck in Chicago."

EJ: . . . song, "Stuck in Chicago."

EFC: See, I didn't realize that. Wow.

EJ: I still haven't heard his song, so I don't know . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: . . . if they're the same. I thought you might know.

EFC: And there was a gal that Huey had named Barbara Lynn that did . . .

BC: She's . . .

EFC: . . . one woman—"One Man Woman." It was—our version was "One Woman Man" or [*laughs*] whatever.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: But they put—this shows you what kinda guy Huey was. He put our wives' names as writers, [*BC laughs*] for some reason. I don't remember what. Because we'd already did it for

Metromedia or somethin'. I don't know. It was some way—
sneaky way of gettin' writers' royalties or [*laughs*] somethin'.

EJ: Right.

EFC: Huey.

BC: [*Laughs*] Just shake his—Huey. Yeah.

EFC: Man. [*Laughs*]

[01:58:17] BC: But the songwriting became a major thing, doesn't
it?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: I mean, it became what . . .

EFC: Well . . .

BC: . . . you really wanted to do.

EFC: . . . well, we enjoyed doin' that.

[01:58:25] BC: So then the first Asylum alb—you know, you get—
you—they pay—the money changes hands, and you get free of
that contract.

EFC: We went to New York first, actually. We went to Napanoch,
which is not too far from Woodstock, with John Simon. You
know he did The Band, you know. And worked with him for a
couple of months. And when we'd go down to the city and
record, and it just wasn't—he wasn't—I mean, he liked to play
in his garden. He wasn't that much—you know, he was kinda

burnt out on music or somethin'. He liked our stuff. He said, "Oh, sounds fine to me. Let's go record it," you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: So we recorded and sent it to LA, and they said, "Well, it's pretty good, but it's still not what we want. We know you got—you can do better." [01:59:06] So they sent us to California with Steve Cropper.

BC: Steve Cropper. Yeah.

EFC: Which was a better fit.

BC: And that really fits, doesn't it?

EFC: Yeah, 'cause Steve would really like to play, and he liked what was goin' on. But John would just lay back and smoke pot all the time, and [*BC laughs*] he wasn't really into, you know, just wasn't into it, you know. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And he was a good guy, you know.

[01:59:24] EJ: Do those tapes still exist? Do you know?

EFC: You know, I don't even think I've got copies of it.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: It was with Bill and Terry.

EJ: Was it?

BC: Yeah.

EFC: We had a couple of cuts that were pretty good. But Steve, it was ma—really made the difference. But he ended up bringin' in studio players to play with Ernie and I, which was what really made it work. [*Laughs*] You know, just a couple of guys, a bass player and a drummer. 'Cause we already had the tunes, pretty much.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Well, Steve'd come out to the—we had—they had us a house out in the Valley rented, and he'd come out in the afternoon. We'd rehearse the tunes, and then we'd go in the studio and cut 'em. It was easy. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[02:00:02] BC: Well, it's probably easy when you got somebody that sorta sees things the way you do it.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: You know, I mean, there's gotta be some kinda regional . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: . . . cultural connection there. I mean . . .

EFC: That's right.

BC: . . . that Memphis sound and you guys is real close and . . .

EFC: Yeah, that's right. And we're actually—we were influenced a lot

by that, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Even in our writing [*laughs*] and stuff, you know. That's close to home. Yep.

BC: Yeah, I mean he's a legendary figure now out there in the . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yep.

BC: You go to that Rock 'n' Soul Museum over in Memphis—you ever been there? The one right next to the FedExForum.

EFC: I went to the old one—I went to the one before they moved it but . . .

BC: Yeah. He's all over that place, I mean . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: He had this belt that had all the songs that he'd written on it [*laughter*] all the way around the belt and had the sta— musical staff with, like, "Green Onions" and "Midnight Hour" or whatever.

BC: Yeah.

SL: Pretty strong.

[02:00:56] EJ: He plays on this record some, too, right?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: On both of the records.

EFC: Both of 'em.

BC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep. "Duck" Dunn played on the second one.

EJ: And I noticed lookin' through it that he's got cowriting credits on a couple of songs.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Did he do arrangement work?

EFC: Yeah. That was just—well, actually, like, "In One Eye and Out the Other," we just kinda made that song up in the studio, you know. [*Telephone rings*] [02:01:24] And then in "Union Man," we had a different—you've probably heard that version of "Union Man" that was an old—you know, it was this major key, like kind of "Honky Tonk Woman" kinda deal different, and when we got out to LA, he said, "I like those lyrics, but you know, let's do some of this kinda disco stuff." We didn't know what the hell he was talkin' about disco, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And it was just startin' to happen, you know, so he came out to the house there and came up with that riff. You know, he had the riff [*sings*] "dun du dun." And ?Matt? ended up playin' that riff. He didn't play it. He played the other part but, anyway,

he—it ended up workin'. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah, that's the biggest single, isn't it?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: The "Union Man."

EFC: Yep. And it was a disco hit, too. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: It was, like, we don't know why, you know, but. [*Laughter*] It was always a surprise to everybody who come see us play live, you know, 'cause they thought we were a black band, you know, with . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . blue suits on or somethin', you know. [*Laughs*] It was totally different from what they imagined. Yeah, Steve's cool. Dave Foster played the Moog stuff on there.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Fact, you know—I don't know if you know Mark. I can't think of his last name. Played with Plan B. The guitar player. He's playin' with Seal now.

EJ: Oh, Mark Summerlin.

EFC: He's playin' with Seal.

EJ: He is?

EFC: Plays with Seal.

EJ: Wow.

[02:02:48] EFC: Yeah. Anyway, he—Seal's new record, Dave Foster produced, and he said—he was talkin' to Dave about where he was from, and he said, "I know the Cate Brothers," and Dave said, "Oh man! I played on their record." He even remembered everything about it. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: He said, "Tell those guys hello." [*Laughs*] Course, he's everywhere, Foster is.

BC: Yeah. Yeah. It's a small-world story, isn't it?

EFC: Yep.

BC: Yeah.

[02:03:08] EJ: And Klaus Voormann is on this record, I think, too?

EFC: Yep.

EJ: Plays bass, and Levon plays drums on a cut.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. [*Laughs*] [*Telephone rings*] Uh-oh.

TM: That was the phone. Pause tape.

EFC: Is that . . .

[Tape stopped]

[02:03:21] TM: We're rolling.

BC: Okay. Maybe now this is a good time 'cause we've, you know, [*EFC laughs*] we've sorta reached the sorta maximum exposure

time. I mean, you guys are in *Rolling Stone* and stuff, so you've come a long way from [EFC laughs] the YAC . . .

EFC: That's right.

BC: . . . by this time.

EFC: Yeah.

[02:03:33] BC: So when you—when—from the perspective of now when you look back on it, you know, what did you sort of expect at that time? Did you ex—did you—I mean, you were pretty veteran—you were a veteran band by that time. You knew . . .

EFC: Pretty much.

BC: . . . that all sorts of weird stuff was always gonna to happen . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . you know, and that what you expected wasn't gonna happen.

EFC: Right.

[02:03:53] BC: So when, you know, when things start to do as a lot of the things—you know, the sorta roller coaster of the music business. At that moment, do—where you sorta said, "Okay. This is what we set out to do. We've sorta done what we set out to do," or just sort of your own perspective. I don't wanna

put . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . words in your mouth but . . .

EFC: I know what you mean. It seemed like it was such a—I mean, it was a long trip there, but once you kinda got there, you didn't really think about it like, "Whoa, we've made it," you know.

BC: That's exactly what I'm askin' you.

[02:04:25] EFC: You did—we did *American Bandstand* and met Dick Clark. Course, when we were young kids and we watch him on TV, you thought, "Boy, if we ever make it to *American Bandstand*, we'd make it," you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: But once you get there, it's not like—you know, you don't feel exhilarated like, "Oh man, we made it," you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: It's just seemed like, "Oh, it's another gig." [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah. Okay.

EFC: You know what I mean.

BC: That's exactly—you read . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . me exactly right. I just wanted to sorta . . .

EFC: It's kind of surreal. You don't really think about, you know—
never did really think we made it. I'll put it that way. We just
knew that we were somewhere up there, you know . . .

BC: Yeah, and you were . . .

EFC: . . . and made it a distance of sort.

BC: And you had work, right?

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: You had gigs and jobs and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Okay.

EFC: Yeah. It's a tough business. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

EFC: It's hard to stay up there, I guess.

BC: It is. But it looks like, I mean, from where I sit, it looks like
you were lucky in one sense that you had good mentor/friends,
you know . . .

EFC: Yeah. True.

BC: . . . in Ronnie and Levon.

[02:05:21] EFC: And ac—you know, actually, if it hadn't been for
Levon, it probably would never happened, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Probably never would've.

BC: So it's a . . .

EFC: So we can thank him for that.

BC: . . . down-home connection stuck with you, didn't it?

EFC: It's who you know . . .

BC: Yeah. [*Laughter*]

EFC: . . . I guess.

BC: Well, it sounds like, you know, sounds like a great adventure, lookin' back on it.

EFC: Yeah, it was. I miss, you know—I wouldn't trade it for anything. [*Laughs*]

[02:05:44] BC: Any spectacular anecdotes? Any spectacu—you ever, you know, just anything you think of.

EFC: Yeah, it was a lit . . .

BC: Or wild audiences . . .

EFC: Well, it was a, you know, it . . .

BC: . . . particularly nasty bar owners?

EFC: I think, probably—we played a lot of shows with big-name groups, but that wasn't as much fun or as, you know, as exciting as just workin' with Levon 'cause Levon had all these friends in the movie business or whatever, and you never knew who was gonna show up. Like one night in New York at the Lone Star, Rip Torn, Tommy Lee Jones, and Dennis Hopper, all

three showed up at the same time [*laughs*] to the gig, right?

BC: Yeah.

EFC: So they're in the dressing room, you know, partyin'.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Stuff like that, you know. And Bob Dylan, you know, comin' to a gig or, you know, whatever, you know. With Levon there was more of that stuff that went on, you know.

BC: So Levon, you know, carried a lotta action right along with him.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Everybody liked him, I guess.

[02:06:41] BC: Yeah. I remember in a paper one of—a kid wrote for my class, and you interviewed him. This is Archie Schaffer, by the way.

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: And he s—you told him that one of the real highlights of your career was payin'—playin' the New Victoria in London.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: So you—what do you remember about that? Just . . .

EFC: Well, we were the headliner . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . and Hot Chocolate opened for us, right? But—and it was

sold out [*laughs*] . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . in London, England. Now, why? How do they know us, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

[02:07:13] BC: That sound . . .

EFC: It was kinda . . .

BC: . . . was real popular then, wasn't it? I mean, it's . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . sorta . . .

EFC: Right.

BC: . . . was one of the few times in the music business it might've been to your advantage to be billed as vaguely Southern.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

BC: You know, you got the Allman Brothers comin' up and Charlie Daniels . . .

EFC: And we played a lot with, oh, Lynyrd Skynyrd and Charlie Daniels, Marshall Tucker. Played a lotta shows with those guys. We were kinda tabbed as a Southern band, but we didn't really—our music wasn't really that—well, it was Memphis, but it wasn't like Skynyrd or . . .

BC: Yeah.

EJ: It wasn't that Southern rock. It was more of a Southern . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . soul.

EFC: Southern . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . soul. Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

[02:07:54] EJ: But then you guys were also opening for Queen around this time, right? [*Laughs*] This is . . .

EFC: Well, not—that story is—that is a real interesting story.

BC: There is a weird story. Yeah.

EFC: 'Cause when they released that album—actually, I think it was in November of [19]75, but they didn't really get started on it good. You know, the first of the year they wanted us to tour with a major act, and Queen was on *Asylum*, right? So, "We're gonna put you on the road with Queen," 'cause they were the only group goin' out that winter of [19]76, right. So they put us on tour with Queen, and the first show we played was in Waterbury, Connecticut. And I swear, it was stand-up only, no seating. It was fourteen-year-old boys, you know what I mean. And they were yellin' "You suck." We hadn't even

played a note. [*Laughter*] Hadn't hit a note yet. "You suck."

BC: Yeah.

EFC: We thought, "This ain't gonna work, you know." So we did another show. It was gettin' a little better the next time. Then we started playin' opera houses like Boston, Detroit, and Chicago. It was nice, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: The crowd was real appreciative, and our song was on the radio, and every major city, first thing we hit the—get off the plane, take you to the radio station, and . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . play our record, you know. That was the way it was back then.

[02:09:07] BC: Sure. And the DJ interviews you at the—yeah.

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. And that's what made it, the record, happen. By the spring it was charted, you know.

BC: Yeah. And that's why they made Metromedia not have the label and the radio stations [*laughter*] because . . .

EFC: Exactly.

BC: Now, I can understand . . .

EFC: Exactly.

BC: . . . what the government's thinkin' there.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah. You're right.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: But that must've been a great tour. So that was kind of a highlight, too, wasn't it?

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: That ended up bein' enjoyable. At first we thought, "This is not," you know [*BC laughs*]—'cause we'd be in the same—on the same flight with 'em, and we even had—every show they'd have a party afterwards at a restaurant. You know, the girls would be chasin' their cars and stuff, you know. We'd be followin' right behind 'em. [*Laughter*] But they were nice guys. Freddie was a little strange. [*Laughs*] He didn't talk much, but the rest of the guys, Brian May, they were all cool. Yep.

[02:10:04] TM: Is there a story about Brian May's guitar or somethin' or—maybe I'm just imaginin' that.

EFC: I don't remember. He used to come—he used to stand and watch us play a lot.

EJ: Oh yeah? That's nice.

EFC: He was about the only guy in the band that would stand there while we're [*laughs*] playin' and watch us. He said, "You guys are real soulful." That's what he always said. He liked it.

[02:10:26] EJ: Were you guys livin'—so when you weren't touring, you were still livin' in Northwest Arkansas . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . through this period?

EFC: Yep.

EJ: Did you come back and play back here, play around here?

EFC: Yeah, we did a little bit. We played the Rink a couple times. We never—never even entered our mind to move anywhere [*laughs*] else or at least stay in LA or New York, even though we were playin' LA a lot.

BC: So this was always a kind of steady home base . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . right.

EFC: I don't know why it just never entered our mind to, "Oh, we need to move out here," you know. Just didn't even think about [*laughs*] it.

BC: Yeah, probably kept you sane, you know.

EFC: That's right.

BC: A lot of those people that do move, you know, they get uprooted and they . . .

EFC: Absolutely.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yep. We's ready to get away from [*laughs*] it.

BC: Yeah.

[02:11:14] EJ: So who's in the touring band at this point? Who's the rhythm section? Is it still Bill or just Ron?

EFC: Right now?

EJ: No, in the—at [19]75, [19]76 when you're—when you guys are first going out and supporting this record?

EFC: Actually, Terry was there.

EJ: Terry was playin' drums still.

EFC: And then Bill left before we finished the record. His wife came and got him 'cause he wasn't playin' on the record. She got mad about it, I guess, but. She came and got him, and we [*EJ laughs*] didn't even know it was goin' on. We came home one night from the studio, and he was gone. But Terry hung in there. He broke his arm out at the place we were stayin'. Fell out of the tree and broke his arm. He couldn't've played drums if they'd've wanted him to. But he stayed with it and sang. Course, Levon was out there, too, but yeah, it was Terry.

[02:12:02] And then Ron started—we had Albert singin'—
Singleton played for a while. And then . . .

EJ: He's the one on the cover of the picture of—on the sheet
music, right? There's a picture of . . .

EFC: A black guy?

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. That's . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . Albert, yeah.

EJ: That's Albert.

EFC: And then Ron joined after that. Yep.

[02:12:24] BC: And then later—let's bring it further up to date. By
the time you have David playin', Renko, playin' . . .

EFC: You're talk—that was—when was that? [Nineteen] eighty-nine,
maybe?

EJ: [Nineteen] eight-nine . . .

BC: Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: . . . that's a little longer.

EFC: He was, like, eighteen at the time.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

BC: See, and I was here by then, so I can—I remember seein'
you . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . that particular configuration of your band several times.

EFC: Seen it—in [19]80 . . .

[02:12:47] BC: You had Porky playin' then?

EFC: Yep.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: See, in [19]80—we played with Levon from [19]79 till—I don't know, about four years there. We played in Canada a lot. And then The Band got back together in [19]83, and we did that for th—about three years. So all—and in a little bit on up—you know, whenever Terry and I went in [19]86 or [19]87, went to Madrid. Did a show with 'em. Anyway, it wasn't—right after that's when Dave started with . . .

BC: So you'd come back then after The Band period. Come back here and . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

EJ: We always lived here.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[02:13:29] EJ: I—before we move too much farther forward, I wanted to ask a little about this record.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Because you did those two records with Cropper, and I mean, so far, the Metromedia stuff has all the girl singers and the horns, and you and Ernie are singin' together a lot. And then the stuff that Cropper produced is pretty dense and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . very funky.

EFC: And [*clears throat*] then got horns and stuff, you know.

EJ: And then this record, to me at least, has a different sound than that.

EFC: Yeah. What . . .

EJ: It's a little more sparse and . . .

EFC: . . . what happened is, like, the management company [*clears throat*] said—you know, we had a place over here at Beav-O-Rama. Had a A-frame and a little kind of a studio set up in the basement. They said, "You guys just go woodshed and write another album," you know what I mean. So that's what we did. The record company said, "Man, we'd like to hear you guys, like"—'cause they'd always hear us play live and stuff. "We'd like to hear you, like, the band, you know, just the

band. Just what you do." Not a lotta extra stuff, which there's a little bit on there. We used the horns a little bit but . . .

EJ: Couple of horns.

EFC: So that's the way we did it. We did this with Jim Mason in LA. Yeah, but it's more, you know—I don't know. It's not produced as much.

[02:14:36] TM: And what album are we referring to here?

EJ: This is *Cate Brothers Band*.

EFC: [Nineteen] seventy-seven is when we did it.

EJ: [Nineteen] seventy-seven?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: And yeah, and that's the first one with Ron, both Ron and Terry, playin' on it?

EFC: Yep. Yep.

[02:14:51] EJ: And there's a few tunes on here that I—you guys were still doin' in the set when I left in 2000.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: "Stranger at the Door" and "Out on a Limb."

EFC: Yeah, we still do that once in—yeah, we do those ones . . .

EJ: And there's also a song on here, "Give Me a Reason," that was covered by the Neville Brothers later.

EFC: Yep. That's right. Timmy Schmit sang harmony on that, too.

EJ: Really?

EFC: From the Eagles, yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Wow.

EFC: You didn't know that?

EJ: Huh-uh.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: No, I didn't. That's nice.

[02:15:24] EFC: Yeah, Aaron Neville said—they cut that song once before with that guy, Joel Dorn, producer from Atlantic or whatever. I talked to Aaron in New Orleans. He says, "Man, I really love that song." Said, "But we just didn't like the way Joel produced it. He had orchestra and all this stuff." So when they ended up cuttin' it a couple—you know, three or four years ago, more basic, kinda the way we did [*laughs*] it.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

[02:15:53] EJ: Did you guys feel like this was more—this reflected more accurately what you all . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . sounded like and what you wanted to sound like?

EFC: More accurate towards the live group, yeah. Definitely.

[*Laughs*] Yeah.

BC: Yeah.

[02:16:07] EJ: And then after that, you did the album with Tom Dowd, right?

EFC: Yeah. And that was the—still the same band, but Atlantic was—that was Atlantic, and they were kinda in some trouble at that time, you know, with their label. They were losin' money, and they just never did promote it. [*Laughs*] Yeah. I don't think they liked it anyway, really. [*Laughs*]

EJ: I always thought Tom was . . .

EFC: Tom Dowd was cool to work with, though.

EJ: Was he?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Does Levon play on this album? Was . . .

EFC: Nah, he's singin' on some song there with us. I can't remember which one. [*Laughs*] He was down there. He came down and stayed for a couple weeks but, yep.

[02:16:50] SL: So over the span of these albums we've been talkin' about, what were the studios like? And what were the recording spaces and the equipment . . .

EFC: Oh, they were great.

SL: I mean, you were watchin', you were experiencing, as your band was growing and spreading influence, you were also

seeing technology . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Definitely.

SL: . . . continue to improve.

EFC: But it was a lot more expensive stuff back then, actually.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I mean, now it's all digital. It's, you know, simpler in a way, you know. Yep.

SL: So the first stuff that you did, you did direct to disk, right?

EFC: Well, the, yeah, the real early, like, you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . teenage deal but, yeah. And then the studios with the *Cate's Gang* thing was done was four-track. Yep.

EJ: And . . .

EFC: And then from there to—straight to twenty-four after that, I guess. But you know, it was all, like, real studios then. It wasn't—nowadays everybody's got a computer. You can record at home.

[02:17:58] TM: Does that change anything, you think? Do you think that [*clears throat*] the—it changes the feel or what can happen or . . .

EFC: Not necessarily. I think soundwise I prefer the analog sound. I think it sounds, you know, sweeter and, I don't know,

warmer, and just sounds better to me, analog does, than digital. Digital's kinda got that bionic hole or whatever you call it. [*Laughter*] It's clearer.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: You know, but it's not the same.

TM: Bionic hole. I've never heard that term before. [*Laughter*]

BC: That's a great term.

EFC: There's somethin' missing . . .

SL: I'm not sure we can say that [*unclear words*] . . .

EFC: . . . there's something miss . . .

TM: Yeah.

EFC: . . . there's something missing there.

TM: Somethin'.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It's clean, but it's . . .

SL: The life is gone.

EFC: . . . there's a frequency there that's not there.

BC: Yeah. Maybe it's been processed.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Overprocessed or somethin'.

EFC: Vinyl is hard to beat.

[02:18:52] BC: Well, you know, just in terms of durability, these

people that run archives are findin' that nothin's been developed yet, disk or—that holds up like vinyl.

EFC: That's right.

EJ: Yeah.

BC: So you know . . .

EFC: Exactly.

BC: . . . if you don't break it, you know, you'll [*laughs*] . . .

EFC: Yep.

BC: . . . you'll have it for longer than you'll be on the planet so . . .

EFC: Yep. It's just like guitars and stuff like that. You know, all these years you'd think the guitar would be, like, space-age. Well, yeah, you have the synthesizer deal . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . but it's still just a Fender or a Gibson guitar and a Fender amp. I mean, that's—can't get much better sound than that, no matter what you do, you know what I mean. You can spend a lotta money but [*laughs*]*—*you'd think after fifty years that be somethin' sound that'd never heard before, [*laughs*] but . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . it's not true, except for synthesizers and stuff.

[02:19:43] BC: You know Elliott West, Scott?

SL: Yeah.

BC: Elliot gives a thing. You know, he's a history professor. He says that the real life changer was the telegraph because that's the first time you get instantaneous transmission . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . you know. And he said everything else is icing. He tells all these kids with their iPods, you know, that what you're looking at is a telegraph thing with icing.

EFC: Right. [*BC laughs*] It's true.

BC: Everything else is icing on a cake once you get that instantaneous transmission, and the same thing with electric sound, right? I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . once you get it, you got it.

EFC: But you can make a record on the iPhone now.

BC: Yeah.

TM: Yeah. And they do it.

BC: Yeah. And they do it.

EFC: And they do.

[02:20:20] BC: This is just personal. I wanna ask you about a couple songs. I've read one—on your timeline you said you'd—"In my humble opinion, one song would—shoulda been a big hit."

EJ: Oh yeah.

BC: Go ahead and ask him . . .

EJ: "Time Is a Thief." I've always . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . thought that song shoulda been . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . a massive hit.

EFC: Yeah, Atlantic just didn't promote that at all. Yep.

BC: So did—and it's a way for us to ask. You know, we'll all have our favorites. I have two. "Let It Slide."

EFC: Oh yeah.

BC: "Think I'll just let it slide." I love that song.

EFC: Well, thank you.

BC: And another one that I won't think of it while I'm askin' you, but this is just a way for us to say, do you—I mean, I know the answer's gotta be yes, but I wonder which songs they are.

[02:21:00] Do you have your own sort of favorites of songs that, you know . . .

EFC: Nope.

BC: . . . you've written? [*EFC laughs*] Nope. They're all just product in that sense?

EFC: Well, no, I mean, it depends on, you know, the time, or I

mean, it would go through phases where we might play one song for a while, and, "Man, I forgot about that. I like it," you know, but then you forget about it.

BC: But you play it again for a while.

EFC: But I can't think of one particular song that—I mean, "Am I Losin' You" is probably, as far as—you know, is probably my favorite of the songs we've written entirely without another songwriter or anything bein' involved.

BC: Okay. Yeah, that's what I'm askin' you.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, and it still hasn't been cut right yet but . . .

EJ: Really? [*EFC laughs*] [02:21:37] You don't feel like that one's been cut right?

EFC: Hm-mm.

EJ: The version on *Radioland* isn't . . .

EFC: What?

EJ: . . . the version on *Radioland* . . .

EFC: No.

EJ: . . . isn't what you . . .

EFC: It's pretty good, but it's still not—Coco's version's pretty good, too.

BC: It's not what you're hearin' in your head, huh?

EFC: Exactly.

[02:21:51] BC: Yeah. What about "Please No More"? That was the other one I was tryin'—I—that's another song that . . .

EFC: Yeah, we didn't write that one, though.

BC: Okay.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: But yeah, I like that one.

BC: That's a beaut.

EFC: You know, we did . . .

BC: You do a great version of that song.

EFC: Tell you another little trivia about that. [02:22:02] We did the demo on that song for Dave Egan, who wrote it, right, him and the guy from Memphis. I forgot his name but—Randy Hansen.

EJ: Buddy Whittle? Oh yeah.

EFC: Huh?

EJ: Sorry.

EFC: Anyway, Dave sent us this cassette, said, "I want you guys to demo this song." So we demoed it, and this guy Dave Edmunds in England or wherever—I don't know who—who'd he play with?

EJ: Played with Rockpile.

EFC: Yeah, Rockpile.

BC: Okay.

EJ: Nick Lowe's partner . . .

BC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . in Rockpile.

EFC: A kind of a producer guy. He really liked it, and we almost ended up doin' a project with him.

EJ: Wow.

[02:22:34] EFC: But anyway, that's where Joe Cocker got the song, from our demo.

BC: Yeah.

EJ: Oh.

BC: Okay. [*Laughter*] Well, obviously it inspired him, didn't it. Yeah.

EFC: But he had the seagulls on his version.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: You ever heard of that?

BC: Hm-mm.

EFC: You haven't?

EJ: Huh-uh.

BC: No. I haven't.

EFC: You haven't heard Joe Cocker do it?

EJ: Huh-uh. I hadn't heard . . .

BC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . Joe Cocker's . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . cut on that.

EFC: Got seagulls on it. [*Laughs*]

BC: Well, you always like the one that you first enjoyed, so . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: . . . I don't need to hear anybody else's version. You guys nailed that one so . . .

[02:23:01] EFC: Yeah. ?That'll work.? Yeah, it—that is a good ver—you seen it in that movie . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . *Outside Ozona*? There's a movie called *Outside Ozona*, and "Please No More" is in the movie. They're in this car. It's kind of a mystery, a murder movie—mystery where [*unclear word*] guys are in their car, and the song comes on the radio.

BC: Right.

EFC: And it's our, you know, our version of it.

EJ: It's your version.

BC: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Well . . .

EFC: But we never have collected any money 'cause [*EJ laughs*—I asked Billy Jett about it. He says, "Well, it's kinda complicated. You gotta do this, do that, or do that." [*Laughs*]

[02:23:38] EJ: One song of you—of y'all's that gets—that seems to have gotten covered a lot is "You Can't Change My Heart" . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . off of the first record. Billy Preston and Marilyn McCoo cut it . . .

EFC: Billy McCoo . . .

EJ: . . . David Soul . . .

EFC: Marilyn . . .

EJ: Oh, not Billy Preston. Sorry.

EFC: Billy Davis.

EJ: Billy Davis Jr. and . . .

EFC: Marilyn McCoo.

EJ: . . . Marilyn McCoo. Yeah. David Soul did a version of it.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Three or four others.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

EJ: And then you guys . . .

EFC: David Soul.

EJ: . . . recut it on the live album in [19]98 . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . too.

[02:24:05] EFC: And then the surf guys or whatever you call it, Shag

guys . . .

EJ: Oh yeah.

EFC: . . . in North Carolina . . .

EJ: The guy in North Carolina, [*EFC laughs*] Rickey Godfrey.

EFC: [*Unclear words*]

EJ: Is that a song you . . .

EFC: I'm not too familiar with that stuff. Are you familiar with that?

BC: No. No, I'm not.

EFC: The Shag deal over there in North Carolina. It's real popular in the clubs.

EJ: It's like . . .

EFC: It's a dance they do.

EJ: . . . dance music. Yeah. It's like a . . .

EFC: It's like . . .

EJ: . . . beach dance.

EFC: . . . kinda like the Stroll kind of a Shag or whatever. [*Laughs*]

BC: Well, if they're usin' that, I hope you did get paid on that one.
[*EFC laughs*] You know, it's . . .

EFC: Yeah, a little bit.

EJ: But there's a demo of that song that's on the—that—the rereleases of the ?Cagey Crick?, Crazy Cajun stuff. And then you guys—it just seems to me interesting that song's had such

a long life.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, it has, actually. [*Camera clicks*]

[02:24:52] EJ: And in terms of covers, "Yield Not to Temptation,"
y'all recorded . . .

EFC: Twice, yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Two or three times, right? 'Cause . . .

EFC: That's right. Actually, three if you count the *Soul Siblings* or
whatever it is.

EJ: There's the *Soul Siblings* version, and then for one of the
Elektra albums, and then you did it again in 2004.

EFC: That's right. Exactly, [*laughs*] yeah.

EJ: So that's obviously a song y'all had a lot of familiar—lot of
affection for.

EFC: Yeah, Ernie always likes to do that one. Yep.

[02:25:21] BC: So I know you retired the Cate Brothers Band, but I
know you're still playin'.

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*]

BC: So . . .

EFC: Quite a bit.

BC: . . . so you wanna talk just to bring it forward. You know,

Levon's—Levon, when he came back after his surgeries and stuff, was playin' mostly with his daughter. Right? And you got some of that goin', too, so . . .

EFC: Yeah.

BC: Right?

EFC: A little bit.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. I don't play that much with the—Earl's Garage, but every once in a while their guitar player has to be outta town [*laughs*] or somethin'.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: But I got this other deal with Jason and the Earl and Them thing . . .

BC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . that I do all the time.

BC: Yeah.

[02:26:01] EFC: Yeah, Ernie didn't—he just doesn't wanna do a lot. We actually got four or five shows this spring.

BC: Okay.

EFC: Which kinda surprised me that [*laughs*] he wanted to do that much, but they keep busy. Busy enough.

BC: Yeah. Sounds like it was a pleasant surprise that Ernie was

ready to do a little more.

EFC: Yeah. Sorta. I mean, he still likes to play, but I mean, as far as the amount—I mean, I understand he wants to do couple of three times a year, at least. Do somethin'. But this spring we've got four or five shows, [*laughs*] just in the springtime, but he li—he enjoys it. He just don't like to travel or be up too late. [*Laughs*]

BC: Sure.

EJ: Yeah.

[02:26:42] SL: Well, y'all had a pretty unfortunate experience comin' back from Eureka Springs one night.

EFC: Yeah, that wreck, that's really kinda what's got Ernie thinkin' about we might oughta slow down. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

SL: Talk a little bit about that. What—you were probably asleep when that happened.

EFC: No.

SL: No, you were . . .

EFC: We were—it was actually on that stretch between that last stretch on—I guess it's 45 that—after you go—leave Clifty, and you go up the hill, and then you got that stretch that comes up. It was in that stretch that goes curvin' around. Ernie was

drivin', and I was pass—sittin' in the passenger seat. We—and Ron was back in the second seat, and we were talkin' and everything, drivin' along. And all [*unclear word*] we saw this car comin' around the curve, and Ron says, "Is that guy gonna get over?" He was in our lane. I'll be darned. You could tell he was tryin' to get over, but he hit Ernie's side of the van. Tore the door off. Knocked, you know, him into the steering wheel, and of course, he had a seat belt on, but it cracked his hip. And he ended up with a blood clot in his leg, and it was horrible. And I hit the windshield with my [*laughs*] head, and I guess I'm hardheaded. [*Laughter*]

TM: It didn't make a difference to you.

EFC: It broke the windshield.

BC: Broke the windshield.

EFC: But it didn't—I didn't feel anything. I mean, it didn't hurt. And I had a scratch on my cheek, but yeah, it took him a long time to get—you know, he was out in the hospital, like, three different times. He ended up—the last time he knew somethin' wasn't right in his bladder. And he went to go to the bathroom, and he was pissin' blood. And so, he went to the doctor, and they said his bladder looked like there'd been an explosion in there. It was just full. And it was all from that

wreck, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And this is all over, like, two-, three-month period. So after that he was . . .

SL: He was a little gun-shy.

EFC: Gun-shy. I don't blame him.

BC: That's exactly the word, isn't it? Yeah.

[02:28:35] EFC: Plus, he had had some heart problems, too. I mean, he has a natural bypass that happened.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: Heard of those. Instead of havin' to have—he didn't have to have surgery. His heart had made its own . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . valve around naturally 'cause he was a jogger, and they said probably that's why. [*Laughs*]

SL: Man, I've never heard of that.

EFC: You hadn't never heard of that?

SL: Huh-huh.

EFC: Yeah, it's called a natural bypass. He don't have the blood supply he should have, but he has enough that they don't have to do a stint or a surgery or anything. But he has to kinda be careful, you know. The combination of all that [*laughs*] is

like—plus, you know, drivin' back from Kansas City or from Little Rock, you know, sometimes we drive back after the gig and get home at five in the morning.

SL: It's hard.

EFC: Yeah.

BC: That gets old after a while, doesn't it?

EFC: Yeah. I don't like to do that [*laughs*] anymore.

BC: Yeah.

[02:29:29] EJ: Well, and the songs that you guys do are all pretty emotional songs. I mean, it seems to me havin' listenen' to 'em a lot there's a lot of . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . first-person narratives, heartbreak, and romance.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

EJ: There's a lot of emotion in those songs.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: I would imagine that singin' . . .

EFC: I've had a lot of that. [*Laughs*]

EJ: . . . that it's just a lot of work to put that out.

EFC: Yeah.

[02:29:53] SL: So I think, you know, I think your live album that you did with . . .

EFC: I like that. At Chester's. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. I really . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . think that gets you guys.

EFC: Turned out good, I thought.

SL: I mean, I feel like that's a real Cates experience.

EFC: Oh, it is, yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: I mean . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . I thought y'all nailed it, and I thought the recording quality is good.

EFC: Mm-hm. Yep.

[02:30:20] SL: But that's just a local . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . produced thing.

EFC: John Ware.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Is he the one who produced that?

EFC: Darren Novotny.

SL: John Ware?

EJ: Is he?

SL: Yeah. That's *W-A-R-E*, by the way.

EJ: Oh, is it? I misspelled that.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Oh. Well.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: What's that?

EJ: He'd done a singles cassette, too, right? Did he produce that?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. I mean, John didn't really do the mixing. Darren and me actually did the mixing on it, but John was involved when we recorded it, you know. But he left. I think he even moved before [*laughs*] we even finished the mixing . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . or somethin'.

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh. I think he left.

EFC: But he was havin' a little problem at the time. Drinking problem or somethin'.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: He's doin' great now.

SL: He is doing great now.

[02:31:04] EJ: So when—I was gonna—this is some—that raises somethin'. This is one of the things I like about that live album

and that I love about the way the more current version of the band plays is the way you and Dave Renko play together.

EFC: Yep.

EJ: When he joined the band, was that the thought that you—was it the thought that it would work that way, or did you . . .

EFC: Nope.

EJ: . . . have an idea. It was just gonna be a sax player . . .

EFC: We never did hire Dave. He just showed up. [*Laughter*]

BC: He just joined.

EFC: No. No, I mean—I don't mean it in the wrong way, but he's—yeah. Yeah, he just started showin' up to play with us, you know. And after, you know, two or three weeks, we just started payin' him. [*Laughter*] I mean, you know, he ended up bein' real good.

BC: Seemed like the right thing to do, didn't it?

EFC: Yeah. [*BC laughs*] And it ended up bein' a real good deal, you know. He played with us Saturday night.

EJ: Oh yeah.

EFC: He played on the weekend, yeah, in Eureka, yeah. Yeah, it's fun.

[02:31:56] SL: Well, Dave was kind of a prodigy, wasn't he, on the sax? I mean, wasn't he hot, like, when he was fourteen?

EFC: He'd actually played since he was about eight or nine.

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh.

EFC: But he was still learnin' when he started with us. He tells people that he learned—all his licks come from me that he plays on the sax. But that's probably why we play good together. He plays my licks, you know. [*Laughs*]

BC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: So it's not normal sax stuff, you know. But nah, he's a great player. [*Laughs*] Man. He's got some chops. I don't know how he does it. And I've heard him play with—like when we did Clinton inauguration thing, we did—Jon Simon had a horn section, right. And then we did a couple shows with Levon where we'd have a section. Dave'd get in the section. Perfect, you know. [*Laughter*] You know what I mean. No problem.

BC: Wow.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You know, people think 'cause he's so used to soloin' all the time that he wouldn't fit in with a group, but oh yeah, he knows what to do.

[02:32:55] BC: Since you brought up the inauguration, you got any stories around that?

EFC: I have one.

BC: Good. Let's hear it.

EFC: The second one, the second year, when Bill and Hillary actually came on stage, right?

BC: Mh-hmm.

EFC: And we were playing "Ophelia" with Levon.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And we was kinda tryin' to stop the song, and he kept sayin', "Oh, keep on playin'," you know. So anyway, we ended the song, and there's this mic cable that was runnin' across the stage. And it had a short in it or somethin', and Bill stepped on it, and it made this really loud [*vocaliztion of static*] through the—and the building was real echoey anyway. It's a all-marble building that—what's the name of that place?

SL: That was the—is it the . . .

EFC: Somethin' museum?

SL: Yeah, I think it's the architecture museum.

EFC: Might be.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Anyway, it made a loud noise. Course, the Secret Service guy's freakin' out, you know.

BC: Yeah.

EFC: And Bill turned around, and he looked straight at me. He says, "Was that me?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Yeah."

BC: It was.

EFC: "I think so." [*Laughter*]

BC: "Yes, sir, Mr. President."

EFC: Yeah. Right. Yeah, that was cool.

BC: Yeah, that musta been a great, great . . .

[02:34:04] EFC: And Bob Dylan, that first year, you know, when you were there, he just kinda showed up at rehearsal on Saturday night, and nobody knew he was gonna be—he wasn't playin'. He had his hood on, and he was comin' downstage. Plugs in and starts playin'. Didn't say, "I'm gonna set—play this song" or what key or anything. He just started playin'. [*Laughter*] And I swear the second night when we did the real thing, I swear he didn't do the same song, you know. [*Laughter*] Steve Stills was playin' then. [*Laughs*] Well, he did do "Key to the Highway." That was understandable, I guess, but I didn't know what else he was playin'. [*Laughs*] Just tryin' to follow.

[02:34:43] SL: Y'all've had—there's people that come and play with you guys just 'cause they like to play with you, aren't there?

EFC: Sometimes.

SL: Who's the guy from the Eagles that comes down here?

EFC: Well, Joe Walsh played that one time with us. Yeah. 'Cause Levon said, "Man, if you ever get a chance, you oughta go see the Cate Brothers." And he, Joe, said, "Yeah, I've heard of those guys." But he had a CB buddy, I mean, a ham-radio guy here in Fayetteville that he talked to on the phone—I mean, on the radio, all the time. And Joe was comin' to Kansas City. He's got a sister who lives in Kansas City or somethin'. And anyway, this guy was sayin', "Hey, I'm havin' my class reunion, and I got the Cate Brothers playin.'" And Joe says, "Cate Brothers! Man, Levon's always talkin' about those guys." And he said, "Well, why don't you come down and [*laughs*]—at the—to the class reunion." And Joe said, "Okay." So anyway, he came down and played all night with us. [*Laughs*] We couldn't get him to sing or anything.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: He just played guitar, but he played great.

TM: Let's change tapes real quick. Okay.

[Tape stopped]

[02:35:44] SL: We're on our fourth tape here. And Bob just left. He gave us an hour that he could give us. But we got you out of Fayetteville, and we got you guys on the road. We talked—he talked about—and I like—I love the way he talked how you

were expanding your sphere. And you get a call from Levon, right?

EFC: Yeah, we contacted him about goin' on the road. He said, "Well, we're up here in New Jersey. You guys need to come up here. We, you know, we—help us out," [*laughs*] or whatever.

[02:36:19] SL: And so, what was going on was that Bob Dylan was getting ready to go electric. Is that . . .

EFC: Exactly. Yeah.

SL: He was moving on past . . .

EFC: Well, "Like a Rolling Stone" was on the radio big that summer of [19]65. It was a big record. Yeah. And they had heard—he—they had did a record with John Hammond, and that's where Bob had heard their—he said, "Man, I like that band." And he came to that club in New Jersey that—and heard 'em back earlier in the summer and then had decided he wanted—he'd hire the whole band. And Levon said they were goin' to get \$1,600 a week whether they worked or not. That's not that much money, but back then it was, you know. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, sure it was.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Probably unheard of when you were? . . .

EFC: Course, they may—I'm sure he paid 'em more money later on,

you know what I mean, but that was what they started off at. They didn't—so they ended up a lot of the time play—in Woodstock, right, without pl—not workin', but they still got paid. [*Laughs*]

SL: So let's talk about . . .

TM: You can get a drink when you need to, if you need to.

EFC: Okay.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It's all right.

[02:37:28] SL: What is it that you think that—I mean, there were thousands of bands to choose from, and Bob Dylan probably could've chosen . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . almost anybody 'cause he was pretty much, I mean . . .

EFC: I mean, he already had Al Kooper and Mike Bloomfield and . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And so, what was it about Levon and the Hawks, you think, that got him?

EFC: I can't really [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Do you think it was Southern stuff?

EFC: Might be. I can't really speak for him 'cause I don't know how he hears things, but I think he just heard a real good band. But it also had, you know, the right elements and sound that he liked. Maybe the direction he wanted to go, maybe, you know what I mean. 'Cause he wouldn't wanna—he wasn't gonna go psychedelic or whatever. He was goin' to stick with more of a soulful, you know . . .

SL: Well, he was a storyteller . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . for one thing. He was . . .

EFC: And he likes, you know—yeah. And he was all—Bob's always a fan of, like, Southern gu—and like Bob—you know, Billy Riley and all these people. I mean, he was always, you know, been a fan of that stuff. Roy Orbison or whatever. But not that The Band sounded like that.

SL: No, but . . .

EFC: I think they just had a sound. I'll put it that way.

SL: And it's . . .

EJ: And you said that they were co—sorry. You said that they were playin' a lot of, like—after Ronnie left, they were playin' a lot of, like, Bobby Bland . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . and stuff like that.

[02:38:55] EFC: Back—I know a lot of tunes that they played in Somers Point that you wouldn't think about, and this was before they were really writin' songs. They had one record that just gettin' ready to come out, Levon and the Hawks, where they did "He Don't Love You (and He'll Break Your Heart)."

EJ: Right.

EFC: And "The Stones I Throw" is the other side, but they did that song, you know, "Let Me Break Your Heart." But the rest of it was all cover music. They did "Shotgun," you know. Junior Walker. "It's Not Unusual" by Tom Jones, [*laughter*] believe it or not.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: And "A Summer Place."

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Garth played it on the keyboard. [*Laughs*] I mean, songs you would never think about them playin'. "Walkin' the Dog." Well, and then, course, Richard did the Ray Charles stuff. Yeah. But at—once they got—when they got with Dylan, I guess he influenced Robbie a lot. They'd—and then, course, they're getting paid not to work, so it became—Robbie became a songwriter pretty much, and Richard and Rick, too, but

mainly Robbie. Especially lyrically, he—I think he was really influenced by Dylan. [*Laughs*]

EJ: By Dylan, yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[02:40:05] SL: Well, you know, one thing that The Band had was—and there's people who've written about this—is that they had the voices. They . . .

EFC: Oh man.

SL: . . . had the characters. Each voice had its own . . .

EFC: Those three voices are special. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, distinct characters . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . and they could pu—assume roles, almost like a play.

EFC: That's right.

SL: Like a conversation that . . .

EFC: Very true.

SL: . . . was happening rather than a . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: It was a new template. It was . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . it was different than what was going on.

[02:40:36] EFC: They definitely broke grou—new ground with their

music. I—you know, it was funny. When I first heard *Big Pink*, I was like, "I don't if I li"—I didn't—wasn't sure I liked it. I mean, I kinda did, but I wasn't that sure about it 'cause I was so used to the way they used to play but once I—after I started listenin' to it more, I got—I really, you know, I got attached to it but . . .

SL: I still listen to it.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: It's still on my . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: A little every day, almost. It's almost . . .

EFC: "Lonesome Susie."

SL: Yeah. "Lonesome Susie." Well, even . . .

EFC: All of 'em, actually.

SL: All of 'em.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: All of 'em.

EFC: Yeah. Every song.

SL: It's pretty crazy. [02:41:09] So but now, I—you know, you mentioned that Levon didn't like flyin' on the leased plane

and—but I also heard that he didn't like getting booed.

EFC: No. No. [*Laughs*] He didn't like that either.

SL: Because Dylan was not—it was not a popular move from his fanbase.

EFC: That's right.

SL: They were literally getting . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . booed whenever the elect . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . whenever the electricity [*EFC laughs*] popped on.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

[02:41:39] SL: Levon was now playing in front of people that were booing them.

EFC: And Bob would have to tell 'em, "No matter what, just keep playin'." Yeah.

SL: Yeah. And so, Levon just didn't like it.

EFC: No.

SL: And came home.

EFC: Right.

SL: And . . .

EFC: Pretty much.

SL: . . . so, and he hooks up . . .

EFC: He actually went to New Orleans first.

SL: Worked on the oil rigs . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . right?

SL: With Kirby.

EFC: With Kirby Clement. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: Yeah. Kirby Penick, right?

EFC: Mh-hmm.

SL: Yeah. [02:42:08] And so, but he gets back here to Springdale, Fayetteville, Northwest Arkansas, and does he kinda hook up with you guys or . . .

EFC: Yeah. He just—I don't remember how we got hooked up, but I believe I was at the store. Well, actually, there about the same time that I started at the music store, I guess. I don't e—you know, I don't even remember if he came to a gig or what, but anyway, we were needin' a drummer at [*laughs*] the time. He—"Sure."

EJ: Was this, like, [19]66, [19]60 . . .

EFC: [Nineteen] sixty-six, I think, or [19]67. Ernie and I were

talkin' about it the other day, and we couldn't remember if it was [19]66 or [19]67. [*Laughs*] I think it was late [19]66.

But . . .

SL: He wa . . .

EFC: . . . *Big Pink* was—*Music* . . .

EJ: [Nineteen] sixty-eight.

EFC: . . . *from Big Pink* was [19]68, wasn't it?

EJ: Yeah.

[02:42:56] SL: Seems like I remember him wanting to play

harmonica a lot . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . back then, that he had spent some time with a

Mississippi . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . bluesman when he was down on the Gulf.

EFC: Yeah, Sonny Boy and—well, yeah, down there, yeah. But he

was always a fan of Sonny Boy, you know.

SL: And was there a . . .

EFC: James Scott and . . .

SL: Lockjaw . . .

EFC: What?

SL: . . . Lockjaw Davis. It seems like I heard . . .

EFC: I don't know much about that.

SL: . . . heard that name . . .

EFC: Oh yeah?

SL: . . . mentioned at one point. [02:43:24] So he was with you guys for how long? How long . . .

EFC: Oh, just a few months, you know, four or five months. Maybe not that long.

SL: And he got . . .

[02:43:33] EFC: But Robbie called and said they got—"We got a deal with Capitol Records and"—he said, "I guess it"—well, I forget how he said it. "This is goin'—I guess it'd be better to be a little fish in a big bowl." [*Laughter*] "So I guess I better go up there."

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: And so, that's when they started workin' on *Big Pink*.

EFC: Yeah. A lot of people thought that they did that record at Big Pink.

EJ: Nah.

EFC: They didn't.

EJ: No.

EFC: And then—I was . . .

SL: No, but there's *Basement Tapes* that . . .

EFC: Huh?

SL: There's *Basement Tapes* that were . . .

EFC: Yeah, the *Basement Tapes* were done . . .

SL: . . . at Big Pink but . . .

EFC: . . . at Big Pink, but the other was done in the studio there in New York.

[02:44:12] SL: So I mean, we can get back to Lev—Levon kind of traces through your all's career . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . up to the present day. Up to this week, actually.

EFC: There you go. True.

[02:44:23] SL: But I wanna talk a little bit about your stint at the music store.

EFC: Okay. [*Laughs*]

SL: I know that you started doing lessons there. And—but when I—when you and I crossed paths, you were actually runnin' . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . Ben Jack's. And how many people did you teach to play the guitar?

EFC: You know, I didn't teach that long, really, because once I started runnin' the store, I couldn't do it—both.

SL: You couldn't do the lessons.

EFC: Yeah. So I hired Bill Wright to—and then Joey Starr was a teacher there. I'm thinkin' David mighta even—well, he was playin' drums at that time, but yeah, Joey was with me quite a . . .

SL: David . . .

EFC: . . . while. Starr.

SL: David Starr.

EFC: He was a drummer first but . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, Joey worked for me for a long time. I mean, just teachin'. He didn't need the money. I don't know why he was doin' it. [*Laughs*]

[02:45:25] SL: Well, I guess the real qu—the real thing I'm tryin' to get around to, Earl, is that your guitar playing, there's no question that it has been a heavy influence with guitarists in this region and this . . .

EFC: Really?

SL: . . . part of the country. I mean, it seems like to me that almost every guitar . . .

EFC: I can't think . . .

SL: . . . player that's from around here . . .

EFC: Really? I can't think of that many.

SL: . . . has some Earl [*EFC laughs*] Cate licks and . . .

EFC: Yeah, maybe. I don't know. I can't think of that many right off but, you know. I know Tommy Payton and . . .

SL: Well, Tommy, of course. Yeah.

EFC: There's one. Joey probably a little bit, but he never did play that much. But yeah, I guess there has a little bit, you know.

[*Laughs*]

SL: Well, I mean, just by y'all being here all this time.

EFC: Well, that's true.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: The influence is just—it's inevitable. [02:46:24] So and then what about Terry Cagle?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Let's talk a little bit about Terry.

EFC: All right.

SL: 'Cause that's a big story, too.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: Well, first of all, he's lucky to have survived, right?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: What was it that happened with him?

EFC: Well, now, he just—he had the heart attack here a few years

back. Yeah. And that was before he started playin' with us again but—see, he moved to Virginia. That's when we hired Porky.

EJ: Was that . . .

EFC: 'Cause his brother was up there. Huh?

EJ: I'm sorry. Was that [19]85 or so?

EFC: No. No, it was [19]89, [19]88.

EJ: Oh, okay.

EFC: I don't remember. Ron had already moved to Nashville. And then Terry's brother, Wheeler, was in Virginia, and he said some kind of a job as if Terry could make a bunch of money [*laughs*] or somethin' like that. So he left and went out there, and we grabbed Porky. And then we went through a couple of bass players till we got John Davies.

SL: Uh-huh. Now, Terry is Levon's nephew.

EFC: Nephew.

SL: So let's see. That means that . . .

EFC: His mom's—his mom was Levon's sister.

SL: Okay.

EFC: Modena.

SL: Modena.

EFC: Yeah, it's really good to have Terry back 'cause it's—and Ron,

even though it's those same guys, it's like . . .

SL: ?And I? . . .

EFC: . . . it's magic. [*Laughs*]

SL: It is magic, you know, and . . .

EFC: There's somethin' about it's just, you know, it's just there, you know.

[02:47:56] SL: Well, now, when you hired—when y'all hired Ron—I guess this is right after Bill just kinda picked up and left and . . .

EFC: Well, and Albert Singleton—you remember Albert?

SL: Oh, I kinda remember him.

EFC: Well, we were just, like, desperate 'cause we had—once we'd finished the record, we're gonna have to start playin'. We're gonna start tourin' and stuff. So tryin' to think of somebody. Ron was in Little Rock, but we didn't—I thought about Ron at the time, but I thought he was playin' in this band. I hated to break up, you know, a band or somethin'. But Albert wasn't doin' anything and . . .

[02:48:27] EJ: Did he live in Fayetteville? Albert?

EFC: Albert did, yeah, at the time.

EJ: Did he?

EFC: And he had set in with us a few times. I thought, man, he

plays good bass. And you know, they kinda liked the idea of havin' a black guy, you know, in the band, I guess.

SL: Sure. Yeah.

EFC: You know, I mean, it was nice. But Albert got—he wouldn't—he didn't like to fly. And it got to a serious point. And we had this gig. Well, we played the Fourth of July in Little Rock at a big show at the stadium, at War Memorial Stadium. And then we had the next night in Kansas City. We were playin' with Heart. And we flew from Little Rock to Kansas City. Albert decided he was gonna drive. He didn't wanna fly. And we knew when we left to get—to go to the plane, he still hadn't left yet. Hadn't left Little Rock. Make a long story short, he showed up, like, two hours late. And we're supposed to be opening for Heart. Now, they were good enough to wait.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Now, we're talkin' about holdin' the audience, even.

SL: Oh man.

EJ: Wow. Yeah.

EFC: So you know, we had to fire him. [*Laughter*]

[02:49:34] SL: You couldn't work it out. Yeah. Well, now . . .

EFC: We had to do it.

SL: . . . wasn't Ron a keyboard player?

EFC: No. No.

SL: He wasn't? He's always played bass? For some reason I thought he was playin' keyboards.

EFC: Nope. He's always been a bass player. He bought his first bass from me at Ben Jack's.

EJ: Really?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Was he livin' in Fayetteville then?

EFC: Springdale.

EJ: Springdale. His family's from around here?

EFC: Well, they're from Oregon originally, but yep.

SL: Well, now, back to Terry, you know, he just looks and sounds kinda like Levon. I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah, well, it's his mentor.

SL: It's in the blood, I mean . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. There's no doubt about it.

SL: And the way he . . .

EFC: He don't have to act like it. He just is.

SL: I know. I mean, the way—but even the way he plays the drums . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . there's somethin' . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . there's a bloodline there . . .

EFC: Well, that's who he learned from, pretty much.

SL: Well, yeah . . .

EJ: It reminds me . . .

SL: . . . but it's also, like, stuff that you really can't teach.

[02:50:25] EFC: You know, Terry's left-handed, but he plays drums
right-handed.

SL: No. I didn't know that.

EFC: You didn't know that?

EJ: I didn't know that either.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: I notice, you know, his grip. I mean, you don't see a lotta
drummers . . .

EFC: That's right.

EJ: . . . that play with that grip anymore.

EFC: I know. It's still the Levon.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: The same way that Levon does.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Old-style, old-fashioned.

EFC: Mh-hmm. He switches around. Sometimes he plays overhanded, I mean.

[02:50:51] SL: [*Laughs*] Okay. We should talk a little bit about Porky, though.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: So Terry has a—some kind of job, moneymakin'offer, and he . . .

EFC: Yeah, he moved. He went and left town.

SL: Went to Virginia.

EFC: So we kind—we knew Porky was around and so—and he was a killer drummer, you know what I mean.

SL: Now, who . . .

EFC: I mean, not—maybe not as much our style as Terry 'cause we'd always played with him. But as far as a—you know, in the top . . .

SL: So [*unclear words*] . . .

EFC: . . . technically on top of it. He was . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . on top of it.

SL: He had his chops.

EFC: I mean, on top of the beat, even.

EJ: He does. He . . .

SL: Yeah.

EJ: . . . plays forward. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, he plays forward.

EJ: He plays—it's just a lean forward . . .

EFC: Terry's more laid back.

EJ: . . . as opposed to a lean back. Yeah.

EFC: Yep. Yep. And it was a pleasure playin' with Porky. I mean, you didn't have to worry about anything [*laughs*] with him.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: He'd let you know if the bridge was comin' up. He'd let you know if you were at—if you didn't remember where you're at, you'd know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You know what I mean. He was cool.

SL: Well, he also was just a nice guy, too.

EFC: Yeah, he was. Everybody loved Porky. Bless his heart.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Man.

[02:51:50] SL: And so, tell us what—how long was Porky with y'all?

EFC: Let me see. He died in—be ten years this spring—I mean, this fall. September. So let me think. Well, it's been—it was about—well, how many years is [*laughs*] that?

EJ: Well, when did he start with you guys? Was it [19]80 . . .

EFC: I think it was [19]89.

EJ: [Nineteen] eighty-nine.

EFC: So and he died in 2000. So it's about eleven years, I guess.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Wow. See, I did not realize . . .

EFC: Somethin' like that.

SL: . . . that he played that long with you.

EJ: Is he on that—what's the first thing he's on recordingwise?

EFC: *Radioland*.

EJ: *Radioland* is the first thing he's on?

EFC: Yeah. With all the CDs . . .

EJ: All the CDs.

EFC: . . . and the live record, yeah. Yep.

SL: So what band was he with before he was with you all?

EFC: You know, he played some with Rob and Julie, but he, you know, he came here with Paul Hughes.

EJ: Oh . . .

SL: Kay.

EJ: . . . I didn't realize . . .

EFC: You know Paul?

EJ: . . . that.

EFC: 'Cause he used to play with Paul in DC. And when Paul moved here, he had his little studio. I can—you know, I've never been out there. Porky came here with him, you know, kinda get the studio goin' and stuff and ended up likin' it here. [*Laughs*]

EJ: That's what happens to people.

EFC: Yep.

SL: You know, when we're doin' these interviews, we have to kinda—I have to kinda play dumb, [*EFC laughs*] which is not a stretch for me. But we have to couch these answers, and when we talk about folks, we have to remember that people that are listening to this and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . watching this don't know who Porky was or anything.

EFC: Right.

[02:53:22] SL: How did Porky die?

EFC: Well, he ended up with—what do you call it? Bob Dylan had it.

TM: Congestive heart or . . .

EFC: No. I can't think of the name of it now. It's caused from bird droppings. System . . .

SL: Oh, I know . . .

EJ: Systemic . . .

EFC: No, not it. Gah.

TM: [Unclear word] I can't think of it either.

SL: Bird—the . . .

EFC: It's a curable thing, but they were treatin' him—they thought he had some kind of a rare . . .

SL: Avian . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . avian flu or . . .

EFC: Well, no. They thought he had some kind of a—kinda like a leukemia kinda cancer. There's somethin'—they were givin' him prednisone. And so—histoplasmosis.

SL: Okay.

EFC: That's what he had. But anyway, they were—at the VA, they were givin' him prednisone. Like, all summer he was takin' prednisone. He was—and he wasn't feelin' any better, and he was losin' weight and all that. And evidently, like, prednisone is like throwin' fuel on a fire. You know what I mean? It was makin' it worse, and I went up and saw him at the VA, and they were gettin' ready to take him to Little Rock. And they were still givin' it to him intravenously at the VA. Took him to the Little Rock VA, and then he was there a couple days, and they found out it's histoplasmosis. We can treat that. I die . . .

SL: Too late.

EFC: He died that night. They didn't even get a chance to cure it, and they could have. It was just a misdiagnosis.

[02:54:57] SL: So he was a veteran.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: In Vietnam or . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yep.

EJ: And I had heard that he played with, what, like KC . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . and the Sunshine Band?

EFC: He did at one time.

EJ: Right? Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. He didn't play on the hit, but he played with 'em. [SL *laughs*] He also played with Albert King . . .

EJ: Did he?

EFC: . . . sometime. But he was in the military band, too. Called the Airmen of Note. It was like a jazz—military jazz band or whatever. But he said—he claimed that he was in Vietnam and he was a helicopter gunman or some[*laughs*] kinda deal.

SL: Man, I tell you, that's amazing that he—number one, that he survived that, and number two, that he was so friendly and . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . and open and talkative and—you know, because most . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . most war veterans . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . are not like that.

EFC: Yep.

SL: They carry scars with 'em from that point on, so that's really awful that we lost him.

EFC: Yep.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, it is. [02:56:00] Like I say, they—I forget—it was somebody—it was supposedly some kind of cellular disease. They thought he had it—mainly Scandinavians have. Or somethin' like—somethin' really weird diagnosis, but they were way off. [*Laughs*] Way off.

SL: Man.

EJ: Man.

EFC: But he shoulda went somewhere maybe besides the VA.

SL: You need a second or third opinion. Sure.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: 'Cause that's what we kept tellin' him. "Go somewhere else."

And it kinda got to, you know, that—through about a year's time there, it kinda got to the point where it was kinda like cry of the wolf, you know, 'cause he was always sayin' he wasn't feelin' good and somethin' was wrong, and then he'd say, "They think I've got cancer," or somethin' like that. And it kept goin' on and on till finally we just didn't know if we believed him or not.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: You know how it is and . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You know, 'cause, I mean, you know, after a while you just think, "Well, I've heard that before." But it was somethin' wrong with him.

[02:56:58] EJ: So that version of the band is togeth—that's the version that I saw the most . . .

EFC: *Radioland*.

EJ: . . . because of that age that I am. The *Radioland* band . . .

EFC: Yeah. Right.

EJ: . . . I guess. The—you and the—Porky and John, you and . . .

EFC: Dave.

EJ: . . . Ernie and Dave.

EFC: Yeah. That's when you were workin' at George's?

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Late [19]90s.

SL: So we've talked a little about—we've talked quite a bit about the Rockwood Club and about a little bit of the Shamrock Club, and you mentioned the Rink just barely.

EFC: Yeah.

[02:57:35] SL: What about George's? I mean, George's been around forever.

EFC: Yeah, I reme—you know that—you know, contrary to what a lot of people think, George's was never a big music place until, probably, what? Late [19]70s . . .

SL: [Nineteen] seventies.

EFC: . . . and early [19]80s. It wasn't—I mean, it's always been there.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I remember when there was just a little fence about like this [indicates height with hand] around it and, course, then the little taller fence and the tree in the middle and all that.

EJ: But they didn't have music then?

EFC: No. No. Well, one of the first bands I think I heard there outside was Sundance. Remember that?

SL: Wow.

EFC: Remember that?

SL: Sundance.

EFC: With the . . .

SL: Sure.

EFC: He just passed away. Glen Hendrix.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Remember Glen?

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Sure.

EFC: Played keyboard.

[02:58:19] EJ: When you guys are comin' up, it seems like the music is mostly, like, out on the highway, right?

EFC: Yep.

EJ: The Shamrock and the Rockwood . . .

EFC: Yep.

EJ: . . . and all that.

EFC: And the Rink . . .

EJ: And the Rink.

EFC: . . . later.

EJ: It's not till the early [19]70s that Dickson Street starts . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . becoming . . .

EFC: [Nineteen] seventy-two . . .

EJ: . . . where people . . .

EFC: . . . [19]72 the Library switched from bein' a beer place to a mixed drinks and, you know, nice carpet, and it was a pretty fancy place, actually. [*EFC laughs*] And then when everybody wore tuxedos [*laughs*] and stuff. [02:58:49] And then Dickie, he started off that he wanted it to be a jazz club. And he did, right at first, have a jazz band.

EJ: He had live jazz at first?

EFC: Stages was on the side.

SL: Yep.

EJ: And this is in [19]72 when he starts havin' music? Starts . . .

EFC: Yeah. [*SL laughs*] Yep.

EJ: My mom worked at the Library.

EFC: Do what?

EJ: My mom worked at the Library.

EFC: Oh yeah? [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I didn't know that.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Wow.

[02:59:14] EJ: And then you've got the Swinging Door right next door . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . right? You guys played there some, I imagine.

EFC: Yeah, a little bit. Not as much as we did the Library. We played after they moved the stage to the side. You know, originally it was up by the front door, the Swinging Door was. And then they moved it to the side. You remember that?

SL: I don't remember them moving it to the side.

EFC: You don't? Yeah.

SL: Uh-uh.

EFC: I think it was still the Swinging Door then. Pretty sure. It mighta been White Water.

SL: I think maybe . . .

EFC: Maybe it was White Water . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . now that I think about it. And me and old Zorro played there then, too.

SL: After they moved the stage?

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: Now, see, I don't remem—I just don't remember that.

EFC: Really?

SL: But . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . I'm not very reliable [*EFC laughs*] in memory. [02:59:58]

So who else should we talk about in the band? Have we really talked enough about Ron Eoff? I mean, he's in Nashville . . .

EFC: Probably not.

SL: . . . right?

EFC: Yeah, he's been there since, golly, [19]88, I guess.

[03:00:13] SL: So every time you guys play, he commutes?

EFC: He did, yeah. And he did for seven, eight years. He did it almost every week to come back and play with us. [*Laughs*]

SL: So why was he in Nashville?

EFC: Well, he moved there—he started—he got this gig with Joel Sonyia, right?

SL: Oh yeah. I remember. Okay.

EFC: And you know, that's—he had a big hit on the radio. And you know how it is. People are tellin' you what's gonna happen afterwards. And he thought, "Well, I better make a move," you know. So he moved down there. And then he got a gig after

that. That all kinda petered out. He got the gig with Delbert McClinton for, like, a couple years. And he's still there. And you know, there's not a lotta work. I mean, even in town if he gets a gig, it doesn't pay anything.

SL: Right.

EFC: But he keeps talkin' about maybe movin' back, but I don't know if he's goin' to or not. He said it'd take three trucks. [Laughter] Probably that much to take all his bass amps and basses. He's got this huge collection.

[03:01:23] EJ: There's a live recording from the late [19]70s that's on that *Rock Around the World* radio program. It's you guys playin' at the Roxy with Ron and Terry. And the bass is really nice. There's a . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . kind of an almost jazz-fusion feel . . .

EFC: Yeah, that's what he's into.

EJ: . . . to what you guys were—and it's . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . somethin' that—it really kinda surprised me, you know, hearing the live . . .

EFC: Well, you know, he played—what was that band? You probably remember. With Mike Hightower and the jazz band, and Pat

Lindsey played drums.

SL: Pat Lindsey. Wow.

EFC: And what was that guy, Chris, that was the singer. Kind of a keyboard guy some, too. Anyway, they did jazz, kind of a jazz fusion. They'd do Tom Scott and the . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . Head Hunter stuff, you know, Herbie Hancock. What were they called?

[03:02:14] SL: What were they called? It's on the tip of my tongue.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Did it start with an A?

EFC: Yeah, somethin' like that.

SL: It did . . .

EFC: Jazz Express or somethin'. Anyway, after that then he moved to Little Rock and they—he played with Tim Alexander . . .

SL: Tim Alexander.

EFC: . . . and Ron, what's the [*unclear word*], from Fort Smith, the two keyboards, and Hightower, Mike Hightower. And ch—and Brooks, Cherry Brooks.

SL: Cherry Brooks. Yeah.

EFC: Played drums.

EJ: This is Tim Alexander that's in—later in *Asleep at the Wheel*?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Oh, okay.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: And played with Zorro.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. Anyway, they were the house band in Little Rock for a long time. Cherry Brooks. It was actually called the Hot House Tomato Boys . . .

EJ: Oh.

EFC: Before Windy . . .

SL: That's right.

EFC: . . . took the name, yeah.

SL: That's right.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Wow.

SL: That's right. [03:03:07] You guys have seen a lot of bands come and go. And you know, there's somethin'—it's quite remarkable that you guys are still playing and still together [EFC laughs] after all this time. I mean . . .

EFC: Well, we kinda had the nucleus, you know, with Ernie and I. You had—you already got that, so . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . we kinda got the—have the tunes and the whatever.

SL: Yeah, but you know, the—most everybody that joins up with you guys sticks . . .

EFC: Yeah, seems like it.

SL: . . . as long as possible.

EFC: We've been lucky from that end. [*Laughs*] We haven't had that many changes, really.

SL: You really haven't.

EJ: Not for the length of time.

EFC: You know, not—that's right. Not at all. Yep.

[03:03:48] SL: Is there anything that you and Ernie started with, and I'm not necessarily talkin' about a particular song, but maybe a method of working or an ideal. Is there somethin' that y'all began with that is still with you today? I mean, what is it that has—how is it that even twins can stay and work together and live together . . .

EFC: We've al . . .

SL: . . . for so long?

EFC: I don't know. We've always got along pretty good. I mean, we've never—I'm not sayin' we don't have arguments once [*laughs*] in a while, but you know, we've never had any kinda problem with that—ego or anything like that. And we just kinda gotta method that see—you know, a chemistry that—

well, like I say, you're brothers and twins. We make the same mistakes at the same time. [*Laughter*]

SL: You feel each other's pain.

EFC: Yeah. Right. Yeah. No, it just seems to work, and we don't do a lot of writin'. We need to do some more. We get—plannin' on to do some more writing, and Ernie still wants to do another CD sometime.

EJ: That's great news.

EFC: Yeah, he said, "I wanna do somethin' to be proud of," you know. [*Laughs*] Whatever.

[03:05:05] SL: Well, I will give the Pryor Center a plug. You know, we recorded your all's thing at George's, your little farewell [*clapping sound*] . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . performance at George's. And that's on twenty-four tracks and four or five cameras.

EFC: Oh yeah. It should be all right.

SL: So it's—and we've actually—Trey has actually done a cut or two on it, and it looks and sounds great.

EFC: Well, good.

SL: You know, J. T. was doin' the mix. Even the stereo mix . . .

EFC: Oh yeah?

SL: . . . sounds good.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Darren was back there helpin' us, and . . .

EFC: J. T.

SL: . . . J. T. provided the, really, the stereo mix that we're cuttin' against but . . .

EJ: Good set of ears.

EFC: Yeah, like Ernie's, like I say—well, you know—'cause Ernie's kinda the one that broke the news, I mean, wantin' to, you know, slow down and—but before we knew it, I mean, the wo—rumor got out—rumor got out, it's like—he said, "Man, I didn't mean we were quittin'." [*Laughter*] "Just not gonna do mu—I don't want wanna to do much."

SL: Not do as much.

EFC: So everybody . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . blew it up into this big thing. "Oh, the Cate Brothers are quittin'. They're quittin'." [*Laughter*]

SL: Not possible. Y'all probably couldn't quit if you wanted to.

EFC: That's right. But anyway, you know, it wasn't our idea to make that big a deal out of it.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Well, you got a—what—let's see. I think the mayor gave you Cate Brother Day, didn't he?

EFC: Yeah, a couple times. [*Laughter*] Yeah, whatever.

[03:06:29] SL: Well, you know, we need to talk a little bit about your family life and your family. Now, you've been married twice, now, is that right? Or one . . .

EFC: Three.

SL: Three times. Your first wife was?

EFC: Blanche.

SL: Blanche.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Not . . .

EFC: That's Devin and Dawn's mom, yeah.

SL: Okay. And Devin is how old now?

EFC: Golly. I'd have to think.

SL: Unfair question, isn't it?

EFC: Four—forty-five . . .

SL: Wow.

EFC: . . . forty-six, maybe.

EJ: That'd make him my age. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, that's probably about right.

EJ: Born in [19]65.

SL: In . . .

EFC: [Nineteen] sixty four.

EJ: [Nineteen] sixty four. Okay.

SL: And what does he do now?

EFC: He works for Superior . . .

SL: Industries?

EFC: Yeah. No, the auto in Siloam.

SL: Oh, okay.

EFC: He was with Pratt Whitney for years, you know, that make that jet engine. And he worked his way up there as far as he could go, and then he got tired of that, and he had pancreatitis. And they said—they attribute it a lot to the chemicals in that plant 'cause a lot of people got sick. You know, they haven't proved it, but it's pretty obvious 'cause it wasn't from drinkin', you know, or anything like that.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Anyway, so he's—he just does the computer thing, auto sales, for Superior.

SL: So he works for David Sloan, I guess. That's who . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. [03:07:54] And then—and Dawn?

EFC: She works in Rogers. It's Kent Foods or somethin' like that.

They're a client or vendor for Walmart and other places. But I don't know what all she does. She just a secretary or whatever. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh.

EFC: She lives next door. Yeah.

SL: And is sh—let's see. Is she the one that's been doin' the genealogy?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

[03:08:21] SL: And does she—is she also the one that sings?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. Really good singer.

SL: So how long has she been doin' that? From the beginning?

EFC: Quite a while now. I mean, they started off in my old garage out there without her. Dickie Pool Jr. playin' bass and Kev—her husband, Kevin. He's an attorney, right. Anyway, after a couple years, they said—Dawn started singin' with 'em every once in a while. They said, "Oh man. She can sing."

[*Laughter*]

SL: Oops.

EFC: Oops. They needed it.

SL: Did you—you didn't advise her not to get involved with [*EFC laughs*] music?

EFC: Well, her husband's playin' drums.

SL: Yeah. Well, there you go. [*Laughter*]

EFC: No, I never have. I never encouraged them to play at all.
They just come natural, I guess. They'd always been around it.

SL: So did—does Dawn play? Your s—did . . .

EFC: She just sings.

SL: He just sings?

EFC: She doesn't play. Devin plays har—does harp and sings.
Really good harp player. [*Laughs*] They got a pretty good
little band.

[03:09:25] SL: So Devin is in the band, too?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Oh, cool.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: See, I didn't know that.

EFC: You didn't?

SL: No.

EFC: Earl's Garage.

SL: So that's Earl's Garage. I love that.

EJ: You remember the first time . . .

EFC: I don't play with 'em. Huh?

EJ: You remember the first time you and he played music
together?

EFC: Well, I don't know. It's hard to say. I mean, he—sometimes we'd be just practicin' or somethin'. He might pick up the harp or somethin' but . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: And he tried to play bass a little bit. But then he just, you know, after a while, he just come up and set in with us. Play the harp and do a—you know, "Milk Cow" or somethin' easy, you know. Yeah. And Dawn sits in with us once in a while.

[03:10:06] SL: And then you had a second wife?

EFC: Yeah, Carol.

SL: Carol.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Now, I can remember Carol.

EJ: She was workin' at LJ's when I worked there years ago.

EFC: Oh, that's right. Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep. Yep. Her and Karen Brewer.

SL: Karen Brewer. Wow. There's a name I hadn't thought of in a while.

EFC: Yep.

SL: That's—is that Sonny's wife? Sonny Brewer's?

EFC: Well, she lives in Prairie Grove.

SL: Maybe not.

EFC: Karen. She, nah, she had a bout with cancer, but she came out of it.

EJ: Oh, good.

[03:10:40] SL: And your current wife?

EFC: I'm not married.

SL: You're not married now? There's a . . .

EFC: I'm still with Bonnie, yeah.

SL: Still with Bonnie?

EFC: We've been together about nine years.

[03:10:47] SL: But you had a third wife?

EFC: Yeah. Angela. Yeah.

SL: Okay. Now, I don't think ever . . .

EFC: She was the young one. She got killed in a car wreck.

SL: That's right.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I remember that now.

EFC: Yep.

SL: That's hard.

EFC: You remember her, don't you?

EJ: Yeah. I was friends with her. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: It's hard.

EFC: Yep. Man. She was nice. Pretty cool. [*Laughs*]

EJ: She was a good person.

EFC: Yep.

SL: And now you're with B . . .

EFC: She made me happy.

[03:11:16] EJ: There are a couple of songs on the 2004 record that
are . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . dedicated to her, right?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

EJ: That would be "Play By the Rules."

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, we wrote that song kind of about that and Porky,
you know.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

[03:11:40] SL: But now you're with Bonnie?

EFC: Yeah. I've known her for years. You know her, don't you?

EJ: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: I know her.

EFC: She's not that interested in gettin' married. She's like "Why?"
You know what I mean, like, why complicate things, you know.

SL: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: And I—it's okay with me. [*SL laughs*] And I stay at her place
most of the time.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. And I—if I want to get away, I just come here.
[*Laughs*]

EJ: You got your own house. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Feel like . . .

EFC: And I like it that way, and she does, too, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: We're not—you know, everybody needs their space.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, you don't get on each other's nerves that way. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: But she's neat. You know, she used to play good bass . . .

EJ: That's right.

EFC: . . . at one time.

EJ: That's right. [03:12:19] She was a musician, too. She was a bass player.

EFC: She played bass.

[03:12:22] SL: Who'd she play with?

EFC: Well, she played with Firm Young Minds. It's that girl band with Susie Stevens but . . .

EJ: That's right.

EFC: And she played with the—what's that—Dave McKnight. Ah, tryin' to think of their name. Tommy Payton played guitar, and Chrissy played keyboard. What was the . . .

SL: Yeah. I member them.

EFC: What was that band? [*Laughs*] I can't think of their name right now. She played with JoJo.

EJ: Did she?

EFC: Quite a bit.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Yeah. Her and Hatfield. Yep.

EJ: She used to play at the Library Club blues jam some, right?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Or I'm thinkin'—yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: That's right. That's where I first saw her play, probably.

EFC: But she had two little boys and then ended up with a divorce, and she just couldn't play and raise kids, you know.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: So she had to quit.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: But I knew her back then even, you know.

SL: Well, Earl, what do you like to—do you wanna follow up?

[03:13:21] EJ: Well, just one thing. Since you mentioned JoJo, I thought I would ask 'cause he's someone I'm interested in around here is JoJo Thompson, blues piano player, keyboard player, nephew of Buddy Hayes, who . . .

EFC: Right.

EJ: . . . Scott mentioned earlier. When did you see him play arou—I didn't see him start playin' around here until the late [19]80s.

EFC: I never did really. I mighta saw Buddy Hayes one time, and I probably didn't even realize I was listenin' to JoJo. I mean, it was kind of a, you know, band with horns and stuff. But I didn't know JoJo until later on.

EJ: He [*unclear word*] . . .

EFC: In fact, Ronnie Hawkins came here—to town one time, and he

had one of Don Tyson's Lincolns, right? And we picked up Dwayne English, you know, and—what's his name? Pinkerton? Harold Pinkerton.

EJ: Harold . . .

SL: Harold Pinkerton.

EJ: . . . Pinkerton, one of the original Hawks.

EFC: Picked Harold up. Picked me up in that Lincoln. We went down to . . .

SL: Sherman's.

EFC: . . . Sherman's. He was lookin' for JoJo's. And JoJo—we drove up, and JoJo was sittin' on the porch. [*Laughs*] And then Dwayne was playin' out at the VIP Club, right?

SL: Yeah.

[03:14:30] EFC: So we took JoJo out there. We went to see Claude Chambers, too, but we didn't take—he didn't wanna go or somethin'. Anyway, we went out to the VIP Club with Ronnie, right, to see Dwayne play, and they wouldn't let JoJo in.

EJ: Really?

SL: Wow.

EFC: 'Cause he was black.

EJ: When would this have been?

EFC: Let me think. Golly.

EJ: I mean, approximately.

EFC: Early [19]80s, maybe.

EJ: Early [19]80s.

EFC: You know, I can't even remember.

EJ: Really?

EFC: But you know, Ronnie's bein' Ronnie, says, "He ain't black. He's Hawaiian." [*Laughter*] That didn't work. But that r—that kinda ruint the night for everybody but . . .

SL: That is . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . a bummer. [03:15:07] You know, I didn't—I usually do ask about segregation and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . stuff. I mean, you know, you grew up just outside of Springdale, and Springdale didn't have just a stellar . . .

EFC: No.

SL: . . . history with . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . African Americans.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Did you ever—and I mean, my gosh, you guys have played everywhere. Did you ever run across that kinda stuff other

than . . .

EFC: Not that much, no. I mean, of course, when I was a little kid, I mean, I remember we'd go to Fayetteville bout—we'd get about to the VA Hospital, then you'd see—you know, it was kinda like, "Oh, there's a black person." But I never thought about it, like, you know, bad or, you know, nothin'. Just like—'cause you didn't see 'em in Springdale [*laughs*] but . . .

SL: Right.

EFC: . . . you know.

[03:15:55] EJ: When you guys started playin', like when you discovered Ray Charles and started playin' black music . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. That was the whole deal.

EJ: . . . did you get any resistance?

EFC: Yeah, it was like that was part of our—that was our favorite kinda music, [*laughs*] really.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Well, and that was accepted. I mean . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . pretty much . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . in the white community. I mean . . .

EFC: I mean, I heard—I've heard stories about Chuck Berry, you

know, they not lettin' him stay in Fayetteville and stuff like that.

EJ: I remember you told me about that one night at the blues fest. You said . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . that the university hired him.

EFC: Supposedly, they hired him, Chuck, and he—they wouldn't let him stay [*laughs*] in town. Yep. I don't know what they did with Jimmy Reed but . . .

SL: Well, that's inst—that Hawkins story's kind of interesting and the Lincoln that late.

EFC: What's that?

SL: That late.

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Background conversation*] It really is. I couldn't believe it. It was, like—that turned me off, pretty much. [*Laughs*] It was like . . .

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . I won't be comin' back here. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I mean, I like Dwayne and all that.

SL: Yeah. [03:16:59] So Earl, what do you do when you're just not doin' music? What do you—I mean, do you—what do you like to do? What's your pastime? What do you do to relax?

EFC: I keep pretty busy. By the time I do all my yard—you know, mow my yards and mow Bonnie's yards, and every once in a while I get to go fishin', maybe.

SL: You like to fish.

EFC: Yeah, I hadn't been able to do much lately but, yeah.

SL: I did a little fishing last weekend.

EFC: Oh yeah?

SL: Yeah. Did pretty well.

EFC: All right.

SL: The white bass are runnin'.

EFC: Oh yeah. It's that time.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Bonnie used to live at Beav-O-Rama, and boy, the springtime is . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You didn't have to—just throw it out there, and you got 'em.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. [03:17:43] So doin' the honey dos and fishin', that's

about it?

EFC: Yep. And playin'. I got—I'm always doin' somethin' for somebody, like doin' a demo or somethin', you know. John D. LeVan lives right over—right across the bridge over there.

SL: Now, who is he?

EFC: You know who he is?

EJ: Oh yeah. I know who John D. is, but I think Scott wants you to tell us for the tape.

EFC: He, you know, he played with—actually played with the Emcees one time, you know, years ago. He's from Tulsa, the Tulsa area, but used to be really—and he played in a band with JJ Cale at one time, you know, and . . .

[03:18:23] SL: Were the Emcees—did they—were they ever called the MC5?

EFC: No.

EJ: No.

EFC: No. That's Detroit.

SL: That's in Detroit.

EJ: Different band.

EFC: The Emcees actually played Canada on the same circuit with the—Hawkins back in the early [19]60s when they played there all the time. Yeah.

[03:18:39] SL: Now, did you say that you guys went to Canada, as well?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, we played that circuit.

SL: Did you play at the—at Hawkins's club there or the club that he . . .

EFC: No. Not the one—he had—what was the one he had? We never did play that one. We played the Grange in Hamilton. We played in Kingston, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: All the towns up there. [*Laughs*] Stratford.

SL: Stratford, yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: That's where Richard's from.

SL: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

EFC: Garth's from Hamilton.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Rick's from Simcoe, but I had never played [*laughs*] there. That's—I th—and then where is it—Paul Shaffers' from some—way—oh, it's up north. Yeah. Yep.

[03:19:27] SL: So let's see. We were talkin' about dealing—or how Levon talked ya'll into comin' up to New Jersey, kinda takin'

their place for 'em at that one spot. And did you go—did you just kinda migrate to Canada . . .

EFC: Well, their . . .

SL: . . . after that or . . .

EFC: Yeah. Their agent, Colonel Kudlets, you know, he was like the main booking agent in Canada that booked Ronnie for years and booked ev—Conway Twitty and all those people from can—the—when they came to Canada. He was still bookin' 'em at the time. And he came down to New Jersey while we were playin' there with The Band—with the Hawks, and he said, "Yeah, I like you guys," you know. "You wanna go to Canada." So he kept us booked till the end of the year, till Christmas. Yep.

SL: Did you like it in Canada?

EFC: I liked it all right. It was different. We'd do, like, thirty minutes on and thirty minutes off. All the clubs.

SL: That's strange.

EFC: That was the schedule.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: And then there was two or three of 'em was—two of 'em, for sure, that had go-go girls. So the go-go girls would dance for thirty minutes. Then you'd play for thirty minutes. In New

Jersey at that Tony Mart's, they had three bands. Now, you play thirty minutes, and you're off an hour. You just rotate, you know. [*Laughs*]

[03:20:51] SL: How long did that—how long did you do that? I mean . . .

EFC: Well, on the weekends, they'd start about three in the afternoon . . .

SL: Wow.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . and go to, like, one or two. It's a long day.

SL: A long day.

EFC: But it was weird. You just had to be ready [*laughs*] 'cause, boy, that—Tony, man, he wanted, when that band stopped a song, he wanted you either be playin' the same song [*laughs*] or start immediately. He didn't want one second of silence between. [*Laughs*]

SL: So it was band after band after . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . band.

EFC: They had two stages, right?

SL: Uh-huh.

EFC: So the way they rotated it, you know, the band would always

be ready on the other stage or whatever.

EJ: Oh, okay.

EFC: We played week with—on the same stage with the Hawks. We had to use their stu—their equipment, you know.

EJ: And share equipment and just . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . walk up.

EFC: The other time was on the—inside-the-bar deal, you know, whatever. Yep.

[03:21:47] EJ: You would play the same set when you went back on second or third time or would you . . .

EFC: Oh no . . .

EJ: . . . work through it and then . . .

EFC: . . . we'd change it up.

EJ: Change it up.

SL: Wow.

EFC: Well, by the end of the night, you were repeatin' some songs [*laughs*] but . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, but it was weird. It goes fast, thirty minutes.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: And he expected you to keep rollin', boy. [*Laughs*] And they kinda—the Hawks would kinda splurge. They'd been there all summer. They'd play, in thirty minutes, they'd play, like, three songs [*EJ laughs*] or four.

EJ: Long solos?

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. They were [*laughter*] . . .

EJ: Stretch out.

EFC: Yeah. Yep.

[03:22:26] SL: So you get done with Canada, and you come back home or . . .

EFC: Came home for Christmas, and then we were kinda debatin' what to do 'cause we didn't really wanna go back up there in the winter.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And this guy named Huey—see, I forgot his last name—from Atlanta who had came in to New Jersey with his band. Oh, Huey and the Madmen is what they were called. But anyway, he was in it from Atlanta, and he had started a bookin' agency, right? And so, he'd called or gave us a card or called or somethin'. [03:23:02] Anyway, we ended up—he booked us in Florida [*laughs*] so . . .

SL: Excellent.

EFC: Yeah, we started in Pensacola and then went to Cocoa Beach, and we stayed with him until May, I guess it was, and came home. [03:23:14] Well, our drummer's wantin' to quit. He didn't wanna do it anymore. On the road. I think he was losin' his wife, but he lost her anyway. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: You know what I mean?

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: After quittin' the road, she ended leave—up leavin' him anyway.

[03:23:32] EJ: Is this Randy, the drummer that . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . the drummer that Levon replaced . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . and then . . .

EFC: Well, sort of, yeah.

EJ: . . . Terry replaces Levon?

EFC: Actually, when we came back in [19]66, you know, after we'd played the road, Randy stayed in Memphis 'cause that's where his wife was at, but they ended up divorcin' anyway. Then we

just used Mack Allen Wolfe. And Dan Kerlin.

SL: Dan Kerlin.

EFC: You know, two or three different guys played drums with us in the summer there at Mhoon's Club until Levon came on, and then Terry was right after Levon, you know.

[03:24:09] SL: How'd Dan do?

EFC: He did all right. I thought he was a lot better then than he is now. *[Laughter]* You don't have to put that in.

SL: That's okay, Dan. I'll tell *[unclear words]* . . .

EFC: But he was playin' with the Rogues then.

SL: Yeah. The Rogues.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: You know, there's another band we didn't mention was the Rebel Rousers. Do you remember them?

EFC: Yeah. Who was that?

SL: Chuck Stanfield *[EFC laughs]* played the guitar. Remember him?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Red hair?

EFC: That's right.

SL: Crazy guy?

EFC: That's right. I forgot about that.

SL: And I think Dan was in that group, too, at one point.

EFC: And there was the Shades of Soul.

SL: The Seven Shades of Soul, wasn't . . .

EFC: Seven Shades of Soul. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Seven Shades of Soul.

SL: Yeah. Yes. Uh-huh. [03:24:45] So let me—did you know the story about Dan? You know, he was a good drummer, and I grew up watchin' him play. We—he graduated a year ahead of me, I think, or two. But I heard that one night he fell off a sorority balcony.

EFC: Oh, really?

SL: Landed on his head and . . .

EFC: I didn't know that.

SL: . . . broke his neck.

EFC: Woah.

SL: And he wasn't ever supposed to walk again.

EFC: I didn't know that.

EJ: Really?

EFC: Wow.

SL: But su—I've heard people say that his—well, of course, it's a miracle thing.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: I mean, now he's—he walks, and he talks, and he's not paralyzed at all.

EJ: [*Unclear words*] . . .

[03:25:27] SL: But his drumming changed. [*Laughs*]

EFC: Really? Well, it's possible.

SL: That's what I've always heard. So . . .

EFC: Well, I mean, it . . .

SL: . . . we can keep that thing you said about Dan.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: He just plays differently now.

EFC: He does play differently now. [*Laughter*]

SL: No. I like Dan.

EFC: Yeah, I like him.

SL: Great artist.

EFC: He's a good guy.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: And a good guy.

EFC: He did the *Radioland* cover.

EJ: *Radioland* cover and that *XNA Allstars* cover, too. Yeah.

EFC: Well, no. He didn't do that one.

EJ: He didn't do the . . .

EFC: No, Kerlin didn't do that. That was a different guy that did

that. He's a . . .

EJ: That one. That's not . . .

EFC: That's not Kerlin . . .

EJ: Oh.

SL: No, it doesn't look like Dan.

EJ: No, it doesn't look like his stuff.

[03:26:03] EFC: What's that guy's name that's got all the art over there in Goshen?

SL: Oh, Bombek? Dombek?

EFC: Dombek.

EJ: George Dombek. Oh, that's . . .

SL: Dombek.

EJ: . . . who that is.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Dombek. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, that's hot.

EFC: He's quite a guy.

SL: He is quite a guy.

EFC: Yeah.

[03:26:17] SL: So you do Florida, and you come back here, and when do you lay the road down? Do you ever lay the road

down? I mean . . .

EFC: Probably not.

SL: . . . as long as you keep goin' . . .

EFC: Yeah. We just . . .

SL: . . . there's always gonna be some kinda gig . . .

EFC: You know, with the family and everything, we just didn't—we thought it's best not to stay on the road. It's tough when you . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . you know, you can't leave 'em at home, and it's hard to take 'em with you so . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: We had wanted to get more into writin' songs and, you know, doin' that.

[03:26:49] EJ: I wanted to ask about songwriting 'cause you s—you told us you all—you and Ernie started writing songs in the late [19]60s, mid- to late [19]60s. There's—as a listener it's easy to assume that the one who's singin' lead is probably the lyric writer most of the time. But . . .

EFC: Kinda is.

EJ: . . . is that generally true with you guys or is that . . .

EFC: A little bit. Ernie probably does more lyrics than I do, but there's some songs on there, like, for example, "Let it Slide," that I just wrote the song when I was livin' at the lake, you know.

EJ: Right.

EFC: But then there'd be other song that he'd write 90 percent of the lyrics. But we have to get together to make—to structure it and all that so . . .

[03:27:29] EJ: So it still ends up bein' a group . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . project. You sing lead on a couple of songs . . .

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

EJ: . . . on these records.

EFC: I tried.

EJ: You sing lead on—well, I think you do a fine job. You sing lead [*EFC laughs*] on "Can't Stop" and then on . . .

EFC: Yep.

EJ: . . . one of the early ones, maybe? "Always Waiting" or something like that?

EFC: No . . .

EJ: Did you?

EFC: . . . let me see.

EJ: No.

EFC: Let me think a minute. That "Can't Give Up" or whatever it is on the white album, that's me on that one.

EJ: Oh, really?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Oh, is that you singin' lead on that?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: That's a really good—I love that song. [*EFC laughs*] That's one of my favorites.

[03:28:00] EFC: And then I did one on the Tommy Dowd record, "Takin' a Chance" and whatever it is. And Ron—and the other one is—what is that one with the clarinets and stuff?

EJ: "Reunion"?

EFC: Yeah, "Reunion."

EJ: Oh, is that—you're singin' lead on that . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . and on can't—on "Takin' a Chance."

EFC: Right.

EJ: "Takin' a Chance," there's—it sounds like there's two vocals. There's someone is singin' back up right with you that's . . .

EFC: Well, Terry.

EJ: . . . not Ernie. Oh, is that Terry?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Okay. It's like a dual-lead vocal. [*Vehicle passes*]

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: I was wonderin' about that. I was listenin' . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . to that in the car on the way down. I said, "Who is singin' that other part?"

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah, that was Terry.

[03:28:39] SL: Well, Earl, we can't do an interview with Earl Cate and not talk about guitars. [*EFC laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I don't know anything about 'em. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, you know, I'm lookin' over there at your guitar collection, and I see predominantly Fenders.

EFC: Telecasters.

SL: Telecasters. And so, I see a absence of Gibson. You just never got into Gibson.

EFC: No, when I was runnin' the store, I had—you know, it was 335 that I played a little bit at the Gaslight, and I kinda liked it, but I just—I like those controls right there, you know, with your little finger 'cause I've always used that volume control as a dynamics, you know. I don't know. It's just what you get used

to. I've just always been a Tele player. I've had a couple Strats, but I don't know [*unclear words*]. They sound okay, but I just never—can't get the same thing out of 'em.

SL: Well, it seemed like the heavy—the Gibsons always sounded heavier to me. I don't know why . . .

EFC: Well, they do. And they sound great, I mean. It's hard to beat P90 pickups.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[03:29:47] EFC: I saw—I was readin'—where was that I read about?

Who was that? Oh, it was Mike Campbell, plays with Tom Petty on his new record. He found a [19]59 Les Paul, right?

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Guess what he paid for it? \$250,000.

SL: Shew!

EFC: And he used it on the new record and [*camera clicks*] that—Petty says that's the best soundin' guitar that he's ever played. Well, it better [*laughter*] . . .

EJ: It better be.

EFC: . . . for that kinda money.

SL: Wow.

EFC: Yeah. \$250,000. [*Laughs*]

[03:30:24] SL: Well, I don't know if it's—I mean, did Robbie influence you heavily?

EFC: Not heavily, but he did influence me 'cause he was—his style was somethin' that I hadn't seen before. I remember when we played in Joplin at that club. I had—the first year I was there, I was playin' like a Fender Duo-Sonic or somethin'. I mean . . .

SL: Okay. Yeah.

EFC: . . . it wasn't even the three-quarter neck . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . but I had these real light strings, so I could bend 'em, you know. Man, all the guitar players up there said, "Never heard anything like that." Said, "What the—what're you doin'" . . .

EJ: That's interesting.

EFC: . . . you know. I said, "Well, I'm puttin' a banjo string on the bottom and movin' a set of strings up," you know, right. Nobody played that style. They were—all played Ventures . . .

SL: Yeah. Sure.

EFC: . . . style, straight ahead. They never heard any—they'd never heard a guitar player bend the string, you know. *[Laughs]*

EJ: Wow.

[03:31:21] EFC: And I kinda got that from Fred Carter and, well, and B.B. King and all the guys that were doin' it, but for some

reason, just that close, you know, it was totally different.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Nobody was doin' it. [*Laughs*]

[03:31:32] SL: Well, also, it seems . . .

EJ: Not from the South.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . it seems to me that the—there's somethin' about
Telecasters and those harmonics just . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . can peel the side of your face off. I mean, it's just . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . it's just amazing.

EFC: Yeah, they . . .

SL: There's something about them that . . .

EFC: Yeah, it's true. Roy Buchanan knew how to do that. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I got to meet him one time.

EJ: He played with the Hawks, right? Is that right?

EFC: Briefly, yeah.

EJ: Briefly.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: 'Cause he was who Robbie was . . .

EFC: Right.

EJ: . . . workin' with when he first joined . . .

EFC: Right.

EJ: . . . The Band's [*unclear word*] . . .

EFC: That's who Robbie really kinda—it was his influence in the beginning, as far as I know. Plus the blues, you know, Hubert Sumlin. Yep. But I liked Robbie's style back then. It did seem like later on that he didn't play as, you know, totally—he played totally different . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . with The Band, which is cool. But you know, probably a different style than he did in the old days.

[03:32:26] EJ: He's talked about, in interviews, about wanting to play less aggressively around the time *Big Pink* came out.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

EJ: Play the straight more.

EFC: Played a Stella. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Did he?

EFC: That fir—on *Big Pink*, some of the songs, it was actually a Stella with a pickup in the sound hole.

SL: Wow. [*EFC laughs*]

EJ: Really?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Really.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: It's the first guitar I've . . .

EFC: You ever seen the pictures?

EJ: Nuh-uh.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: I haven't seen those.

SL: Man, those are tough guitars to play. [*Laughter*]

EFC: Yep.

SL: That's what I took my lessons on.

EFC: [*Laughs*] That's right.

[03:32:54] SL: Man. Well, you know, so you've got the Telecaster.

You like it 'cause of the volume knob is right there with your little finger, right?

EFC: Yeah. It's kind of a macho instrument. It's not, you know [*laughs*—you have to know what you're doin' to make it sound good. You can't just buy a Telecaster and—I mean, the pickups are important.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Like I say, it's just a different—you gotta approach it

differently. Like, some guitars just sound good no matter what you do but . . .

SL: You have to milk a Telecaster is . . .

EFC: . . . but some guys—I've had a few guys accuse me of soundin' the same no matter what guitar I play, but [*laughter*] but I've never played anything different to speak of but . . .

SL: Well . . .

EFC: . . . I did play a Strat with The Band on one tour, you know. Yeah.

SL: Seems like I member seeing a Strat.

[03:33:46] EFC: I had a [19]57 Strat that I sold to Larry Shaeffer in Tulsa. You know, he collects stuff. That was about eight years ago, I guess. I sold it to him for fifteen thousand, and at the time they were goin', like, fifteen, eighteen. And I wasn't really wantin' to sell it. I mean, I just—he called me one day. He was in town. He said, "Can I look at that Strat?" I said, "Sure." And he had his son with him. He had the cash in his pocket. It was hard not to take it.

SL: Oh, man.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: But he sold it for twenty-five at the guitar show. And then at three years later, it was worth forty. Now, it's worth about fifty

thousand.

SL: Oh, man.

EFC: I shoulda kept it.

EJ: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*]

EFC: But that [19]55 and [19]57 are worth some money, probably.

EJ: Yeah, I would think.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Well, you know, there's nothin' that sounds anything like a Telecaster.

EFC: To me, yeah, they got that . . .

[03:34:45] SL: You know, what about foot pedals and effects and all that stuff? I mean, did you ever really . . .

EFC: Yeah, I still—I use a ra—a little rack of pedals. I mean, I—just to enhance the sound. I don't use 'em—overuse 'em, you know. I don't—I like it just to be almost where you don't really think you're usin' anything, [*laughs*] you know what I mean?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Just a little, you know. And I've got a overdrive pedal that I really like. It's not real distorted. It just sounds good, you know, more sustained, and then the chorus a little bit and delay. I've gotten way more into the delay stuff. Like, I use two different delays in my rack. Kinda got into that.

SL: You . . .

EFC: A lotta that I got from Thackery 'cause he's heavy on . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . reverb and delay, man.

[03:35:38] SL: Okay. Now, who—you gotta tell everyone who
Thackery is. Who's . . .

EFC: Jimmy Thackery?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, he's a blues player, but you know, we did a rec—a couple
of rec—we actually played on a couple of his records, but we
did a record with him, too. And anyway, he produced our
record but—*Play by the Rules*. He's a good guy. He's why—
he's a great guitar [*laughs*] player.

EJ: He started . . .

EFC: He gets after it.

EJ: . . . coming here in . . .

EFC: What?

EJ: . . . the [19]90s, right? In the . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . the blues festivals in Eureka . . .

EFC: Yep.

EJ: . . . were happening.

EFC: Yep.

EJ: Is that when you guys met?

EFC: First time I met him was in Memphis. But you know, he married Sally Riker from Eureka and moved here . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . from Florida. But he's from, like, DC area, I think, mainly. Well, he used to play in the Nighthawks. He was their guitar player.

SL: So do you play . . .

TM: Scott, we need to change tapes real quick.

SL: Oh, okay.

[Tape stopped]

[03:36:38] SL: Well, first of all, let's fi—I wanna finish up with the guitar stuff. You know, we were talkin' about your preference for the—how it's what you get used to . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . workin' with. But it seems to me that Telecaster just has a place of its own, that there's not . . .

EFC: Yeah, they do.

SL: . . . another guitar that comes—that can make . . .

EFC: They're a little twangier than the . . .

SL: . . . you can't really make any other guitar sound like a

Telecaster.

EFC: Not really.

SL: You know, you can—I would say you can baby a Telecaster and diminish its uniqueness.

EFC: Well, yeah.

SL: But . . .

[03:37:22] EFC: It's like I have that [19]57. I have Joe Barden pickups in it, right, which are more like Humbuckings, really, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: There—but they're completely noiseless. They have no buzz or anything, and they sound great. But it still sounds like a Telecaster. I mean, it's not, you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It's just the guitar. [*Laughs*] Plus, the—I mean, it—I've got other Teles. I got—still got another one in there in the case, but I still like to play that old one. It's just the neck. There's somethin' about it. Just feels right, and it sounds right. You know, I can't make any of these others—I mean, if I put Barden's in 'em, they'd sound close to it, but it still wouldn't be [*laughs*] the same. You can pick up fifty guitars, and not any one of em's gonna sound exactly the same.

SL: Or feel the same.

EFC: Or feel the same. Exactly.

SL: Even though they come off the same line.

EFC: Exactly. Yep.

SL: Same hands put it together.

EFC: And somebody could pick up my guitar, a guitar player, and say, "How do you play this thing?" [*SL laughs*] It's not what they're used to, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[03:38:25] SL: Yeah. So how long have you been playin' that guitar?

EFC: Actually, since the early [19]80s because I member takin' it to Canada one time, and I had my other guitar—well, that—the [19]55 I was playin' most of the time. And I picked it up one night. "Man, I like this one, you know." And I just started playin' it. And then I started changin' pickups out and stuff. I pretty much stuck with it.

SL: So that's almost thirty years?

EFC: Well, I mean, I say early. It mighta been more like mid-[19]80, you know, [19]86 or somethin'.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I can remember when Tommy was at the store. [*Laughs*] I remember 'cause he had it hangin' in the back for a long time, Tommy Payton did. We didn't ?lose? our, you know, [19]57. But I didn't play it after I bought it. I didn't even play it. Fact, I just put it in the case 'cause I was playin'—I had a couple of other ones. And I had the—originally, I had a [19]52 Tele. That's what I played "Union Man" and all those first two albums. [03:39:34] Well, all of 'em up until it got stolen in New York . . .

SL: Oh.

EFC: . . . when we were playin' with Levon at the—where were we at? Oh, at the Lone Star, the night before.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: They broke in our truck. And actually, the roadies were supposed to break—take the guitars to their room.

SL: Room, of course.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: They didn't.

EJ: Ah, man.

EFC: They were in ?amble? cases. I had a [19]57 and a [19]52. They hot—it was parked at the Gramercy Park Hotel. They—like, it was probably three or four o'clock in the mornin'.

Somebody broke in the va—in the—it was a Ryder rental truck. Broke in there and hot-wired it and drove it off with everything we owned in it, drums, amps . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . keyboards. [*Laughs*]

EJ: ?Did the rec? . . .

EFC: Never did find it.

EJ: ?Did the rec? . . .

EFC: And it happened again when we were playin' with The Band. We were playin' at Queen's University, and we stayed at this hotel close by. I'll be darned if they didn't do the same thing again. Somebody stole the truck. And the guys should not have even—I don't even know why they stayed at the hotel. They shoulda went back to Woodstock. But they stayed that night at the hotel. [03:40:50] But I got back—my amp back on that.

SL: How'd you do that?

EFC: Just crazy. We got a lotta stuff back. This guy that was bookin' us, he lived in that area. He kinda did a Kojak deal. [*Laughs*] He went to this house. This sounds like a movie. He heard this saxophone playin', and Garth had lost his sax, and it was in the truck.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: He heard this saxophone playin'. He walks up to the house, and these people answer the door. And their son was downstairs playin' the sax. It wasn't Garth's sax, but somehow this guy, this kid, knew somethin' about this equipment. And then—and so, one thing led to another, and I'll be darned if they didn't find about half of it.

SL: Wow.

[03:41:35] EFC: The—I've got—I still got the amp, the Music Man.

EJ: That's that same Music Man amp?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: How long have you been playin' with—through that amp?

EFC: Well, since then.

EJ: Since then.

EFC: Well, actually, I've been playin' my old—I've got a Super Reverb that I had redone to a Blackface style, but I been playin' it lately most all the time, yeah.

EJ: Really?

EFC: Yeah. But anyway, that was crazy. But that [19]52 . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Ew.

EJ: Was that really a Tele, or was that a Broadcaster?

EFC: No, it was a Tele.

EJ: It was a Tele.

EFC: It was ?rife?—yeah. And that Broadcaster was [19]49 . . .

EJ: Oh, was it?

EFC: . . . if I'm not mistaken.

EJ: Okay.

EFC: There're not very many of them aroun—left. There's no tellin' what [*laughs*] it's worth. Man.

SL: Wow.

EJ: Did you . . .

SL: What—go ahead.

EJ: I'm sorry. The foot—Scott was askin' about the foot pedal setup. And I've seen—since the [19]90s I'd seen you use that rack of Boss pedals.

EFC: That's about it.

[03:42:35] EJ: Did you—when you were makin' these albums in the [19]70s, were you usin' a pedal setup then . . .

EFC: I . . .

EJ: . . . or . . .

EFC: Mostly then I just used a Phase 90, you know, the orange one.

EJ: Right. Right.

EFC: And a Wah-Wah pedal. That's pretty much it. They didn't

really have much in delay pedals back then.

EJ: No.

EFC: Now, they got . . .

EJ: The delay then . . .

EFC: . . . some nice . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I just never have liked the rackmounted stuff that much.

EJ: Yeah.

[03:43:04] TM: Where did you get your style of basically with playin' with the volume and the other stuff as you play and using that as a . . .

EFC: I don't know. I just kinda developed it. It's like—a lotta people do it. Jeff Beck's really good at that. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And bu—Roy Buchanan did it some. And Robbie did, originally, quite a bit. Jerry Yount.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Lot of people have done it, you know. It's just—just becomes part of your deal, you know. Beck is the king of that, though.

SL: Man, he's been gettin' a lotta coverage . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . lately.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I've been really pleased to see that. And I've been watchin' every one of those things that come up, and he is . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . unbelievable.

EJ: Yeah.

[03:43:48] EFC: He is. I saw that art—I read the article with him and Clapton [*unclear words*]. You know, Clapton—everybody knows who Eric Clapton is, but a lot of people don't know who Jeff Beck is. They started off at the same time. Played in the same band. [*Laughs*]

SL: I know.

EFC: ?They're the same? . . .

SL: I know. Did you see that little session they had together just talkin' about all that stuff? They . . .

EFC: Saw some of that, and I saw him play with—you know, what—it was on the YouTube, I guess, when he plays with Jeff Beck. It—Ron—what's that club? Ronnie's Club.

SL: Ronnie's, yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: That little girl bass player.

SL: The little girl. I . . .

EFC: Man.

SL: . . . can't believe that.

EFC: Incredible.

SL: Aw. [*Laughter*]

EFC: Man.

SL: Man.

EFC: Boy.

SL: Man, she kicks ass. There's no question about that.

EFC: There was rumors that he was gonna be on the show in Tulsa,
but I mean, I didn't go. But he wasn't . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . on the show. 'Cause they did do some dates together
but . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . Clapton and . . .

[03:44:40] SL: Well, you mentioned the Lone Star in New York City.

One of my favorite recordings out of that is Richard Manuel
singing . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . "Country Boy."

EFC: Right.

SL: It's done on an 8-track TASCAM, I believe.

EFC: Yep.

SL: Tell me about the Lone Star Cafe. It's just a—it's a small place, isn't it?

EFC: It's not there anymore, but it was down by the Village. It—tryin' to think—Mort Cooperman, I think, was the guy's name that owned it. But it was kinda like a piece of Texas. I mean, that was their whole . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . that was the theme, you know. And everybody played there, you know. We did a TV show there. Well, actually, it was the day after our truck got stolen. That's why we were there. [*SL laughs*] [03:45:27] Did a TV show with Bo Diddley and Robert Gordon, and Danny Gatton was playin' guitar with Robert Gordon.

EJ: And you guys played?

EFC: Yeah, we did the show . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . but I never have seen it or anything.

EJ: Huh. Do you know the name of the program or anything?

EFC: It's *Live from the Lone Star* . . .

EJ: *Live from the Lone Star*.

EFC: . . . I think. I don't know if they did that all the time or not, but we played there a lot of times. We even played a show one

night there with Danko. It was Rick Danko and the Cate Brothers. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Wow.

EFC: But we used to do that, though, with Levon a lot. Thorogood jammed with us one night there. Usually, it was, like, Mickey Raphael or somebody that was in town and would come up and play harp or somethin' but . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Yeah, it was a cool place. [03:46:16] I member Paul Shaffer was there one night. And I thought because he was from Canada, he probably knew Levon, and I was standin' by the bar, and he said, "Man, I'm really enjoyin' the show. You think there's any way that I could say hello or meet Levon?"

[*Laughter*] Believe it or not, it was Paul Shaffer. And I took him upstairs. [*Laughs*] And another funny thing, that same night, Steve Tyler was there. And I swear, probably fifteen, twenty minutes went by. He was just standin' there drinkin' and stuff, and I thought it was a girl. [*Laughter*] I did. And I finally thought, "Well, shit. That's Steve Tyler." [*Laughter*]

TM: Dude looks like a lady.

EFC: He did. And his hair was so long and just . . .

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] That's funny.

EFC: Yep.

[03:47:14] SL: So what about—did you ever see the original Barn that Levon had?

EFC: Oh yeah. Stayed there a lot.

SL: You did?

EFC: Mh-hmm.

SL: Well, let's talk about that place.

EFC: It was pretty cool. I mean, it's that—even—but even back then he was wantin' to do the kinda the Ramble deal, but it wasn't comin' together. But he ac—I don't know. I shouldn't even be talkin' about that but he got—I guess he got in some financial problems, but he leased it, and I think Hayden McIlroy actually had a note on it. And he leased it to this guy named Eddy Offord.

SL: Yeah. Eddy Offord.

EFC: He had the studio . . .

SL: Did the . . .

EFC: . . . there . . .

SL: Sure.

EFC: . . . and took it over to make the payments, but we eventually had a, you know—what a—what Levon called a mutiny or whatever. We took it back over. [*Laughter*] Well, we could—

'cause we'd been playin' in Canada. We came down to Kingston one day. He said, "Boys, we're gonna go back and take over the Barn." They were recording at the time. It was in about the middle of the day, right? Some guy was doin' the bass part or somethin'. He was downstairs, and there was a big dinner bell in the kitchen there that goes into the big room. Levon started ringin' that dinner bell. Says, "Boys, the session's over." [*Laughter*] And that . . .

SL: So . . .

EFC: . . . was it. [*EJ laughs*] He moved back in.

[03:48:30] SL: Eddy Offord, he did the engineering for the RCO All-Stars . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . right?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Great.

EFC: He's an English guy. Oh yeah.

SL: Great ?pow? . . .

EFC: Crazy guy, though.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Man.

SL: Crazy guy, huh?

EFC: Man. [*Laughs*]

SL: Man, he knew how to get the sound outta that place, though.

EFC: Oh yeah. He's done a lot of stuff, you know, a lot of stuff.

[03:48:46] SL: And so, but that—is that the old Barn? Is that . . .

EFC: The old Barn, yeah.

SL: And then . . .

EFC: He built that right af—you know, right before he did RCO . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . All-Stars, yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[03:48:58] SL: And Hayden had a hand in that.

EFC: Huh?

SL: I'm glad to hear that Hayden had a hand in that.

EFC: Yeah, he was kinda aggravated at Hayden for a long time, but that's the only thi—way Hayden could keep the payments goin' is to rent it out 'cause Levon [*laughs*] wasn't makin' the payments.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I shouldn't—don't put that in there.

SL: Oh, that, well—we're gonna to interview Hayden, too, so . . .

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . I'll get Hayden's side of it.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: It's okay.

EFC: It'll be different. [*Laughter*] Yeah.

SL: So you di—so you had a mutiny and it . . .

EFC: Well, I guess you'd call it that. I don't know what . . .

SL: He got it back.

EFC: It was pretty funny. He moved back in. [*Laughs*] And we stayed there a lot. We'd just stay there and drive down to the city and play or go up to Hartford, Connecticut, or somewhere. We was always playin' somewhere.

EJ: When is—when around is this? Late, very late . . .

EFC: Let me think.

EJ: . . . [19]70s or early [19]80s?

EFC: [Nineteen] eighty-one, [19]82.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Maybe somewhere around in there. [03:49:54] I member one night we played at—in Poughkeepsie at the Chance, this club, and after the show we went back to Levon's, back to the Barn. Jaco Pastorius was with us, and he went back to the Barn with us, right. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Wow.

EFC: So anyway, Ron had already met Jaco before that. But anyway, it was Danko and Jaco and Ron and me [*SL exhales*] set at Levon's kitchen table and drank moonshine [*laughter*] till me and Ron finally give it up, but the next day we had to go do a gig. The bu—tour bus came to pick us up. Jaco was out in the yard—I mean, out by the Barn there. Said, "I need a ride." Levon said, "We're not goin' that direction." [*Laughter*] We were going the other way, so he was thumbin' it, and he had a gig that night [*SL laughs*] at the same place we had played.

SL: You know, but . . .

EFC: He jammed with us again down in Florida, Jaco did. [*SL laughs*]

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Fact, I think it was the same place that he got killed.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Same club, I think. Yeah, there's a lot of stories. [*Laughs*]
Man.

[03:51:02] EJ: One thing I wanted to ask about earlier, just thinkin' about the kind of career arc that you guys did. You guys did the four albums for—well, the three for Elektra and the one for Atlantic. And then I had heard—I had been told that you had a chance to do another one after that one, that the record

company was maybe interested and y'all didn't want to or . . .

EFC: No, I don't . . .

EJ: No?

EFC: Nah. It was kinda like everything kinda fell at the same time, I mean. I thought that Atlantic just dropped us, but. [*Laughs*] 'Cause they were droppin' everybody at that time.

EJ: Right. They weren't in very good shape.

EFC: Disco was heavy, and they were losin' a lot of acts.

EJ: Yeah. [03:51:45] And so, at that point you all hooked up with Levon. That was like the next thing to do.

EFC: Yeah. Well, he had just did—right after he did—we did a little bit before that but—well, like, Ernie and I went to Japan there with him at the RCO All-Stars but—and then that—right when we got back and was playin', we started that album, right, with Tommy Dowd. And then right after that—well, this was the next year, did a few gigs with Levon. [03:52:10] But anyway, he did the *Coal Miner's Daughter*. He did the movie, and so, he wanted us to be involved, so we brought Sissy—he brought Sissy Spacek to Springdale, and we rehearsed and went out and did the premiere. Did a show at the Roxy with the whole cast, you know, Beverly D'Angelo . . .

EJ: Oh, you guys did that. Okay.

EFC: And Loretta Lynn was there. What?

EJ: You guys did that?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: I didn't realize that.

[03:52:34] EFC: Yeah, we played at the Roxy. And then we did a *Midnight Special* show with the same cast but, yeah. So that took us up to about [19]79 or [19]80. And then we started goin' to Canada, mostly Canada, and playin' with Levon. Yep.

EJ: And this would've been the same format that's on that SCTV performance. It's . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . Levon and Terry both playing drums . . .

EFC: Yep. Yep.

EJ: . . . you and Ernie and Ron.

EFC: Yep. The way he had set up was like Terry and Levon and then me and Ernie. You know, they kinda look alike. And then here's Er—me and Ernie. [*Laughter*] Kind of bookends. It's kinda cu—kinda cool, I guess.

SL: It is kinda cool. [*EFC laughs*]

EJ: And Ron in the middle.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah. But we at—we was playin' at this place called the Nickelodeon in Toronto. It's just a big beer joint. But we'd

play there, like, three nights in a row and sell out every night. This guy and that—well, Eugene Levy was comin' in and out 'cause he was in Second City comedy thing.

SL: Yeah.

[03:53:41] EFC: He brought Robin Williams down there one night.

[*Laughs*] Talk about crazy. And after we got through playin', we're all partyin' and stuff. Robin, he was funny as shit.

SL: He is funny.

EFC: I mean, he never stops.

SL: He can't stop.

EFC: He had—Ron had on a Razorback sweatshirt, a red sweatshirt, and Robin got down on his hands and knees. Act like he was hikin' the ball [*laughter*] 'cause he knew it was a football jersey. Yep. And we were in LA at—well, that's when we were doin' the thing at the Roxy for the *Coal Miner's Daughter*. We went up to the Hyatt. We weren't even stayin' at the Hyatt. We're stayin' at some other hotel. They had a re—kind of a reception thing after the show, top floor, like a suite. Went up there, and we're all—it was Tommy Lee Jones there and Harry Dean Stanton. You know who that is? Actor?

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Sure.

[03:54:33] EFC: They were all sittin' around, sittin' in the floor, talkin' and everything. All at once, knock on the door, and Ernie went over, opened the door, and it was Robert De Niro. [*Laughter*] And he had put on all this weight for that movie . . .

EJ: *Raging Bull*.

EFC: [*Unclear words*]

SL: *Raging Bull*.

EFC: Yeah, *Raging Bull*.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: So I didn't even really recognize him. I didn't rea—I didn't pay much attention. And after a while, I thought, "Oh, that's Robert De Niro." [*Laughter*] And it wa—you know, it was just guys. They were just . . .

SL: It is just guys . . .

EFC: . . . sittin' around talkin'.

SL: . . . isn't it?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I mean . . .

EFC: Yep.

[03:55:02] SL: Tommy Lee Jones is a huge fan of Levon's, isn't he?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I mean, he just . . .

EFC: He's a good guy, too.

EJ: Is he?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, he's a great actor.

EFC: We went to this dinner . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . at Chasen's restaurant. It was real fancy, you know, Loretta Lynn and all those people. And Levon's, "You boys go ahead. I ain't"—and he didn't go, you know. But Tommy Lee was there, and he sat at the table with us. He didn't even sit at the table with the—you know, with Sissy or [*laughs*] any of them. He sat at Cate—with the Cate Brothers, you know what I mean. That's funny. Yeah, he's a cool guy. [03:55:32] What was that movie he did? Well, kind of a—he was a detective or somethin'. Wore a big overcoat. *Laura's Eyes*? Was . . .

SL: *Laura May's Eyes* or *Laura* . . .

EJ: *Eyes of Laura Mars*?

EFC: *Eyes of Laura Mars*.

SL: *Eyes of Laura Mars*.

EFC: Remember that?

EJ: I remember seein' it around. I never saw the film but I . . .

EFC: Anyway, when he came to the Lone Star that night when we were playin', he walks in, and he had the same overcoat that he did in the movie, and he looked just like he did in the [laughter] movie. Yeah, he was cool. Yeah, he likes Levon a lot. He got him those gigs, really.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: He did.

SL: He did.

EFC: Yeah.

[03:56:09] SL: And you know, he's always . . .

EFC: And still does.

SL: . . . and he always does well. Levon does well when . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . he's with Tommy Lee Jones in a film.

EFC: Yep.

SL: The . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . what's that film, the *Three Burials* . . .

EJ: *Three Burials of* . . .

EFC: Right. I haven't even seen the . . .

SL: . . . of something Estrada.

EJ: It's a—yeah.

SL: My gosh.

EJ: I'm not gonna remember the name.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: It's a long name.

SL: It's one of the spookiest . . .

EJ: It is.

SL: . . . moments I've ever had in my life.

EFC: "Why don't you just go ahead and shoot me." [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. [*Laughter*] "Got a favor to ask."

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah . . .

EFC: Man.

EJ: . . . Levon's great in that film . . .

SL: He is.

EJ: . . . I thought.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: He's really . . .

[03:56:44] EFC: What was the movie he was in with Mark Wahlberg?

SL: Oh, the *Shooter*.

EFC: The *Shooter*, yeah. It's a short . . .

SL: Oh, he was great in that.

EFC: . . . part, but he was cool. [*Laughs*]

SL: He was definitely the most riveting . . .

EFC: You know, he did that movie with . . .

SL: . . . five minutes in that film.

EFC: . . . what's his name, the guy from New Orleans? Oh, Steven Seagal. [*Laughs*] You ever see that movie?

EJ: Huh-uh.

SL: I'm not sure I did.

EJ: I don't think so.

EFC: *Fire in the Hole* or [*unclear words*].

SL: Oh yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, absolutely. Was he a preacher?

EFC: He played a preacher, yeah.

SL: Yeah, he was a preacher in that.

EFC: Yeah, and he burns in the church, and . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: . . . he said, "I keep tell—kept tellin' 'em, 'Just let me stick one leg out the winder or somethin' so I can come back in the next one' or somethin'." [*Laughter*] Yeah.

SL: Oh, that's funny. [03:57:28] Well, I guess we oughta—I mean, we talk about your times with Levon, but we've—maybe we ought to say something about Levon and what a friend he's

been to you guys. I mean, how—I know that he got hooked up with y'all between, you know, during the Dylan thing and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . all that, but it seems to me that there's a great deal of respect that comes from him.

EFC: Yeah, I guess so. I mean, he—I think he likes us. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well . . .

EFC: But you know, no, really, if it hadn't been for Levon, we probably never woulda went in the directions we did go or get the br—some of the breaks, you know, 'cause he's always been there, you know. Yep. He's a great guy. [*Laughs*] He's one of a kind. I can tell you that.

SL: He is one of a kind.

EFC: He's got a charisma, you know, or s—if he's in the room, people are listenin' to him, [*laughs*] you know what I mean. Yep.

SL: Well, there's a—there is a loyalty that . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . he draws from people.

EFC: Yep.

[03:58:39] SL: You know, his Rambles are now legendary.

EFC: Oh, I know.

SL: His website is now totally cool and very well-done. The film work that's getting done around him and his band is excellent.

EFC: Yep.

SL: The sounds are great. He's picked up some grea—it's like another career . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . for him that . . .

EFC: And he's so . . .

SL: . . . he's been reinvented.

EFC: . . he's so w—I mean, well-known and respected, or I guess you'd call it, in the business. I mean, and when he goes to Nashville, everybody wants to come down and play with him, you know what I mean. John Hiatt and Sheryl Crow and, you know, whoever's in town, they wanna be there and, you know, yep.

[03:59:22] SL: Now, is he at the Ryman before or after he . . .

EFC: The night before he's here, he's at the Ryman. [*Laughs*]

SL: We oughta just go there . . .

EJ: Wow. Yeah.

SL: . . . and just do that.

EFC: I hope he's—doesn't blow his voice out there.

SL: Yeah, [*EJ laughs*] I know. I know.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Well, he's comin' back here mainly because he didn't sing last time he was here, I think.

EFC: Yeah. That's part of it, yeah.

SL: I bet he'll be careful.

EFC: Plus, his birthday is May 8, I think.

EJ: I don't know.

EFC: I think so.

SL: Well, he's just basically just a good guy.

EFC: Yep. Yep.

[03:59:53] SL: And seems like he, eventually, he gets surrounded by good people . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . somehow or another. It's a . . .

EFC: He manages to always come out on the good end [*laughs*] of things.

SL: Yeah.

[04:00:08] EFC: And he don't try, you know what I mean. I've seen so many—you know, I always thought back then, you know, like, "Man, you could be doin' so much more in film and stuff," you know. I mean, they'd—people'd send him scripts, you know, and they'd say, "We want you to come to LA and read

for this part," you know. He'd say, "Why don't you come up here?" [*Laughter*]

SL: There you go. Yeah. Really.

EFC: And that's the way he looked at it . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . you know, like . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . "I don't want—you know, I'm not there. You know, if you want it that bad enough, you'll come up here." [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, it's a good question.

[04:01:18] EFC: I've got another—there was another funny, you don't have to print this, funny Levon story. One night this guy from William Morris Agency came up to his Barn, and you know, he was wantin' to sign him, you know, and everything. And they were sittin' around the table, you know, and havin' dinner. All at once the guy says, "Yeah, me and Leroy go back a long ways."

SL: Oh. [*Laughter*] Oops.

EFC: He didn't sign with him. [*EJ laughs*]

SL: No, course he didn't. Wow. So you've been up to the—his latest iteration. Have you been to a ram . . .

EFC: Yeah, a couple of years ago.

[04:01:17] SL: Didn't you play at a Ramble?

EFC: Yeah, I played a little bit with 'em, yeah.

SL: A little bit.

EFC: Played the last three or four songs.

[04:01:21] SL: Tell me about—let's talk a little bit about a Ramble.

What's it like?

EFC: Man, it's cool. I mean, it's hard to imagine the—I mean, I'm not sayin' that's bad, but, like, the price they charge for tickets, though, is like a, what, a hundred . . .

SL: Couple hundred dollars.

EFC: Yeah, a couple hundred bucks.

EJ: Hundred, hundred and twenty-five . . .

EFC: And you know, in the Barn, it's not that big, but it's got a balcony around that one—you know, a *L* shape. People stand up there, and people stand in the back. There's not that many foldin' chairs, and there's no stage.

EJ: No stage at all.

EFC: You just set up on the floor. Everything's set up, and up behind 'em where he used—used to be his bedroom or whatever that he turned into there, now is the control room. So they're all set for recording, and they can record anybody live anytime. It's all set up. The Black Crowes did their last

record there.

EJ: Oh, they did? The one that Luther Dickinson plays on.

EFC: Yep. Yep.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, it's really neat. People love it.

SL: Yeah. Well, it's—I've always heard it's a near-religious experience to . . .

EFC: It's like Neal Pendergraft said. He was sittin' at the end on—next—they had the front row for us, right.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It was like settin' there with you. He said, "So you got Tom Malone—Bones Malone's trombone was right in my ear."

[*Laughter*] And it was. It was really right there. Yep.

[04:02:44] EJ: Supposedly when he started doin' those things, you're supposed to bring a hot dish, too . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . right, for the table?

EFC: They still do that.

EJ: They still do that?

EFC: Yeah, and you bring your own booze, like people bring their fifth of whiskey or whatever. And you can go downstairs and mix your own. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Wow.

EFC: It's cool. They got a video screen downstairs. Yeah.

SL: It sounds like—it sounds pretty perfect for Levon.

EFC: Really is. Can't beat it. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It's like we were endin' the show, you know, I said, "Man this is pretty cool," you know. He said, "Yeah, you just—I just walk back—walk off—out—you know, off the stage." Not really a stage. "Yeah, I just go back and take a shower and go to bed."
[*Laughter*]

SL: It is great. It's very smart.

EFC: You make about ten grand so . . .

SL: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Well, you know, it's fitting.

EFC: It finally worked for him, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: He always wanted to do that.

[04:03:42] SL: Yeah. So Cate Brothers are—have cut way back on your gigs.

EFC: Yep.

SL: But you're stayin' busy doin' . . .

EFC: Pretty busy.

SL: . . . music anyway. Always, you mentioned earlier, there's always someone asking you to do somethin'.

EFC: Yeah, seems like. Yeah.

SL: But you're itchin' to get back to writing.

EFC: Yeah. Just do what we do. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. You got—are you working on anything now or . . .

EFC: Yeah, we got a couple of tunes that are all ready. We just need to get some more stuff together. And we will. [*Laughs*]

[04:04:37] SL: Well, is there anything that you would like to say to your kids or . . .

EFC: My kids?

SL: . . . Bonnie or—yeah. Is there anything . . .

EFC: Oh, I love you. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, I—we know that, but you know, I mean, they're gonna ha—we're gonna have this stuff forever. This stuff is not gonna ever get lost. It's not gonna . . .

EFC: Well, just tell 'em thanks for bein' there for me.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. And puttin' up with my ass. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah, well, you're probably pretty hard to keep up with, I bet.

EFC: Yeah, I'm hard. I'm difficult. [*Laughter*]

[04:05:22] SL: What about if you had to look at your career in

music, what—is there anything that you would've changed? Is there anything that . . .

EFC: Oh, I don't know. It could be nice to have had a few more hits, but [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . it's still all right. I mean, you know, we're—we been very fortunate to do what we've done, you know, especially bein' from Sonora. [*Laughs*]

SL: Sonora, Arkansas. Yeah, there—but you know, I don't know of any other band that has any more respect than what you guys command. I mean, it's just . . .

EFC: Wow.

SL: . . . it's just phenomenal. I mean, no one—I don't know of anyone that's ever been disappointed [*EFC laughs*] with any of you all's shows.

EFC: We haven't pissed anybody off yet. [*Laughs*]

SL: I don't—and that's somethin', you know.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: That is somethin'. [04:06:23] What about music today?

EFC: Well, there's still some good stuff, but you gotta look [*laughs*] for it, you know.

SL: Well, the—I was gonna say.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: It's not like it used to be.

EFC: No. I can tell you somebody, and you might laugh when I say that I really like the production on *Sade*.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I really enjoyed their new record. I mean, it's just like her other records, but I really like—I like the way the space and the music, the way they do it, you know. I just like it.

[*Laughs*]

[04:07:01] SL: Now, when you say space, you're talkin' about where there's a breath or there's some . . .

EFC: There's air in the music.

SL: Air in it.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: It's not so cram-packed.

EFC: Right. There's not a bunch of stuff goin' on . . .

SL: All the time. They allow it . . .

EFC: . . . and what does happen, it happens the right time, and it's the right place. [*Laughs*] It's in tune.

SL: Well . . .

EJ: Harmonically arranged. I mean, that's somethin' I've always—I've noticed about your tunes, your and Ernie's tunes, is that

they're very harmonically, I think, interesting.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: You know, there's the different . . .

EFC: Cool.

EJ: . . . voices work together really well and pretty sophisticated.

[04:07:37] EFC: We had some guys last—I guess it was last

September. We played this place in Topeka we like to go to.

It's called Uncle Bo's. And it's at the Convention Center

Ramada Inn, but it's this lady we've known, she—called Suki.

She used to have a club outside of town here.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You familiar with her?

SL: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

EFC: Anyway, there was three guys came from United Kingdom.

They flew all the way to see us play 'cause they knew it was

gonna be in a club that was small, and they'd saw us at the Old

Vic.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: And they'd bought all our albums and didn't realize till a few

years ago that we had CDs, too. They ended up gettin' all the

CDs. But they flew from—all the way from England to hear us

play two nights. [*Laughs*] And now they're tryin' to get us to

come over there. You know, this one guy, I guess, is pretty influential or somethin', but he said, "Whatever y'all want," you know.

SL: Are you gonna do it? You oughta do it!

EFC: Ernie don't wanna go.

SL: He doesn't want to go?

EFC: Huh-uh. No.

SL: How long would you have to be gone?

EFC: I don't know. Not that long, you know.

SL: It's too late to do cloning, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

EFC: That's right.

EJ: Kidnapping.

SL: Yeah, we should just kidnap you.

EFC: It would be kinda fun, yeah.

SL: It would be kinda fun. That's interesting. [04:08:55] Well, what would you have—what would you tell someone that's ten years old and just discovering the Everly Brothers for the first time [*EFC laughs*] and is—doesn't like to do anything else but do this music thing. What would you tell 'em?

EFC: Well, I'd say, "Do what you wanna do."

SL: Yeah?

EFC: You know, if you like music, you might as well play it. You

know, it's, I mean—I don't have really any answers, [*laughs*]
you know.

[04:09:31] SL: Is there anybody—any—I mean, we know some of
the artists that influenced you, but is there anybody that you
could turn someone to that would say, "You know, learn this
guy. Learn this girl. Learn this stuff."

EFC: You know, as far, you know, like—there's a lot of really young
guitar players that are really good. You know, main thing I try
to tell most kid—younger guys is, you know, listen to a lotta
different people. Don't just get stuck on Stevie Ray, or
sometimes they get stuck on Dave Matthews or whatever.
They get stuck. Just—that's all they wanna do. And it's, like,
listen to Albert King. I mean, if you wanna play blues, listen to
some—you know, several—some people that, you know, like—
like, 'cause somebody made some statement about—what was
the thing—that Albert King—I don't remember. Somethin' to
the effect, like, Al—they heard Albert King and said, "Man, he
sounded like Stevie Ray." I mean, it's the [*SL laughs*]
opposite, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You know what I mean.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: [Unclear word] backwards.

EFC: Yep.

SL: I think that's great advice. I think even if you're not gonna do blues . . .

EFC: It's like . . .

SL: . . . it'd probably do you some good to listen to Albert King.

EFC: Like, you know, a few years ago some kid who said somethin' about, "Man, I saw this guy on TV, this black guy. He was blind, and he sounded just like Joe Cocker." [Laughter]

SL: Oh, man.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Well, there is that disconnect.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:11:03] EJ: You know, the subject of blues raises somethin' for me because, I mean—talkin' about styles of music. I've always thought of y'all as kind of a soul band in a lot . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . of ways, and that seems like you're . . .

EFC: Blue-eyed soul.

EJ: Blue-eyed soul and Ray Charles and Bobby Blue Bland and just kind of a soul-blues thing. But then in the [19]90s, in [19]90—was it [19]95 that *Radioland* comes out?

EFC: Mh-hmm.

EJ: I mean, that's much more like a blues-sounding record . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . to me, at least. Was that a conscious decision? Or was it just the way the songs . . .

EFC: I don't know. We—a lotta those tunes we wrote with LeRoy Preston. He was a good guy and was just kinda what we were in—you know, felt like doin' at the time, I guess, stylewise. We weren't really tryin' to do anything particular. Just whatever fit the song. [*Laughs*]

EJ: It was just what came out, then?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: There was kind of a blues—and right around that time, too, it was like there were blues festivals, you know.

EFC: That's right.

EJ: I'd see you guys play blues festivals . . .

EFC: Yeah, we did quite a few.

EJ: . . . so it seemed like a place where you could . . .

[04:12:05] EFC: I always thought the movies influenced a lotta music styles because you ever think about, like, when *Deliverance* came out . . .

SL: Oh.

EFC: . . . man, I sold a ton of banjos at the music store. And then
The Blues Brothers came out, and before you know it—and
Crossroads, and now, before you know it, boy, the blues is, you
know . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I don't know if it—seemed to me like it was . . .

SL: No, I think you're—I think that's right.

EJ: I think you're totally right.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:12:28] SL: I think—and that is something—that's a curse and a
blessing all in one 'cause . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . now, it's all so fast [*snaps fingers*] and so . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . instantaneous and so available. Whatever you want . . .

EFC: You can get it.

SL: . . . is pretty much available . . .

EFC: On your phone.

SL: . . . 24-7. That's right.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And so, there is that instant . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . gratification that is available all the time.

EFC: It's kinda sad in some ways 'cause of the music. You know, the record business or whatever is not there anymore. It's all—it's good in a way, but it's, I don't know, kinda lost . . .

SL: It's Wi-Fi. It's not vinyl now.

EFC: . . . lost the romance ?of what? . . .

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:13:08] EJ: I remember havin' to drive, growin' up around here, havin' to drive to Tulsa to get records that we . . .

EFC: That's right.

EJ: . . . wanted sometimes. I imagine it was harder for you guys . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . even harder for you all to find records. You . . .

EFC: Yep.

EJ: . . . hear someone on the radio and then have to spend months tryin' to hunt . . .

EFC: You couldn't even record it off the radio then. [*Laughter*]

Right. [*Ice rattles in cup*] You know what I mean.

[04:13:26] SL: Hey, did you ever—let me—before we—I think we're gettin' close to wrappin' up here, but did you ever run across Dale Hawkins?

EFC: No.

SL: You never did.

EFC: Never did. I heard the story that Ronnie, I mean, you guys did it, so you would know, that he didn't even realize that was his cousin or whatever. He . . .

SL: He thought he was black.

EFC: . . . and he heard—yeah, he thought he was black. He heard the record on the radio or somethin'. He had no idea.

EJ: Wow.

SL: Well, he saw—he knew that Dale Hawkins was doing "Suzie Q."

EFC: Right.

SL: And he knew that Dale Hawkins was playing the Apollo, and he was the first. He was ahead of . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . what's his name.

EJ: Before Buddy Holly.

SL: Before Buddy Holly. Yeah.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

[04:14:09] EFC: And you know, The Band played there—I mean, the Hawks with Ronnie played at the Apollo.

EJ: Really?

EFC: Yep. Believe it or not. And they—it was either that, or they were just visiting 'cause Levon was talkin' about bein' backstage when Jackie Wilson sang.

EJ: Wow. [*EFC laughs*]

SL: Wow.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: I think they played.

SL: I bet they played.

EFC: It was Ronnie, yeah. [*SL laughs*] Well, back when "Forty Days" was a hit.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: That wasn't—sorry, it wasn't The Band. It was the early version. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: You know, I wonder how—I bet Ronnie did just fine [*laughter*] in front of that crowd.

EFC: Right.

EJ: I bet he wasn't worried.

SL: He improvised, I'm sure.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughter*]

SL: Oh, that's good.

[04:14:52] TM: I've heard Randy Crouch do a song. I think it was "Music Don't Care," [*EFC laughs*] and I think he attributes it to you.

EFC: Well, no, you know, that's [*TM laughs*]*—*you know, Randy, he's a funny guy.

TM: Yeah.

EFC: I told him one time*—*Levon had that statement, "Music don't care." He thought that was the greatest thing. So he wrote a song.

TM: Oh.

EFC: I guess what Levon means is it doesn't care*—*it don't care if you're out of tune or what. [*Laughs*] It's just*—*it's music. It don't care. He comes up with some lines sometimes.

SL: He does. He's good.

EFC: Yeah. He's the one that came up with that "blind chicken can get a piece of corn if he keeps peckin'." [*Laughter*] Even the blind chicken will get a piece of corn if he keeps peckin'.

SL: He told me to stay strong one day. I still say that almost every day.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: "Stay strong." [04:15:43] Well, what haven't we tal—are there any other stories that you can get away with tellin'?

EFC: [*Laughs*] I don't know. I can't even think of much right now.

[04:15:54] TM: How bout any twin stories, growin' up and having a twin. It seems like there'd be some . . .

SL: Oh yeah! We really . . .

EFC: Well, yeah. That . . .

SL: . . . haven't talked about that at all.

EFC: . . . that was ki—that was pretty cool—interesting, I guess. I remember one time in class we switched seats, and they never did know the difference. [*Laughter*] I was Ernie.

SL: Did you all make the same grades?

EFC: Pretty close. Actually, it's amazing. We was always pretty much identical.

SL: And what about dates and girls? Did you ever mess with that?

EFC: Oh, a little bit.

SL: Switch it around?

EFC: You know, I wasn't that—I don't know. More interested in music back then, you know.

SL: Yeah?

EFC: I mean, there was a few. You know, I had to go to dances with a girl or stuff like that, but mainly music.

SL: Did y'all—what about—you know, sometimes, you know, you hear about twins knowing when the other one's hurt or knowing when somethin's goin' on that's not . . .

EFC: Well, yeah, there is a, definitely, a . . .

SL: Some of that spooky . . .

EFC: . . . some . . .

SL: . . . stuff, too?

EFC: Yeah, and there's no doubt about it. We've experienced some of that. Yep. [*Unclear words*] even, you know, sometimes thinkin' the same thing, you know what I mean, when you're recordin' or doin' this, well, "That was, why, that was the same thing I was thinkin'" or "the same words I was thinkin'" or somethin'. ?That's how we're? . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: There's that one song that—the one—one of y'all's songs that talks about the twin thing, too.

EFC: Oh, "Stranger."

EJ: "Stranger at the Door."

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Ernie wrote that one.

EJ: Did he?

EFC: Well, he didn't write it all, obviously. Yeah, he kinda came up with it. Yeah. 'Cause I was kinda, you know, had a reputation, I guess, at the time, [*laughs*] you know, of not bein' true to your woman. I wasn't married at the time, but I think that's what he was writin' it about.

SL: Uh-oh. [*Laughs*]

[04:17:44] EJ: Was he makin' a comment at you? Was he . . .

EFC: Yeah. "It wasn't me. It was my brother. He didn't sa—I got a brother looks just like me, you know." [*Laughter*]

SL: There you go.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*] Yeah, we're different. He's just never has been I guess you'd say as social or whatever the word. I mean, it's different bein' married, and his wife's not a drinker. You know, they don't go out. I've always been out and . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . out and around and, you know what I mean, hangin' out. [*Laughs*] Yep. But it's all right.

[04:18:22] SL: So he's kinda the—well, you know, I've always

thought you were both kinda quiet.

EFC: Yeah, we are.

SL: You're—there's—well . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . I guess polite is . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . you know, there's a polite silence that's . . .

EFC: Yeah. Well, no, that's true, I guess. Shy. [*Laughs*]

SL: That probably has somethin' to do with the way y'all were brought up, though . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . as much as anything.

EFC: Right. You respect your parents and, you know . . .

SL: Do . . .

EFC: . . . do good. [*Laughs*]

[04:18:50] SL: Did you guys, growin' up, did y'all ever get in much trouble as kids growin' up?

EFC: Not that—nothin' that serious. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Got caught smokin' in the barn, loft of the barn—well, in the hay, one time. [*Laughs*]

SL: With real cigarettes or grapevines?

EFC: No, real cigarettes.

SL: Ew.

EFC: Dangerous.

SL: Dangerous, yeah.

EFC: I was with my cousin.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, stuff like that. Nothin' bad.

SL: You know, the first . . .

EFC: Used to get in trouble sometimes when we were in high school.

You know, they had a—they give you your lunch money, right?

But there was this place down the street called the Dog House.

It was like a burger joint. They had really good burgers, big

burgers. But we'd go down there sometimes and eat instead of

goin' at the cafeteria. Maybe it wasn't a big deal, but they had

the menu printed in the paper, so Mom would say, "What'd you

guys have for lunch today," right. [*Laughs*] And we didn't

know. [*Laughter*] We got busted.

SL: Oh, that's funny.

EJ: Yeah.

[04:20:01] SL: So out here it was pretty—it was very rural out here

when you . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . were growin' up.

EFC: Back then. Yeah. Yeah.

[04:20:07] SL: There really wasn't much of a neighborhood, and what neighbors you had were really family, weren't they?

EFC: Yep. Pretty much.

SL: Did you have cousins that you played with at all? Did . . .

EFC: Well, yeah. We had one cousins that—in—lived in town but—and then our other—on my mom's side, they were li—you know, livin' in Marshall. But yeah, we didn't have—we really didn't have any relatives that lived right here. I mean, as far as kids. But the old house is still here. It's amazing.

SL: It is amazing. It's great.

EFC: Not many houses that last that long.

EJ: That's true.

EFC: And it ain't goin' nowhere. [*Laughs*] It's . . .

EJ: That's great. That's good to hear.

EFC: That stone's stone.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Man, I keep thinkin' I'm gonna move one of these days. But I, like I say, I stay with Bonnie most of the time. You know, I come out here in the daytime and work sometimes on stuff. But then I go in, and sometimes I'll stay on, very rarely.

There's no reason to buy another place. [*Laughs*]

SL: There really isn't.

EFC: Yeah. Just for me. Plus, it's quiet. It's a lot easier out here to do stuff, you know.

SL: Stuff, yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

[04:21:22] EFC: I remember one time we rented this place on Dickson Street. Remember when there used to be a camera shop or somethin'. I don't remember. Anyway, we were usin' it to rehearse in, *The Cate Brothers*, and it was in between albums or somethin'. Ridiculous.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: We couldn't.

SL: No. Yeah.

EFC: I mean, there was somebody knockin' on the door . . .

SL: Party all the time.

EFC: . . . every five minutes. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: We couldn't do it. Jason's got a pretty good, little spot down in his basement [*laughs*] or wherever.

TM: Yeah. Gettin' better.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:21:55] TM: What about some of those movies, a couple of those movies, that were done in, like, I guess, [19]76 and [19]86, the *Man Outside* and then *Fighting Mad* and—were—your involvement or anything that you knew about that or even Dickson Street.

EFC: Well, *Fighting Mad*, I, you know, I [*laughs*] played with Zorro in that movie, right. Just for one song, you know, but . . .

EJ: You did? Okay.

EFC: Yeah, it was like . . .

SL: "Wild Goose"?

EFC: . . . because—yeah. "Wild Goose."

SL: I was there.

EFC: It was about eleven o'clock in the morning, and they put all these smoke things in the room to make it look really smoky, which it woulda been anyway if they'd had all those people there any length of time [*laughs*] but, yeah.

[04:22:33] EJ: I was won—that helps clear somethin' up 'cause I had heard that you guys played in that scene, and then I'd heard that Zorro played that scene . . .

EFC: It was Zorro.

EJ: . . . so that makes sense.

SL: It was Zorro.

EJ: Zorro . . .

SL: He was on stage with 'em.

EJ: With him.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. And then, actually, Randy Crouch was playin' steel.

SL: I kinda re—yeah.

EJ: Oh, okay.

SL: I kinda remember that, yep.

EFC: Steve Ward and . . .

SL: Steve Ward.

EFC: . . . Billy Jett.

SL: Yep.

EFC: I don't remember who was playin' drums. You know, I can't even remember.

EJ: Mhoon? Zorro's drummer?

EFC: Huh?

EJ: Was it Zorro's drummer?

SL: Test-tube baby? [*EJ laughs*] Jim Mhoon?

EJ: [*Laughs*] Jim Mhoon.

EFC: Mighta been Jim Mhoon.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: That's very possible. [*Laughter*] Test-tube baby. Boy.

SL: He was hilarious.

[04:23:16] EFC: And then that—I don't know much about the *Man Outside*. You know, I don't—I mean, I remember when they were filmin' it. That one they did in Little Rock was—what was that called? The train? About the train? *End of the Line*.

SL: *End of the Line*. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, Terry was the double for Levon. Anytime you . . .

EJ: Oh.

EFC: . . . saw the train goin' by, Terry was the engineer. It wasn't Levon.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: That's cool.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: That's a great little tidbit.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

[04:23:48] EJ: That *Fighting Mad* thing reminded me of somethin' I was gonna ask about was that I had heard that you sat in with Zorro when they opened for Zappa at Barnhill.

EFC: I did. Yep. It's the same—round the same time. We had just finished our first record, actually.

EJ: What was that show like?

EFC: I didn't get to stay for the show. I had a gig, another gig, out at Frans.

SL: Brer Frans.

EFC: Remember Brer Fran?

SL: Absolutely. Man.

EFC: If I'm not mistaken, I had . . .

SL: What a dangerous place.

EFC: . . . to get—I know I couldn't stay 'cause I had the gig. 'Cause we played . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . early for Zappa. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Right.

[04:24:22] SL: I guess, you know, as long as we're talkin', maybe you should say somethin' about Zorro and the Blue Footballs.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Well, man, they should be really big right now if they were to [*laughs*—you know what I mean?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: They were way ahead of their time.

SL: They were.

EFC: [*Laughs*] I thought . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . you know.

SL: Well, you know, but you know, the combination of Mike Mohoney and Windy Austin, [*EFC laughs*] I mean, they essentially—you essentially had two front men.

EFC: That's right. I think back about all the stunts they did.
[Laughs] It was, like, crazy.

SL: It was crazy but . . .

EFC: And they're good musicians, I mean.

SL: That's another thing.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Even . . .

EFC: Yeah, I'm tryin' to think how many different guitar players.
There was Sizemoore first . . .

SL: Sizemoore . . .

EJ: Sizemoore.

EFC: . . . and then Bob Meyers?

SL: Meyers . . .

EJ: Meyers. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh.

EJ: Bob Meyers.

EFC: And did Cal ever play?

SL: Cal played some, yep.

EFC: There was somebody else. I'm tryin' to remember. [*Laughs*]

SL: Well, Tommy.

EFC: Yeah. That's right.

SL: Tommy played with 'em.

EFC: Wasn't so much Zorro, though. It was a little bit later, wasn't it?

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah. [04:25:30] Tommy was a regular guitar player in the Tomato Boys.

EFC: Right.

SL: Yeah, I guess that's right.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Windy, he's a mess, boy. [*SL laughs*] [04:25:41]
We had that little band, the Traveling Wheel Bearings, right?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Which we still do in the summertime some.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Windy was playin' drums and just finally got to where he just couldn't do it anymore 'cause he couldn't keep up, you know.

SL: Yeah. Right.

EFC: And he was funny. He was fun to be around, but [*laughs*]*—and Terry started playin', and Steve said, "Oh man, this is—that's what's been missin'."*

SL: [*Laughs*] Drums.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, I like Windy.

EJ: He's an underrated talent, I think, anymore. Great singer.

EFC: Yep. Yeah, he is. He lives in Springdale.

EJ: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*]

SL: You know, I don't have his number anymore. I can't . . .

EJ: I do.

EFC: I don't either.

SL: I can't get ahold of him. You have his number?

EJ: I got it from Quinn . . .

EFC: Really?

SL: Oh, good.

EJ: . . . Wills, yeah.

SL: Good.

EFC: I've seen him over at the casino . . .

SL: I need to talk to him.

EJ: I haven't tried to call him.

EFC: . . . a few times.

EJ: Yeah, but I [*unclear words*].

SL: Okay. Good.

EJ: Zor—oh.

SL: Go ahead. Zorro . . .

[04:26:39] EJ: Zorro raises somethin' that I was gonna to ask about in terms of music in the area, too, because the time—by the time I heard Zorro, I rea—I didn't really think of them as having a style. I thought of 'em as kind of a mercenary band 'cause they were all really good musicians and play all kinds of stuff.

EFC: Right.

EJ: Listenin' to 'em later, I realized that there's a big western . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . swing thing goin' on with 'em.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: Sure.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: They were basically a dirty, western swing band or somethin'.

EFC: Yeah, it—that's really true.

[04:27:04] EJ: And how much of that did you guys hear growin' up around here?

EFC: Well, I used to hear it a lot. I mean, Leon McAuliffe and Bob Wills and Johnnie Lee Wills. I mean, they would come here . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . at different times. And like I said, they had the radio show that was on at noon that . . .

EJ: It just—it strikes me that that's a kind . . .

EFC: We never really did get into that style that much, but I mean, I . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . I liked it.

EJ: Yeah. It just seems like it's a style that's not remembered as, now, as being as popular as it was.

EFC: That's right. Asleep at the Wheel still do that.

SL: Kinda revived that . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . a little bit.

EFC: Willie once in a [*laughs*] while.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: But you know, back in the—gosh, I guess it was back in the [19]40s or so it was pretty . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . it was a big deal . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . around here then.

EFC: That's right. It was big band music.

SL: Yeah. It was. It was . . .

EFC: It really was.

SL: Yeah. Western swing.

EFC: Yep.

[04:28:11] SL: Well, I'm just tryin'—you know, I can't think of anyone that has done anything like Zorro and the Blue Footballs since.

EFC: No, they haven't. There's "Nobody Here but us Chickens."

[*Laughter*]

SL: That's right. Don't get me started. [*Laughter*] Yeah, that was quite a time.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Man.

[04:28:40] SL: Any other—I'm tryin' to think of any other bands that made a mark in Fayetteville. You know, there's some people that—there's something about Fayetteville and music.

EFC: Yeah, there's definitely a style [*unclear word*] I guess you might—used to be. I don't know so much anymore or not, but used to be a thing there. It seemed like you could kinda tell where we were from. And a lot of that was influenced by the Haw—Ron and the Hawk—Ronnie Hawkins and, well, you know, like fraternity bands at that—they were into Ronnie Hawkins,

so everybody, like Johnny Roberts and . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . Bill Lafferty, whatever, that's the kinda music we all played. John Tolleson, you know. That's the kinda music we played, so . . .

SL: I mean, it was rockabilly.

EFC: . . . everybody was kinda the same. Nowadays it's not so much like that as much.

EJ: Yeah.

[04:29:25] EFC: Yeah. There's a lotta bands in Fayetteville still.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: I'm not sure they have a Fayetteville sound, though.

EFC: They don't have that.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: It's been too many generations, I guess. [*Laughs*] You know, they don't have, you know—I mean, I don't know what they, you know—they're all different. Everybody's got their own thing.

EJ: My uncle, who was a drummer from Bentonville, used to sa—he told me once that—he described it as white kids playing black music for rednecks. [*Laughter*]

EFC: Was that Possum?

EJ: That was Possum, yeah.

EFC: I'll be darned. Yeah.

EJ: Yeah, and the Uptights.

EFC: Yep. Uptights. I forgot about . . .

SL: Oh yeah.

EFC: Pete and Jack Hill.

EJ: Yeah.

[04:30:04] SL: [*EFC laughs*] Now, I'll tell you a group that's—that was interesting, and when they play now, it's always kind of a reunion thing, and that's Punkinhead.

EFC: Oh man. Yeah.

SL: And they . . .

EFC: I forgot about—we shoulda mention that.

SL: Very high energy and very s—pretty sophisticated . . .

EFC: Funky stuff.

SL: Funky stuff.

EFC: I like it. I saw 'em Halloween.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: It's ma—and what's interesting is, you know, their crowd comes back out.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: And they know all the words.

EFC: That's right.

SL: They sing along with the songs.

EJ: Still know 'em.

SL: It's . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, I really enjoy 'em.

SL: Yeah, I do, too.

EFC: Yep.

[04:30:39] EJ: It seems to me like that's somethin' like with y'all's
have had some of the same crowd for . . .

EFC: Yeah, people come.

EJ: . . . the whole time through.

EFC: Seem like [*laughs*] they do, yeah.

EJ: People know the words. Know the songs.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: They cheer when a song starts. [*EFC laughs*] They know what
they're about to get.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That's good stuff.

EFC: Well . . .

SL: Well . . .

EFC: . . . there's a couple of the older guys still playin', like the Floyd Shorter and those guys. [04:31:03] There's Fuzz Foster and, yeah . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . with the Big'uns and Full House.

SL: Big'uns and Full House. Now, that's some pretty good . . .

EFC: Yeah, it's all right.

SL: . . . great stuff happening there.

EFC: It's all cover music, but it's . . .

SL: Yeah, but there's still that . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . there's that spirit . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . going on in there that . . .

EFC: Yeah. Right.

SL: . . . is kind of a Fayetteville . . .

EFC: No, I agree.

SL: . . . Northwest Arkansas thing.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:31:24] EJ: Fuzz Foster was in, what? River City?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Right?

SL: He was at River City. Golly.

EFC: There you go.

EJ: There's a band we should talk about.

SL: Huge horn section.

EFC: That's right.

SL: Yeah, I remember those guys, for sure.

EFC: Yep.

SL: Dick Johnson . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . was in that band.

EFC: That's right.

SL: Tommy Byrd.

EFC: Yeah, Tommy Byrd. That's right. What was the drummer's name?

SL: The drummer was [*EFC laughs*—doggone. I recorded them, too. Oh. I can see him, but I can't think of his name. Anyway, that was another—that was a pretty—that was kind of a happening thing whenever they played. They had their own crowd and . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. They'd . . .

SL: . . . and they had a great sound and—more of a Detroit thing, wasn't it? Seemed like it was . . .

EFC: Yeah. It was a big horn thing.

SL: Heavy, heavy, heavy horns.

EFC: You know, I can't remember. I just remember a couple of songs is all I can [*laughs*] remember.

EJ: They had two albums on Enterprise, subsidiary label of Stax.

EFC: Yeah, Memphis, yeah. John Fry down in Memphis.

[04:32:27] SL: And then there's—you can't really talk about Northwest Arkansas music without mentioning Jed Clampit.

EFC: Well, there you go. Yeah.

SL: There's a long-term mainst . . .

EFC: And Skip King [*unclear words*].

SL: Skip King . . .

EFC: [*Laughs*] Skip played with him.

SL: Yes. Yeah. Wow.

EFC: One of 'em was OPB.

SL: Ozark Plantation Band . . .

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

SL: . . . with—oh, he's a . . .

[04:32:50] EFC: Hal Capps?

EJ: Hal.

EFC: [*SL coughs*] Max and Lorna and . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . Jeff Green.

SL: Jeff Green. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Still givin' flu shots.

EJ: Hal's on Facebook. I've got a couple—in fact, on—he was on—he mentioned somethin' about buyin' a guitar from you at Ben Jack's . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . ?a while?. A couple months ago he mentioned . . .

EFC: Who did?

EJ: . . . somethin' about—Hal. Hal Capps.

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. I guess he's in Tennessee, isn't he?

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Eye surgeon.

[04:33:18] SL: We lost Frankie Kelly.

EFC: Yep.

SL: That was a big thing.

EFC: Yep.

EJ: I didn't know that.

TM: Bout a month ago.

EFC: Yeah. Frankie'd been around a long time. People didn't realize what all he'd done.

[04:33:33] SL: Do you ever go to the Shirkey shows?

EFC: I haven't in—I've been to a couple shows, but I just never . . .

SL: Man, every time I go I thoroughly enjoy them.

EFC: Yeah, I like it.

SL: It's just getting out and doing it but . . .

EFC: It's hard to get down there.

SL: It's hard to get down there, but he has great, great . . .

EFC: Sure does.

SL: . . . events down there, and it's kind of . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . it's kinda like a—I don't know—it's—I imagine the
Ramble . . .

EFC: Yeah, it's the same atmosph . . .

SL: . . . to be kinda like that.

EFC: Kind of that atmosphere.

SL: You go to the kitchen and . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . have coffee and cookies at break and . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . folding chairs and crammed and a very small play area.

EFC: Yep.

SL: Very intimate.

EFC: Mh-hmm. Yeah, he has some good stuff there.

SL: It is. [04:34:12] That, you know, that venue alone is—has defined Fayetteville, in a way . . .

EFC: Yeah. It has.

SL: . . . in its own way, and it's not . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . it's not obtrusive.

EFC: He's been after me for a long—few years now to get Ernie and I to come down and do an acoustic show, like a . . .

SL: Well, why don't we do that?

EFC: . . . Everly Brothers deal or whatever, you know.

SL: Why . . .

EFC: Ernie won't do it. He won't do it. [*Laughter*]

SL: He don't wanna do it?

EFC: I don't know why. It'd be fun.

SL: Well, I'm just thinkin' it might be fun. You know, I've talked to you, and I think I mentioned it to Ernie that after we do Ernie's interview, we might wanna get the two of you together.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

[04:34:52] SL: You know, I mean, do you think we could convince

Ernie to . . .

EFC: We'll just have to work on him.

SL: . . . do some early stuff?

EFC: You'd have better luck at it than I would. [*Laughs*]

SL: Okay. Okay. I can do that.

EFC: He won't listen to me.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: No, we wouldn't—I mean, I'm not opposed to it.

[04:35:05] SL: Now, does Ernie have kids?

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, his son is the assistant city attorney . . .

SL: That's right.

EFC: Springdale. [*Laughs*]

SL: I've met—I've actually worked . . .

EFC: Brian.

SL: . . . with him on some stuff, I think.

EFC: Goes by Ernest instead of Brian [*unclear words*].

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SLC: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: And his daughter lives in Dallas. Yep.

SL: Well, maybe I could convince him to leave somethin' for the kids. [*EFC laughs*]

EFC: Yeah.

SL: You know? [04:35:35] All right. Now, who else have we not—
did we—have we not talked about? Well, before Zorro and the
Blue Footballs there was Rodeo.

EFC: That's right. [*Laughs*]

SL: Rodeo was pretty big deal.

[04:35:44] EFC: In fact, I was tellin' Eric. I think Steve Melody has a
Beta of mid—of *American Bandstand* or *Midnight Special* . . .

EJ: *Midnight Special* . . .

EFC: . . . or both.

SL: *Midnight Special*.

EJ: . . . is what you were sayin' of your all's appearance on there.

EFC: I'm positive he's got it. I mean, if it's even work or if you can
even transfer it or ?I don't know?. [*Laughs*]

TM: Well, we . . .

SL: We could probably figure that out.

EJ: We could probably figure that out.

SL: Yeah, we could probably figure that out.

EFC: I can't believe you can't get it, you know. I mean, it's gotta be
there. All those—all that stuff's gotta be there somewhere.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Well, it's on there. They're just releasing it. Like, you can get highlights of [19]77, highlights of [19]78, and so on and so forth. So . . .

EFC: But we're not a highlight.

EJ: . . . whoever has the rights to it isn't releasing whole shows, which makes it hard . . .

EFC: Right.

EJ: . . . to get anything for archival purposes.

EFC: Right.

EJ: And it seems to be some kinda semi-fly-by-night company, so.

SL: So have you written 'em and tried to . . .

EJ: Have not written. I haven't . . .

SL: Okay.

EJ: Yeah. Just found it.

[04:36:41] EFC: We've always thought it'd be cool if we could get all that live, you know, video stuff all on one DVD.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: It'd be cool.

SL: Or a set. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. We could just sell 'em at the gigs. [*Laughs*]

SL: You could. And you would sell them.

EJ: Yeah, you would.

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah. Yeah.

SL: Yeah, you would.

EFC: It'd be cool to do that.

SL: What about . . .

TM: Hey Scott, I'm goin' to change tapes really quick.

SL: Oh . . .

[Tape stopped]

[04:37:05] SL: What about Lucinda Williams?

EFC: I remember her back when she was goin' to college, and she'd come in the music store and buy strings and stuff. Yeah, she's done well.

SL: She's done well.

EFC: She can write songs.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: She comes . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . by that natural . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . I think.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Honest as . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . honest, as my dad would say.

EFC: Yep.

[04:37:28] SL: So I did—you know, I can't for the life of me remember going to see her play.

EFC: I don't think I ever heard her when she was here, but she would—played at some, when, you know . . .

SL: Yeah, it was just her and a guitar, right?

EFC: The D-Lux or somewhere. I can't remember.

SL: Uh-huh. Yeah.

EFC: Or Rathskeller, maybe.

EJ: Maybe the Rathskeller. They did used to do music down in the basement.

EFC: I'm thinkin'.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I'm not positive . . .

SL: I used—I played there.

EFC: . . . about that but . . .

SL: Yeah.

EJ: But she didn't play around a lot, is that . . .

EFC: No.

SL: I don't think so. Hm-mm.

EFC: I think even then she was doin' the coffeehouse circuit, kinda.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: She may not have been in college. I, you know, I might be wrong about that. She may've just been visiting, [*laughs*] you know, her parents or somethin', but she used to come in quite a bit.

SL: Mh-hmm. [04:38:12] Why don't you—you wanna talk about Guisinger's?

EJ: Oh.

EFC: Well, that used to be the only music store.

EJ: Is that where your piano came from that was here that you grew up with?

EFC: No.

EJ: No.

EFC: Guisinger, I bought some of my first, not first guitars, but several. I bought a brand new Jazzmaster from Guisinger's.

EJ: Wow.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And I ended up tradin' it even for a Tele, [19]57 Tele, and the guy thought I was crazy [*laughter*] that I wanted to trade with him 'cause it was a lot nicer and, you know, whatever. But
I . . .

SL: A lot heavier guitar.

EFC: . . . wanted the Tele. Huh?

SL: The Jazzmaster's less—you know, I ended up with Denny
Tune's . . .

EFC: Oh yeah?

SL: . . . Jazzmaster. Mh-hmm.

EFC: Really?

SL: Mh-hmm.

EFC: Well, they're popular now, you know.

SL: Yeah, they are. I seen 'em . . .

EFC: A lot of the guys . . .

SL: . . . out there.

EFC: . . . playin' 'em.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And it actually is a cool guitar. Those pickups are cool.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: But I wanted that Tele sound so . . .

SL: Yep.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, they're a lot heavier guitar, though.

[04:39:09] EFC: And I bought a Concert amp there, brand new.

SL: Mh-hmm. He used to sell Ampeg amps.

EFC: Yeah. One of the first ones, yep.

SL: Remember that? The bass amps?

EFC: And records.

SL: And records. He had little . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . booths that you could go in and listen to the record before you bought it.

EFC: Yep.

SL: It was a cool place.

EFC: Yeah, it was.

SL: And he sold music.

EFC: Right.

SL: Sheet music.

EFC: Sheet music. Absolutely. [*Laughs*] Guisinger's.

SL: On the Square. Yeah, that used to be the only shop. Oh, oh, you know, we didn't really talk much about Ben Jack.

[04:39:45] EFC: Well, you know, Ben Jack's, when they—when I first started workin' there, it was, like, he was sellin' the Vox stuff. You know, all the Beatle amps like Super Beatle and AC . . .

SL: Yeah, Bill Arnwine bought one.

EFC: . . . Buckingham—right. [*SL laughs*] Buckingham and AC130s. They were really popular.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And the fad, you know, like the Vox guitars. They were terrible guitars . . .

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

EFC: . . . but they had an octagon shape and stuff, you know.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Like Paul Revere and the Raiders.

SL: Beatles.

EFC: Yeah, the Beatles thing.

SL: The Beatles were doin' Vox.

EFC: Hofner basses.

SL: Rickenbacker.

EFC: Then they—custom stuff, you know, Tuck and Roll . . .

SL: With the heavy . . .

[04:40:25] EFC: That was really big for about a year or two, and then Peavey came along with the same feel, except not Tuck and Roll, but at a third of the price or [*laughs*] somethin'.

SL: Right. Right.

EFC: And knocked 'em out of the water [*unclear word*]. [*Laughs*]
Yeah.

SL: Now, he . . .

EFC: Now I wished I had all of the stuff I traded for there . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . the instruments, you know, like old guitars. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I wished I still had some of that stuff.

SL: I know.

EFC: Man. In fact, that [19]52 that I had, this guy, Lonnie Treat, gave it to me because he owed me a little bit of money at the store for somethin', and he was a Sheetrocker guy, and he found it in the closet somewhere. He just gave it to me.

[*Laughs*]

SL: Wow.

EJ: Wow.

[04:41:13] SL: So now, Ben Jack had a store and a studio in Fort Smith, too, right?

EFC: Yep.

SL: And so, he was kind of—I mean, was he kinda the heavyweight recorder guy up in this area?

EFC: Yeah, he probably had the best studio around.

SL: He had a room and . . .

[04:41:31] EFC: Yeah. And then he had Mickey Moody for a while

[laughs] . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . the guy from Fort Worth. Yeah, he—yeah. A real studio, you might say.

SL: You know, I think I only met him once.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: I don't know why. He was kind of a big guy, wasn't he?

EFC: Well, no. Not really.

SL: No, he wasn't? Was he heavy? Seemed like he . . .

EFC: White hair.

SL: White hair. I remember white hair.

EFC: Not that heavy, not really, no.

SL: So do you know much about him? How he came about? Came into . . .

[04:42:02] EFC: Well, he's from Fort—his dad, I guess—there was a Jack's Motor Company there in Van Buren. He had Jack's Motor Company, and he had a big, huge farm. I can't remember that area. It's back east of Van Buren. The family had business. You know, they owned a lot of property and stuff. But he—I don't know where he—I mean, I never did know the background on where he learnt to play the steel, but he played with Hank Thompson, and he's played with . . .

EJ: Oh, I didn't know that.

EFC: Yeah, he played with Hank Thompson, and he played—I think he even played some with Bob Wills, maybe. ?I'm not?—he, you know, goes back. But he's always been in the music business, you know, as far I know. He was a salesman. He's a good guy. He always treated me good. I remember one day I was—in fact, it wasn't long after I'd started runnin' the store, and he come up one day from Fort Smith and was drivin' this Volkswagen bus, and it was all painted up red and white, "Ben Jack's Guitar Center."

SL: I think I remember seein' that. Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. I drove the heck out of that one. But he'd come—we didn't use a bank in town then. He'd come up once a week.

SL: Get the money and . . .

EFC: Get the money, yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: That's somethin' else, isn't it?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Man, that's . . .

[04:43:33] EFC: And we got . . .

SL: . . . that's old school.

EFC: . . . we got . . .

EJ: That is old school.

EFC: . . . robbed a couple of times, not from the register, but a couple times a guy broke the front window out and stole a couple of guitars. Yeah, we had an alarm, but it wasn't hooked to the police station. It was just a . . .

SL: It just sounded off?

EFC: . . . loud alarm and . . .

SL: Man, you'd think if you break in the glass like that, you'd take more than a couple of guitars.

EFC: Yeah, I know. You'd think he would . . .

SL: Back up the . . .

EFC: . . . take his time.

SL: . . . trailer and load up [*laughter*] and go.

EFC: They could have, really.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. Huh. [04:44:06] Well, that was—you know, Ben Jack's was pretty much the hangout . . .

EFC: It was.

SL: . . . for musicians.

EFC: Yeah, I remember a lot of guys just come there and . . .

SL: And it was almost like the coffee shop of musicians.

EFC: Yeah, that's right.

SL: Everyone came by to see Earl [*EFC laughs*], to see what was goin' on.

EFC: Yeah. Just hang out.

SL: Hang out. See who's . . .

EFC: Well, you could always play and do whatever you wanted to do.

SL: Yeah.

[04:44:25] EFC: I had—even had a—one time I had those A7s that—what's that guy that built 'em around the—used to work at Baldwin?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: What was that guy's name? Anyway, I—you probably know who I'm talkin' about.

EJ: The speaker . . .

EFC: Had the . . .

EJ: . . . guy or—no.

EFC: Yeah, he . . .

SL: Yeah. Well, the A7 is the . . .

EFC: You know, the A7 Altecs.

SL: Yeah. Yeah.

EFC: But this guy, he . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . could build the cab—he had the cabinets built, and then

you had to buy the components. But anyway, I had a couple of those in the back room. Man, it was cool. It was the best sound, you know . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . in town, though we ended up usin' them for a PA, you know, but.

SL: Sure.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: [*Laughs*] I remember we ended up buyin' those La Scalas.

EFC: It was pretty long hours, though, back then. It was, like, we opened at 9:30 and closed at 9:00, six days a week.

SL: Last-minute stuff before the gig, I guess.

EFC: Yeah, six days a week.

SL: Get some strings. Get a cord.

EFC: Yep. But he don't stay open that late now. [*Laughs*]

SL: No.

[04:45:22] EFC: Yeah. But I guess they're keepin' the store. You know, he passed away and the—Shirley's never done anything. She—he got her from her parents' house when he married her, you know. She don't know how to do anything. Course, they're very wealthy, but they decided—Joe Phelps came back here and kinda helped 'cause he was good friends with Ben.

Kinda helped her get . . .

SL: I did not know that.

EFC: You didn't? You know, Joe's been very successful.

[04:45:49] SL: Tell me about Joe.

EFC: You know, Joe ha—he was ahead of his time when he had Video-Acts. You remember that?

SL: Yes.

EFC: Him and Mike Martin, they were doin' videos of bands [*laughs*] and his booking agent. Then they ran the studio for Ben for a while, but anyway, Joe moved to LA, and he started workin' for this advertisin' agency. They did CBS music. In fact, he did the Fender catalog layout. He put my picture on there one time ?on display?. Anyway, and then he had the Rhodes piano thing. He got to go to Ray Charles's studio and stuff.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Anyway, then he, after that, he got his—started his own advertisin' comp—agency. Now, he's got like a high-rise in Santa Monica. He owns this building.

SL: Wow.

EFC: He wrote a book that's like a bestseller. I mean, it's unbelievable. [*Laughs*]

SL: What a guy.

EFC: Yeah, what a guy. Anyway, he helped Shirley kinda—they're just, as long as the store's, you know, not losing money, you know, they're gonna keep it open 'cause that's what Ben would want 'cause that's what he's always done . . .

SL: That's what they're doin'.

EFC: . . . you know.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: At first everybody was sayin', "Well, they'll close it up," but . . .

SL: So now . . .

EFC: . . . you've got good guys runnin' it so . . .

[04:47:01] SL: Joe Phelps was a Fayetteville guy, right?

EFC: He's from Paris . . .

SL: From . . .

EFC: . . . Paris, Arkansas.

SL: He was from Paris. And how did he end up in Fayetteville?

EFC: College.

SL: College.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:47:12] SL: And let's see. Did he—he just managed bands? Is that . . .

EFC: Yeah, he had kind of a little bookin' agency. What was that

called? Video-Acts?

SL: Video-Acts.

EFC: Yeah. He'd tape bands, and then they ran the studio for a while down there, him and Mike.

EJ: Mike Martin.

EFC: Mike Martin.

[04:47:32] EJ: Is that the same Mike Martin that's Martin Delray?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Okay.

EFC: That's where he got the name Delray from, our band.

EJ: Right. I saw him show up and jam with you guys when you played the class of—was it the class of [19]64 . . .

EFC: At the Cave?

EJ: . . . reunion in [19]94 at the Cave.

EFC: That's right. Yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: I talked to Mike a while back. He's a tennis instructor. [*EJ laughs*]

SL: Wow.

EFC: That's what he does for a livin' in Nashville. He doesn't play much [*laughs*] anymore. I think his wife has a good job but . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Yeah. I remem . . .

EJ: He made a couple of good records.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: He can sing country. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: He's good. I saw him in LA when he was livin' out there with Becky Hobbs. Member her? She was a country singer. And he was playin' out there. He wasn't doin' much country then but, yeah. Yeah, Joe's done really well. Success story. [*Laughs*]

[04:48:31] SL: Yeah. There was another name that came up. Oh, let's talk about J. D. Eagle.

EFC: Who?

SL: J. D. Eagle. Isn't he the guy that had the recording studio?

EFC: Oh, Phil Eagle.

SL: Phil Eagle. Well, now, is J. D. Eagle—was his—was that his father?

EFC: You know, I have no—I don't even know. [*Laughs*]

SL: Okay.

EFC: Mighta been. Seem like he did have a—you know, Phil was a big guy.

SL: I, you know, I don't think I ever knew him.

EFC: Yeah, he was a . . .

SL: But he had the—he—in that old house there . . .

EFC: Yeah, in the back there.

SL: . . . in the back.

EFC: And he had this [*laughs*—oh hell, it was probably asbestos, you know.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: No, I don't think it was, but it was that, you know, the pink insulation?

SL: Uh-huh.

EJ: Mh-hmm.

EFC: It was—all the walls was that pink. He didn't put anything over it. [*Laughs*]

SL: Wow.

EFC: It was soundproof.

SL: It was pretty dead.

EFC: Yeah.

[04:49:19] EJ: And that was Maple and Gunter, you said?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Well, somewhere . . .

EJ: The recording studio?

EFC: . . . around there, yeah. ?I don't know if I can show? . . .

SL: Yeah, I can show you. I can show you the . . .

EFC: Wasn't that a rock house . . .

EJ: Okay.

EFC: . . . I think.

SL: Well . . .

EFC: Stone, maybe, or . . .

SL: . . . it—I thought it . . .

EFC: It's a pretty good size . . .

SL: . . . was in that two-story house. Is it not the . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, it was . . .

SL: . . . two-story house?

EFC: . . . two-story. But it was kinda like a big lot, though . . .

SL: Yeah. A big lot.

EFC: . . . if I remember right. Yeah.

SL: A big front yard.

EFC: Yep.

[04:49:38] SL: Short on the backyard, but so, do you remember
what kinda recorder he had?

EFC: I don't remember that.

SL: I mean, as far as I know, that's the first recording studio I
know of . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . in Fayetteville.

EFC: I think that's probably about right. [04:49:51] And then what's his name, Moore, had a little, old place out there.

SL: Bob Moore.

EFC: Bob Moore. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. I, in fact, I think I may've bought some stuff from him when he went outta business.

[04:50:02] EFC: And what did the—what's the guy—ah—that had that really good place goin' there, but it never did make it down by the mall.

SL: Yeah. That would be . . .

EFC: [*Laughs*] That's where we did singles at.

SL: Yeah. Yeah, John Ware. We worked outta there.

EFC: I should know the guy's name.

SL: I . . .

EFC: Can't even think of it.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: In Springdale?

SL: No, no, no, no.

EFC: Fayetteville.

SL: It was . . .

EFC: Mach 1, is that what it was?

[04:50:26] SL: Mach 1 Recording, and his last name was—his
father . . .

EFC: Getty.

SL: Getty. Gaddy.

EFC: Jeff Gaddy.

SL: Gaddy. *G-A-D-D-Y*.

EFC: Jeff Gaddy.

SL: Gaddy. Yeah, Jeff Gaddy.

EJ: Oh, I think I might've even have been in school with him.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And his dad was a—had made some—was a doctor or
somethin' . . .

EFC: Somethin' like that, yeah.

SL: Yeah, and made some money. Mh-hmm.

[04:50:45] EFC: He had a nice setup there. And then Mark
Vanderpool put the one in in Springdale. What was that called?
You member?

SL: I don't know if I ever went up there.

EFC: You know who I'm talkin' about?

SL: Hm-mm. I don't think I ever went there.

EFC: He's a drummer.

EJ: Rick Eby and—no. That was someone else.

SL: I don't think I ever saw his studio. I mean, I know . . .

EFC: Rick Eby . . .

SL: Rick Eby.

EFC: . . . was his partner.

SL: Okay.

EJ: Right.

EFC: Bass player.

[04:51:09] EJ: Yeah. And there's a—I've got a tape that's a piano player—that you're on playin' Dobro, I think.

EFC: Lloyd Marley.

EJ: No, it's not Lloyd. It's a piano player, Ed Burks.

EFC: Oh, Ed Burks. Oh . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . that's right. [*Laughter*] Yeah.

EJ: And you play . . .

EFC: I forgot about that.

EJ: . . . some Dobro on it. And it's set up as kind of like a history of the blues kinda thing.

EFC: I forgot about that, yeah. [*Laughs*]

EJ: There's a narration and—but that was recorded at their studio.

EFC: I did some stuff there with Lloyd Marley. That was another guy we forgot.

SL: Another guy. Yeah, we forgot about Lloyd Marley.

EJ: He's a Bentonville guy, right?

EFC: He was here the other day with John D. We cut a song.

[*Laughs*] Yeah, Lloyd.

[04:51:48] SL: You know who I got to hear play a couple of—a little medley the other night a couple months ago was Sleepy LaBeef.

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughter*] Oh, Sleepy. He's cool.

EJ: He has lots of medleys.

EFC: I like to hear his stories. [*Laughs*]

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah, we intend to interview him, too, but . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . he was actually pretty good.

EFC: Oh yeah. He's . . .

SL: I mean, apparently he's some kind of a much . . .

EFC: He . . .

SL: . . . larger . . .

EFC: . . . he was . . .

SL: . . . than-life act in Europe.

EFC: He was on Sun—yeah, he was on the Sun Records. Yeah, he's big in [*laughs*] Europe. Well, I mean, there's not an—very few left of the real rockabilly . . .

SL: Yeah. There's not.

EFC: . . . I mean, the original rockabilly guys. [*Laughs*]

SL: There's not.

EFC: Nope.

SL: That's right.

EFC: John D. does a lot of that, John D. LeVan. He's kind of a rockabilly guy. [*Laughs*]

[04:52:35] SL: We've been—we've caught a couple of Jason D. Williams's acts lately.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: He's still workin' hard.

EFC: [*Laughs*] He is. We played with him over at the casino.

EJ: He started out in Sleepy's band.

EFC: Yeah, I think so.

SL: Yeah. Well, I don't know if he . . .

EFC: Not in the beginning . . .

SL: . . . started out . . .

EJ: Not started out . . .

EFC: . . . but later on.

EJ: . . . but he played in Sleepy's band.

SL: But yeah, he played in Sleepy's . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . band.

EJ: Before [*unclear word*].

SL: And Sleepy comes to see him whenever he plays somewhere.

EFC: You know, I, you know—did you know that Jason's actually originally from El Dorado?

SL: I do know that.

EJ: I didn't know that.

SL: I do know that.

EFC: Yup.

SL: And actually, I was talkin' to someone that went to school with him.

[04:53:05] EFC: I guess Jerry Lee musta came through there sometime. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, okay, now. Okay. Now, he looks like him.

EFC: I know.

SL: Everyone says, you know, it's probably his illegitimate son. [*EFC laughs*] Apparently, Jerry Lee does not claim him.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: I don't . . .

SL: But . . .

EFC: . . . know that, but he does have a lotta . . .

SL: He looks like him . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . and he certainly . . .

EFC: Sounds like him.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Plays like him.

SL: Sounds like him and certainly high energy . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . like him. [*Laughter*] No, I enjoy his shows.

EFC: Yeah, he's a wild man.

[04:53:36] SL: That's another kind of front-man thing. I mean,
he . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*] It was funny at the casino. It was about
halfway through the show, you know. He keeps it goin' so fast,
you know, it's like . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . boy, he's always talkin'. When he wasn't playin', he was
talkin', and I . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . noticed a couple times when he was talkin', but he wasn't sayin' anything. It was just gibberish. [*Laughter*]

SL: I'll check that . . .

EFC: But he kept the space filled.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Man, he threw that piano stool all the way across the stage. And he—I don't know how many of those stools he's got.

SL: Or pianos.

EFC: And I don't know if he's got—yeah, he told me how many of those damn . . .

SL: He's only got two left, I think.

EFC: Really? [*EJ laughs*]

SL: I think he told me he'd been through ninety-nine of 'em or ninety of 'em.

EFC: Well, I thi—he said somethin' about he had a warehouse or somethin'. He bought every one of them he could find 'cause they don't make the ?Kaiser? or whatever . . .

SL: Yeah. Uh-huh.

EFC: . . . they're called, you know. They don't make 'em anymore. [*Laughter*] Boy.

SL: Yeah, he's quite a—he's a fun . . .

EFC: He was funny when he was on stage, and it was actually me and Jason was the Earl and Them that played, opened for him over at the casino, and halfway through his show, he said, "Man, I've been wantin' to meet these Cate boys for a long time." And I was just the only guy that was there, *[laughter]* you know, of the Cate. You know, Ernie wasn't . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . there. ?It's like?—I don't know what he was thinkin', you know. *[Laughs]*

SL: Well, he works hard.

EFC: Yeah, he does.

SL: I'll say that. And he sounds—actually, he's a pretty good player.

EFC: Yeah, he is. Yeah. Oh yeah. *[Laughs]* He laid on the floor and played with his feet.

SL: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

EFC: And crawl on the piano.

SL: Heel across the . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yep. Yeah, he's somethin' else.

EFC: Yep.

[04:55:18] SL: So is there anybody else that we're forgetting here

Northwest Arkansaswise?

EFC: I'm sure I'll think of somebody when we're through, probably.

EJ: Mike Sumler.

SL: Mike Sumler.

EFC: Oh, Mike Sumler.

SL: Now, there's an interesting story.

[04:55:28] EFC: It is. You know, Mike's back.

SL: He is back.

EFC: I've played a few gigs with him, actually.

EJ: Have you?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Ah, I'd love to hear that.

EFC: It was fun. We played out at the Grill, and we played a gig at Jose's.

SL: I like s . . .

EFC: He's got some great songs.

SL: He does great songs.

EJ: He's a great songwriter.

SL: He has great songs.

EFC: I like his singin', too.

SL: You know, what I like about his songs, they sound like you've heard them before.

EFC: Yep.

SL: There's an . . .

EFC: I . . .

SL: . . . oldness about them.

EFC: There's somethin' about him sometimes makes me think of Rodney Crowell. I don't know why. Somethin' about his voice.
[Laughs] Yeah. I like him.

[04:56:02] EJ: Now, did you guys know him in the [19]70s, maybe?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: He was actually the first . . .

EJ: When you [*unclear words*] . . .

SL: . . . gig that David and I had in our studio.

EJ: Was he?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And it was a great . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . great recording . . .

EFC: And he moved to Houston.

SL: . . . four-track recording.

EFC: You know, he was in . . .

EJ: Oh, really.

EFC: . . . Houston for many years but—after he left here, well . . .

EJ: And he had, like, the Mike Sumler Band in the . . .

EFC: Right.

EJ: That woulda been the [19]70s.

SL: Yeah.

[04:56:22] EFC: I guess Kerlin played with him then, didn't he?

SL: Kerlin did play [*EFC laughs*] with him then. Yeah. Mh-hmm.

EJ: JT played with him, right?

SL: JT played—no.

EJ: No?

EFC: I don't think so.

SL: I don't think so. Huh-uh.

EJ: John played with him? Did I just make that up?

EFC: John might have.

SL: John?

EFC: Anderson.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Well, don't . . .

EFC: I can't remember who . . .

SL: I don't think he did. I think . . .

EJ: Oh.

SL: Who was the bass player? Thin, dark-haired guy. Ah, I can't think . . .

EJ: Summit?

EFC: I can't think either.

[04:56:59] SL: And then the girl singer. Who was the girl singer?

[*EFC laughs*] That—I know I'll remember every one of these names in about ten, fifteen minutes. Anyway, that, actually, of all the recordings that came out of Sequoyah Recording, that first . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . four-track is one of the best ones that I've ever—that we ever . . .

EFC: Cool.

SL: . . . got.

EFC: There he is.

SL: Hey. God, I'm glad we didn't forget Mike Sumler.

EFC: Yeah. I don't know why I get—draw a blank. Can't remember nothin'. [*Unclear words*]

[04:57:40] SL: Then there was a really funny band out of Eureka Springs, Greasy Greens.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: Member them?

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: And then there was a group out of Memphis, Moloch?

EFC: Moloch. Yeah.

EJ: There was—their stuff is back out.

EFC: What was the guitar player's name, though?

EJ: Lee Baker.

EFC: Lee Baker.

SL: Lee Baker, shake those moneymakers, Lee Baker.

EFC: Yep.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And then Brer Frans, there was some bands [*unclear words*]—
well, Crowdad and . . .

SL: Crowdad.

EFC: . . . Steve Gaines.

SL: Steve Gaines.

EJ: Steve Gaines, who . . .

EFC: When we came back from . . .

EJ: . . . ended up in Lynyrd Skynyrd.

EFC: . . . from LA, when it was—I guess it was after "Union Man"
was hittin' pretty hard on the radio, came home one time and
went out to Brer Frans, and Crowdad played "Union Man."
Yeah.

[04:58:22] EJ: There's a video on YouTube of some band from the
Northeast coverin' . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . cov—doin' a cover of "Union Man."

EFC: I'll be darned.

EJ: Yeah. Not a bad one.

EFC: Yeah. All right.

[04:58:35] SL: That was hottest in England, wasn't it?

EFC: Yeah, it was pretty hot over there.

SL: Didn't—I mean, did you have more sales in England?

EFC: I don't know. We didn't get paid that much for it. [Laughs]

Yeah, it did pretty good in Europe.

SL: Yeah, I think I . . .

EFC: I mean, it must have. When we went over there and had good crowds.

SL: Yeah.

[04:58:55] EFC: It's funny about that Skynyrd deal. You know, we played a couple of shows with Lynyrd Skynyrd back in the East. We did, like, somethin' in Maine somewhere, and then we did Asbury Park, a place there where Springsteen always played. Anyway, I guess we were in Maine, and it was—we did our second album, *In One Eye and Out the Other*. We had a, like, a cassette tape, and Steve and Cassie came up to our room, and we listened to the tape and everything. And we'd played

the night—we played a couple of three shows with 'em.
Actually, we played with 'em in California, too. But anyway,
they were—Steve and Cassie, it's kind of eerie 'cause they
were talkin' about, "Man, we've been flyin' in this plane," you
know. "And it" . . .

SL: Oh.

EFC: . . . "we don't really, you know, we don't really like it. It
doesn't—it don't seem—somethin's not right," or whatever.
But then they even mentioned, said, "Why d—but if you guys
wanna ride with us since we're gonna be playin' in Florida next
week or whenever, you guys can, you know, come with." But
we were comin' home before we went to Florida. But anyway,
they cancelled us on the Florida show, and we were supposed
to play with 'em in Little Rock. And we were already home.
But anyway, that's when they had their plane . . .

SL: Crash.

EFC: . . . crash, when they were, you know . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . before they got to—made it to Little Rock. Man. [SL
exhales] [05:00:20] Yeah, I remember when we were in
California, we played with Skynyrd, and this gal came
backstage, and she said, "You know Steve Gaines?" This is

before he was playin' with 'em. I said, "Oh yeah." She says, "Well, I'm his sister." And I thought, "Well, she just lives out here," and she said, "Oh, I'm singin' with [*laughs*] Lynyrd Skynyrd." And she was mostly a backup singer . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . but that was be—but she had talked them into lettin' Steve sit in with 'em in Kansas City. And that's how they got the gig.

SL: That's how he [*EFC laughs*] got the gig.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: Once he sat in, they said, "Man, this guy [*EJ laughs*] good." And he was.

SL: This guy's good and no headache, huh?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Huh. That's the way it works.

EFC: Yep.

[05:01:01] EJ: Since you mentioned "Union Man" again, I—did—is that, lyrically, is that one yours or Ernie's or some of both or . . .

EFC: Yeah, both.

EJ: Both.

EFC: Yeah., I started it off, but [*laughs*] I got the idea from this book. I don't remember what it was about. It was somethin'

about the planter's union in eastern Arkansas. They used to have this planter's union.

EJ: Mh-hmm. Sharecropper's union?

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Planter's union? Yeah.

EFC: Yeah, that's really kinda . . .

SL: I was just . . .

EFC: . . . where I got the idea about.

SL: . . . readin' about that. Yeah, we were in Jonesboro this past weekend, and I guess that's where that started . . .

EFC: Yeah. Mh-hmm.

SL: . . . those meetings.

[05:01:37] EJ: Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, right?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: STFU.

SL: Wow.

EFC: Lots of crop dusters over there. [*Laughs*]

SL: It's a small world.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: It is. So that song is from the point of view of someone who's initially really skeptical about the union.

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. You can't afford to belong to it but . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . then they want their dues, and how you gonna pay the dues when you gotta put—get shoes for your kids, [*laughs*] you know.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: But then it ends up, you know, that you get the—a—get a job, so you're thankin' 'em then.

EJ: Right.

EFC: Whatever.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: They help out then.

EFC: I don't know. It's nothin' profound. [*Laughs*]

EJ: Well, I don't know. I mean, you do a good job of, I think, of . . .

EFC: He won't leave you alone once you start. [Cat brushes against EJ's legs] [*SL laughs*]

EJ: . . . [*unclear words*] it just seems like you do a good job in that song of puttin' together the plight of people caught between . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . a rock and a hard place . . .

EFC: That's right.

EJ: . . . you know, and tryin' to get by. I think that's pretty profound.

SL: Well, okay.

[05:02:38] TM: Hey Scott, I had a question real quick about—this is jumpin' way back. Were you growin' up here when the dam was bein' built in the . . .

EFC: Yeah.

TM: . . . late—can—do you remember anything about that time or remember . . .

EFC: I just remember thinkin', "Boy, we'll be able to see the water from the house," you know what I mean, but you couldn't, really. And it seemed like it took a long time for it to happen, but it was a slow, you know what I mean, slow process, the water comin' up and up. [*Laughs*]

TM: Like, years?

EFC: It wasn't overnight. Yeah.

EJ: Took about ten years to make.

TM: Ten years.

EFC: Yeah. That's a big lake.

SL: It's a . . .

EJ: Yeah.

SL: . . . big lake. It's a big series of lakes.

[05:03:18] EFC: It is, [*laughs*] yeah. [*Unclear words*] what's, you know—joi—almost joins—what's the other one there . . .

SL: The . . .

EFC: . . . over at Beaver Lake?

SL: Well, Beaver, and there's . . .

EFC: Table Rock.

SL: Table Rock.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Taneycomo.

EFC: Oh yeah. But I mean, Table Rock's right there, almost joinin' [*laughs*] Beaver Lake.

[05:03:41] SL: Well, I—it—Taneycomo is, isn't it? Isn't Taneycomo below Table Rock?

EJ: I don't know.

EFC: I—Taneycomo.

SL: And then . . .

EFC: And it goes into Branson there but . . .

SL: Yeah, I mean, you . . .

EFC: Table Rock's kinda southwest of Branson, isn't it?

SL: Table—well, Table Rock is at Branson. It's . . .

EFC: Yeah, but I mean, it's south, though.

SL: And then Taneycomo is the tailwaters of Table Rock.

EFC: Okay. Well, yeah . . .

EJ: Oh, okay.

EFC: . . . that makes sense. Yeah.

SL: Yeah. It's an amazing fishery.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: You and I should go fishing sometime.

EFC: Yeah. Okay. [*Laughs*]

SL: We should. I've got a pl—I've got some spots.

EFC: All right.

[05:04:27] SL: Put you on some fish. Okay. So is there anything else that we should be talkin' about before we—I mean, we've—what are we? We're on our fifth or sixth tape here?

TM: Yeah, we've been rollin' for about a little over five hours.

EFC: Wow.

SL: So . . .

EFC: Should have enough. [*Laughter*]

SL: Well, I mean, you know, this is typically about how far—how long we go. I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . six to eight hours is usually what we do. I kinda let you off a little bit on your schoolin' and . . .

EFC: Yeah. Let Ernie fill that in. [*Laughter*] He's probably got a better memory than me. Yeah, I'd like to see him talk forever about stuff that's happened, [*laughs*] you know what I mean.

SL: Well, we can certainly stay here.

EFC: No, I'm not talkin' about that. [*Laughter*]

SL: I mean, we can . . .

EFC: ?Talk about—you won't hear it?. Talk about one thing, and you remember somethin' else that happened.

[05:05:13] SL: Yeah. Uh-huh. I guess I could ask you if there's any one show that really—I don't know. I don't know what it's like on stage, when you're on stage and you're pl . . .

EFC: I think, you know, probably one of the most interesting things we did is when we played with The Band. Well, besides goin' to Japan, you know, and stuff. Course, Japan is really cool. Is playin' with the Grateful Dead. I mean, just the way they do things, you know. We did that one New Year's Eve gig, but then we played the Carrier Dome in Syracuse.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: And it was sold out. The Grateful Dead and the—I don't know if you know it or not, but that roof is—the air is what keeps it up . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . the dome up. So if you're in the dressing room, you know, like the locker rooms, whatever, is where your dressing rooms are. If you go in the hallway, it's like a hurricane. The air is like shhhhhh. [*Laughter*]

SL: No, I didn't know that.

EFC: Yeah. And then you walk on stage. Imagine if the Carrier Dome is sold out, and you walk . . .

EJ: Wow.

EFC: . . . on stage, lookin' up like this. [*Looks toward ceiling*] You can see people, little people, up there dancin', you know, in the aisles and stuff. [*Laughs*] It's funny.

[05:06:29] SL: So that was with the Grateful Dead?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: The Carrier Dome.

EFC: The Band, when we were openin' for The Band.

SL: And the Band, yeah.

[05:06:35] EFC: I'll tell you another funny story. You know Harold Wieties?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Harold and Stacy, when they were together, we had played— well, we were playin' in town when we weren't out with The Band or whatever, we'd play a little bit in town, but I think we

played at Rumors down at the Hilton or somethin' . . .

SL: Kay.

EFC: . . . one night, and anyway, we got this call. We were supposed to play New Year's Eve at the Library for Dickie. We got this call from The Band sayin' we're gonna play New Year's Eve with the Grateful Dead, you know, so we got on a plane and went out there. Well, Harold and Stacy went to the show, but they had no idea [*EJ laughs*] that we were there . . .

SL: Oh!

EFC: . . . and they're at the Grateful Dead show, and, "Ladies and gentleman, The Band with the Cate Brothers." And we walk out on stage. [*Laughter*] You know, they'd flew from Fayetteville out there. Had no idea, you know.

EJ: Wow.

SL: That's great. Great story.

EJ: It is.

EFC: Well, that's another guy that we didn't really talk about is Dickie Pool.

[05:07:30] SL: Let's talk about Dickie Pool.

EFC: 'Cause—and he, you know, he really had a lo—you know, somethin' to do with music in Fayetteville. He really did.

'Cause he liked to promote groups, and if he found somebody

he liked, well, he'd, you know, push 'em hard.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: And he was one of the first, one of the first, head—steady gigs, you know, besides the Gaslight.

SL: Yeah. He even let us play there.

EFC: Yeah. [*Laughter*]

SL: How bout that?

[05:07:58] EFC: Yeah, he was a, you know, like, he was the—he always said he was the first integrated club in Fayetteville. He used—he always liked to say that, you know.

EJ: Oh, did he? I never knew that.

SL: Well, it came with the jazz idea, I bet.

EFC: Oh yeah. But you know, they used to call it the balcony but—a section there where they all sat together but—and he was probably right [*unclear words*]. That was the good ol' days. [*Laughs*] Dickie, he's a funny guy. Yeah, he's a—you know, was always good to us. [*Cat purring*]

EJ: So that woulda been the first—you talked—first integrated club in Fayetteville kinda but . . .

EFC: Well, that's what Dickie says, you know.

[05:08:36] EJ: What he says, but you talked about seein' Buddy Hayes. Where would you have seen him play?

SL: Well, he played at George's, I know . . .

EJ: Did he?

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . 'cause we've got a recording from him at George's.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: And that's from George's . . .

SL: Uh-huh.

EJ: . . . Majestic Lounge?

EFC: And I was tryin' to think . . .

EJ: Okay.

EFC: . . . if there was another place, and I can't remember what it was called that he used to play. I want to say the armory, but I might be wrong, but I've forgotten.

SL: Well, the armories were a pretty good place to play. I mean . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . they were a big, open place, and if you had a following, you could get quite a few people in there.

[05:09:11] EJ: Well, and I think JoJo used to do his birthday at the VFW, so maybe it was . . .

EFC: Mighta been with them.

EJ: . . . and that's right down in that section of town.

EFC: Right.

SL: I bet that's probably right.

EJ: I bet that's what it is.

EFC: Probably. You're right, yeah.

[05:09:23] SL: Well, now, let's get back to Dickie Pool. What did Dickie do before he opened the Library Club? Do you know?

EFC: Well, see, the Library originally was a beer hall and a pool hall-type place. But before that he—I remember him workin' at the Red Lion.

[05:09:38] SL: Charlie Smoot.

EFC: Yeah, as a bartender. The first time we met Dickie, he was a bartender at the Red Lion.

SL: Yeah, Gary . . .

EFC: He said, "Well, you guys, I'm goin' get you guys some gigs on campus." And he—yeah.

SL: Yeah, my brother Gary used to bounce for . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . Charlie Smoot.

EFC: Charlie Smoot.

SL: He was a Chicago guy, wasn't he? Chicago mob.

EFC: I think, or yeah, I mean, yeah, he used to have that club in Tulsa, the Fondalite, originally, I think. [*Laughs*] I remember

one night when Levon was playin' with us. That was one of our regular gigs was the Red Lion. We went down to play, and there was another band set up. Was Chuck King and the Bel Airs. Not the Bel Airs . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . from Columbia. Levon says, "Well, we'll just whup their ass and play anyway." [*Laughter*] But we didn't. He said, "Well, Charlie, could you front me some money?" And Charlie said, "How much?" He said, "Oh, couple hundred." [*Laughs*] Charlie went, "Oooh," and he didn't do it. [*Laughter*] Charlie. I remember one time he had a big fight. Loyd Phillips . . .

SL: Loyd Phillips.

EFC: . . . was there, and he got in this big fight. And we were on stage. And Charlie comes up there with that cane, and he says, "Stop! You're bein' foolish." [*Laughter*] Didn't do any good.

[05:10:53] SL: You know, we didn't really finish talkin' about Dayton Straton, either.

EFC: That's right.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Now, you know, Dayton was a great fighter. I mean, he just . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . he knew how to fight . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . I guess.

EFC: He was a great guy, but he had a short temper. I mean, you know, once he lost it, he really lost it. And he knew that, but you don't [*laughs*] wanna make him mad. No, he was a great music promoter. I mean, he did great with the Rink. And then they had that other club in Norman. Yeah, and of course, he was Levon's buddy, too, and The Band. First time I ever met Dayton was that time I was talkin' about meetin' Ronnie and Levon over there on Maple Street. Dayton drove up in his car and got out of the car, and I thought he was one of the musicians. You know, he had slick, black hair, you know, and everything, but it was Dayton. Yep.

[05:11:47] SL: He was a pilot.

EFC: Yeah. Well, I think Levon—I'm not mistaken, I think Levon mighta owned half of that plane. I think they were kinda in partners on that.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: Yeah. I think so.

SL: Who was it—I think it was Doug Douglas used to tell me to get

to Little Rock, Dayton would just follow Highway 71 down and hang a left.

EFC: He used to do that—wasn't that plane, but this other single engine he had, he would go to Norman, Oklahoma. He didn't have any radio equipment. He'd just follow the highways. He knew where he was goin'. [*Laughter*] And he could land it over by his club.

EJ: Wow.

EFC: 'Cause it was by the Canadian River there, just a big field, you know.

[05:12:31] SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] Well now, but he, of course, died in an airplane crash. In an—in an airplane that . . .

EFC: Yeah, he went down to Fort Smith to pick up some parts. He had built those steel buildings, like the Rink. And he was gettin' some hinges or somethin', somethin' simple. The weather was sunny.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: The weather was nice down there. Picked the stuff up and was on his way back, and there was this big kinda thunderhead thing. He thought, "Well, I'm gonna go around it. Well, no, it's a little bit big. Can't go around it. Well, I'm gonna go over it." Before you know it, he was inside the cloud and . . .

SL: Couldn't see.

EFC: . . . you know, and it was a, you know, tornadic-type cloud. It just tore the plane apart, evidently. But you know what? They said he landed in the middle of the road, a dirt road, down by Rudy or somewhere down in there.

SL: So he was tryin' to pull it out . . .

EFC: So it looked like he was aimin' it, but they said the wings was already off of it, were already tore off. So I don't know.

SL: Wow.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Crazy.

[05:13:29] EJ: So he ran the Rockwood Club, and then he ran the Rink . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . and I mean, I remember goin' out to the Rink and seein' just the posters, the . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . the wall of publicity photos of people that played out there.

EFC: He had a lot of people out there, yeah.

EJ: Ike and Tina Turner, I think, and . . .

EFC: Wayne Cochran was a big . . .

EJ: Wayne Cochran.

EFC: . . . deal. [*Laughs*] Hell, ZZ Top's played out there.

SL: That's right.

EJ: ZZ Top, that's right.

EFC: Bonnie Raitt.

[05:13:53] SL: Bonnie Raitt. Did you ever cross paths with her?

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: What's the story with her?

EFC: She's cool. Really cool. I mean, I like her a lot. We—she actually played on a song for us out in LA at Shangri-La Studios. We were doin' demos. She played slide.

EJ: Really?

EFC: Yeah. She come to hear us play two or three times.

EJ: Not anything that came out?

EFC: Nope.

EJ: [*Unclear words*]

EFC: Nope. And I saw—the last time I saw her was in Memphis. She played Memphis in May at the—yeah. Yeah, she's a really neat gal.

SL: She's a great story.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: You know, she . . .

EFC: Right.

SL: . . . pulled out of it and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . all of a sudden . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . really came through.

EFC: I mean, even then, this was in [19]70—I meant, [19]80, maybe [19]81 or somethin, when we went out to Shangri-La Studios and worked with—she was datin' Rob Fraboni at the time. You know Robert . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . producer guy. Yeah, he was a nice guy but—so she was at the studio all the time while we were, you know, recordin' and stuff. But she'd already had I don't know how many albums out and . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Kinda like in limbo on her deal—record deal, and . . .

EJ: Right.

EFC: . . . she ended up strikin' gold on that . . .

SL: *Nick of Time*.

EFC: . . . *Nick of Time*. That's right.

[05:15:07] EJ: Is that a John Hiatt song that she a big hit with?

EFC: Yeah, that "take off your kid gloves." They "ain't no porcupine"

or whatever.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, that was a big one. She had a bunch of hits off that record. I like her stuff.

SL: I do, too.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: She's cool. Yeah. She was down in Little Rock here four or five years ago and playin' at the River Park—what do you call it down there? Riverfront or whatever it is. And—with not—with Lyle Lovett, and anyway, we had played over there at the Market. There's that building there. They have afternoon . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . late-afternoon concert. We played there, and then she was playin' right there at the deal. So we just stood up on the lawn, right? We had passes to go in, but we didn't try to go down backstage, but. [05:15:57] We were up on the lawn, and she said, "Little Rock, this is cool. Anybody from the state of Arkansas like Levon Helms and the Cate Brothers, so it must be a cool place." [*Laughter*]

SL: There you go.

EFC: She mentioned our name, yeah.

SL: Yeah. Yeah, I really don't hear anything bad about her at all.

EFC: No.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Whenever everybody . . .

EFC: She came up a couple times to California. We were playin' with Levon, and she'd come up and sing with us a little bit.

EJ: Oh, nice.

EFC: Yeah. Yeah, I like her. [05:16:34] Yeah, Dayton was definitely part of the, you know, music [*laughs*] scene . . .

SL: Well, yeah.

EFC: . . . as far as bringin' acts to town and stuff. He knew his stuff.

SL: And he knew how work with the kids. Keep them in line.

EFC: Yep.

SL: He didn't take any . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . thing from anybody. [*Cat purring*]

EFC: Nope.

SL: Had no fear. [05:17:00] Have you been to Randy Stratton's website?

EFC: No. I hadn't—Daytune Attractions?

SL: I don't—I think, maybe, Daytunes. You oughta go to it. There's some footage. He's got—he's actually got some pretty neat stuff on there . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah, I talk to . . .

SL: . . . of Dayton and . . .

EFC: . . . him. Well, he calls me about once or twice a week.

SL: . . . Dayton and Ronnie are comin' out of a—I think they're in Malibu.

EFC: Oh yeah?

SL: I don't know where they are. They're in California somewhere.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And it's a very young Ronnie Hawkins. And you can just tell by the way he's moving that he's got something about him that . . .

EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah.

SL: . . . is different.

[05:17:43] EFC: He was on that Bob Dylan tour, you know, [19]74, After the Flood. Dayton worked that tour, security or somethin'.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: Yep.

SL: I did not know that.

EFC: Yeah, we went down to Memphis and did a show, and we went to the party afterwards and everything. Dayton was there with Bill Graham. [*SL laughs*] Yeah.

SL: Arkansas.

EFC: Yep.

[05:18:06] SL: Okay. Well, maybe we should wrap this up about—
with Arkansas music in general and its effect. I mean, it seems
to me that, you know, you've got the Delta stuff and—but
there's also now—I'd have to say that the Ozark, Northwest
Arkansas, has also contributed to the music scene in a
pretty . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . significant way. I think Louis Jordan is originally from
Arkansas.

EFC: Yep.

EJ: He's from Brinkley.

SL: From Brinkley.

EFC: Yep.

[05:18:41] SL: You know, you've got . . .

EFC: What's the . . .

SL: . . . Johnny Cash. You've got . . .

EJ: Glen Campbell.

SL: Glen Campbell.

EFC: Glen Campbell.

SL: I mean, and . . .

EFC: Conway Twitty.
SL: Conway Twitty.
EJ: Conway Twitty.
EFC: What's the jazz player, plays horn, that's from . . .
EJ: Oh, Sun Ra.
EFC: Yeah.
EJ: Yeah. Is from Little Rock, right?
EFC: Yeah. And then there's another one, too.
EJ: Pharoah Sanders. That's who it—it's not Sun Ra.
EFC: Yeah. Yeah.
EJ: Sun Ra's from Alabama. It's Pharoah . . .
EFC: Right.
EJ: . . . Sanders . . .
EFC: Yeah.
EJ: . . . is from Little Rock.
EFC: Right. Pharoah . . .
EJ: Yeah.
EFC: . . . that's who I'm tryin' to think of. Yeah.
SL: So anyway . . .
EJ: [*Unclear words*]
EFC: Al Green.
EJ: CeDell Davis.

SL: Al Green.

EJ: Al Green.

SL: Yeah. [*EFC laughs*] [05:19:14] So I mean, there's—it would seem to me that it just keeps pouring out of here, one way or another.

EFC: Yep. What's funny about it, too, though, is, like, with those years out there on the road and stuff, and people ask me, "Where are you from?" and you say, "Arkansas," it's like, "Arkansas? Where's that?" They don't have any idea. You know, it's like . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . they don't give it much credit. [*Laughs*] You know what I mean.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Must be all barefoot hillbillies and [*laughs*]—right?

[05:19:47] EJ: Well, that's one of the things that's always struck me is how the perception of the Ozarks is the hillbilly Ozarks.

EFC: Right.

EJ: But then you guys come out of here playing this—playing soul music.

EFC: [*Laughs*] Yeah.

EJ: You know . . .

EFC: We're . . .

EJ: . . . it's one of those . . .

EFC: Instead of bluegrass. [*Laughs*] Yeah.

EJ: Yeah, one of those places . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . where perception and reality are pretty different.

EFC: Yep. Yep. [*Laughs*] I never did get a—I mean, I got a pickup, but I've just never got into the, you know, the whatever you call it, [*laughs*] redneck lifestyle or whatever it is.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: You know, I've got my dad's pickup but—that I use, but I don't know. You know, it's not what you expect, like you're sayin', you know.

EJ: It's . . .

EFC: Think we'd be playin' country music and, you know.

EJ: The first time I heard you guys play that John Hiatt song, "Memphis in the Meantime" . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . I thought it was y'all's song . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . 'cause it seemed like it . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . seems like it fits.

EFC: Yeah. [*Unclear words*]

[05:20:47] SL: Well, so anyway, Arkansas music, I mean . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. It's influenced a lotta music everywhere [*laughs*]
through the years, I think.

SL: Well, I mean, you can't discount what The Band did, too.

EFC: It's true.

SL: And I mean, you know, Robbie was a great writer, but he
writes like he's a Southern writer.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

SL: I mean, the stories are outta the South.

[05:21:12] EFC: I remember when they were here in the winter of
[19]65, [*SL laughs*] stayin' at the Iris Motel.

SL: Is that right?

EFC: Yeah. Yep.

EJ: Oh, that's interesting.

EFC: They, well, they got busted in Canada or somethin', and they
kind—they had—kinda had to stay out . . .

SL: Stay away.

EFC: . . . stay away for a while, and they stayed here. And Dayton
was bookin' 'em, and he'd book 'em in Dallas and Norman and

stuff. That was in the winter of [19]65. He said, "We're hardly—we're just barely alive."

SL: Oh my . . .

EFC: I mean, it's a really a Civil War kind of a song, but there's still those lyrics . . .

EJ: But he's . . .

EFC: . . . like, well, you know . . .

SL: Yeah. They're talkin'.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Wow.

SL: Talkin' what they know.

[05:21:47] EFC: Yeah. The story about Richard stealin', you know, steaks out of the supermarket . . .

SL: It's Piggly Wiggly.

EFC: . . . and cooked 'em with an iron.

SL: They're talkin' Piggly Wiggly.

EJ: Piggly Wiggly over there.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

EJ: I remember that . . .

SL: Yeah.

EJ: . . . Piggly Wiggly.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Yeah. Yeah, they used to—the girls just let 'em—used to do it.
The checkout girls, they knew . . .

EFC: Really? He had the overcoat?

SL: . . . they knew that they were [*EFC laughs*] doin' this, and they
just let . . .

EFC: You ever talk about him cookin' steak on an iron?

SL: Yeah. [*Laughter*]

EFC: It works, I guess.

SL: Yeah. Yeah. Probably does. [*Laughter*] Probably does.

EFC: Yeah. Hold on. And I guess they kinda went from there—I—
they went back to Canada, but that's where they ended up with
that summer gig in New Jersey. Yeah.

EJ: Yep.

[05:22:32] EFC: But back then they were slick-lookin' guys. They all
wore suits and ties exactly alike and [*SL laughs*] short hair.

SL: They—yeah.

EFC: But when we went to Toronto and saw 'em that afternoon,
"This is different." Nobody had on the same suit, and they
didn't have the neckties on. They had their sport coat on but
no neckties and—[*laughs*] somethin's gettin' ready to happen
here, different.

EJ: Beginnin' to loosen up.

EFC: Yeah, that's right.

[05:23:05] SL: They did afternoon shows there for the underage, right?

EFC: Mighta been. I'm—I didn't even think about that. It was a matinee.

SL: And then they did the evening shows for . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . people that were of age.

EFC: Yep.

SL: And then they'd party all night.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: Sleep till early afternoon, get up, and do it again.

EFC: When we went to New Jersey that summer before, we got there about six or seven o'clock in the mornin'. We drove straight through from Arkansas, thirty hours or somethin' like that. [*SL laughs*] When we got there, it was just daylight. The sun was comin' up, and they were all still awake, 'cept Garth. Garth was asleep, but [*SL laughs*] Rick and Levon and Richard, they were still up. We took Levon down to the Laundromat to pick up his laundry. [*Laughter*] Yep.

SL: Just like home, huh? [*Laughter*]

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Oh, that's funny. That's funny. [05:24:04] So gosh, I hope we're not—I guess there was . . .

EFC: I hope we're not forgettin' somebody.

SL: Well, there was Billie Schneider . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . at the . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . at the Gaslight? No.

EFC: Mountain Inn but the—what's that—what was that called?

EJ: Brass Monkey.

SL: Oh, Brass Monkey.

EFC: Yeah. Brass Monkey club. But then she was . . .

SL: But before that it was . . .

EFC: . . . upstairs at the . . .

SL: At . . .

EFC: What was that called upstairs there by the restaurant?

SL: Well, it was the political hangout.

[05:24:33] EFC: Yeah. Oh yeah. Bill Clinton used to come in there.

SL: Every—all the politicians.

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: All the . . .

EFC: What was that called?

SL: It was called the . . .

EFC: Hell, Carol worked there some. [*Laughs*]

SL: Mh-hmm. I'll think of it in just a minute, but anyway, Billie Schneider . . .

EFC: Yep.

SL: . . . and I guess—who was—David Royal is . . .

EFC: Oh yeah. [*Laughs*]

SL: . . . always hangin' out there, kind of . . .

EFC: David Royal.

SL: . . . bein' the muscle guy for . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

SL: . . . you know.

EFC: Jed used to play up there.

SL: Yep. Well, that was up in the restaurant. He played . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . the restaurant.

EFC: That's what I'm tryin' to say.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: I couldn't remember what that was called up there at that bar.
[05:25:13] That—now, was that after the Brass Monkey or before?

SL: It was before and during and . . .

EFC: Okay. I guess it was.

SL: . . . it was—ah, I can't think of it. [*EFC laughs*] David Pryor could tell you that in a heartbeat.

EFC: But you know, Steve Williams had the Gaslight.

SL: That's right.

EFC: At first it was Tommy McClelland and LeRoy—what was his last name? But when we first started playin'—but then Steve somehow got in there or somethin'.

[05:25:45] SL: The Town Club.

EFC: The Town Club, that's it.

SL: It's called the Town Club.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Okay.

SL: Yeah. So I think you've survived.

EFC: [*Laughs*] So far.

SL: So far. I know there'll be some more stories that you'll wanna . . .

EFC: Yeah, I can't remember anything. Maybe Ernie'll remember some stuff.

SL: Well, if you think of somethin', just . . .

EFC: I just . . .

SL: . . . try—do a little note.

EFC: I'm thinkin' I'm leavin' somebody out but I . . .

EJ: The genesis that we went through, the membership of the band, of the Del-Reys, you had Randy Favorite and Lonnie Watson . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . first . . .

EFC: Yeah, that was pretty mu—and then Gerald Golden played.

EJ: Gerald Golden played . . .

EFC: When we went to . . .

EJ: . . . bass.

EFC: . . . New Jersey for that year, he played.

EJ: Oh, just for that year and then . . .

EFC: Yeah. When we came back ever—and we just disbanded. We didn't even play for a couple of months. And we got Bill Wright started playin' [laughs] with us. I can't think of anything right now. I know I will after you leave. I'll probably think, "Oh, I forgot so and so," but [laughs] it'll be all right.

EJ: When you guys . . .

[05:27:06] EFC: Don Tyson's always been good to us. I mean . . .

SL: Don Tyson.

EFC: . . . we always played . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . so many parties for him, and he always paid us good and treated us great. We did several of his Russellville parties.

SL: Yep.

EFC: I remember one night Bill Clinton was there. It was before he ran for president, and The Band was playin'. It was like—I think it was after Richard had passed, but I was standin' back in the back, and then we ended up gettin' up and playin' with 'em, too, you know, but all at once there's this arm around my shoulder, and it was Clinton. He says, "Man, that sounds familiar, doesn't it?" [*EJ laughs*] Course, The Band. I said, "Yeah, it kinda sounds like The Band." [*Laughter*] He just laughed.

SL: Well, I tell you. Don does a lot of great things.

EFC: He sure does. That whole company.

SL: And he doesn't talk about it, and there's a lotta stuff that he does that nobody knows about.

EFC: That's right. I know some things he's done that nobody knows about.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: And he has been a great friend to music . . .

EFC: Yeah, he has.

SL: . . . and musicians.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yep.

SL: He has all—you know, he probably had a home at the Rockwood Club and . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . and . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . really, a lot of his closest friends come from that . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . from that experience. Not just musicians, but you know, the clientele, and a lotta friendships . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . began there . . .

EFC: That's right.

SL: . . . and strengthened there. [05:28:59] Is there anything else you want to say about the Grateful Dead and that experience with them?

EFC: Well, it was just like—it was definitely somethin' . . .

SL: Different?

EFC: . . . different. Like the New Year's Eve party, Bill Graham came

from the balcony down on a wire in this space-capsule thing. He was Father Time, you know, this white, you know, [*SL laughs*] fake beard, onto the stage at midnight. But backstage was like a circus, a carnival, or somethin' like. Every member has his own dressin' room at the Grateful Dead. And whatever they want in the dressin' room.

SL: Cool.

EFC: If it's a belly dancer or whatever it is. I mean, it was like a circus [*laughs*] or somethin'.

SL: That's great. Well . . .

EFC: Yeah, we played up in Canada one—with 'em at some outdoor thing. I don't know if it was seventy thousand people or [*unclear words*]. And Gary—I was hangin' out the—not with friends or anything, with Jerry Garcia, you know, just kinda hangin' out. They was talkin' guitars and stuff, you know.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: Yeah.

[05:29:58] EJ: And then some of them came out and joined you guys for the encores a couple of times?

EFC: Maybe . . .

EJ: Maybe.

EFC: Bill mighta, Kreutzmann, but . . .

EJ: Ah.

EFC: Nah, we usually played first, and then they played a long show.

[Laughs]

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: It's funny. They'd be like . . .

EJ: Oh, I'm thinkin' . . .

EFC: Between songs they had—all the lights would go out, and they'd be standing there. You could see 'em lightin' a cigarette. Stand there for about five, ten minutes. They wouldn't even start the next song. You hear 'em tunin' up and bling, bling, bling. And then when they started, it'd be like twenty minutes long.

SL: Yeah, yeah . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . yeah, yeah.

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: What was that, Eric?

[05:30:31] EJ: Oh, I was just—I was thinkin'—I guess I was thinkin' of some of The Band gigs with the Grateful Dead where I know that they—there was some . . .

EFC: Yeah. I think so.

EJ: . . . jam, encore jams . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . a couple of things . . .

EFC: Like I say . . .

EJ: You were talkin' about Terry playin' . . .

EFC: . . . Terry did go out that one time. I don't think Levon did that—I know he didn't that night. Rick probably [*laughs*] did.

[05:30:52] SL: Rick was a great spirit, wasn't he?

EFC: He was. He always used to say, "Got a m—you gotta minute? Hey, mister, you gotta minute?" [*Laughter*] That was one of his favorite sayings.

SL: He just always got . . .

EFC: He was a grea . . .

SL: . . . really good . . .

EFC: He was a jolly guy.

SL: He was a jolly guy.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: Great, positive energy all the time, it seemed like . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . to me. Or whenever I was around him.

EFC: Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yep. He was great. All those guys were cool.

SL: They're all different, too.

EFC: And they were all different. Yep. [05:31:28] Garth's, like, you know, totally different. [*Laughter*] He'd go to the gig like—when the guys were settin' up equipment, he would be there, like three or four o'clock. But he'd have his own dressin' room, and he'd have his little incense burnin', and he's workin' on his accordion or his saxophone. Just like he'd spend all afternoon just dabblin' around . . .

SL: Piddlin'.

EFC: . . . instead of stayin' in the hotel [*laughs*] room.

SL: Yeah.

EFC: He'd do that every—almost every day, and sometimes they'd have to carry his—some of his keyboards up to his room 'cause he'd be reprogramming the synthesizers and stuff. [05:32:01] And in Japan they had a—it's called Chroma. It was made by Fender or Rhodes—may be Rhodes that made it. Chroma was a—one of the early synthesizers. They actually had a Garth Hudson button on it. [*EJ laughs*] You know what it did? It made that "yeeow" bend like he used to do . . .

SL: Oh.

EFC: . . . with the Lowrey organ . . .

SL: Yeah.

EFC: . . . with that little thing on the end—the volume pedal that'd

bend the note?

SL: Yeah.

EFC: They had a button on it. They called it the Garth Hudson button.

EJ: Wow.

SL: That's great.

EFC: He'd turn—he'd hit that button, and then when you played, it'd bend the notes. [*Laughter*]

SL: That's cool.

EFC: Yep.

[05:32:37] EJ: So you guys toured with them, like the whole Cate Brothers Band . . .

EFC: Yeah, it was like a eight-piece band, you know.

EJ: Eight-piece band . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . two bass players, two drummers . . .

EFC: Yeah, at first was—what happened was when they decided we're gonna go—come back and do some stuff, well, they were lookin' for a guitar player, and Levon said, "Well, I know the best guy. It's Earl, you know," [*laughs*] 'cause he'd been—I'd been playin' with him but—and I'd—actually, the first show we played in Halifax, it was just me, right? And then—and Richard

was havin'—they hadn't played in so long, Richard was havin' prob—you know, a problem, you know, gettin' it tight, and Rick was kinda loosey-goosey. Levon said, "Let's get the rest of the boys up here and fill it out." [*Laughter*] And it really did work, I mean . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . 'cause Rick liked to play guitar acoustic a lot, and he'd prefer to do that. So . . .

SL: That's funny.

EFC: . . . lotta times, you know, Ri—or Ron was playin' bass. There was tunes, though, we'd have both bass players, two basses.

[*Laughs*]

[05:33:31] EJ: I'm watching the video and watchin' Levon and Terry play together.

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: And then watchin' Rick and Ron playin' bass at the same time . . .

EFC: Oh yeah.

EJ: . . . and that really shouldn't work.

EFC: I know, but it does.

EJ: Two bass players . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . and two drummers playin' rock and roll at the same time should not work.

EFC: That's right.

EJ: But those guys, it did.

EFC: Yep. And then three keyboard players. [*Laughter*]

EJ: Yeah.

SL: Richard and—yeah.

EFC: Yeah. It was a big sound.

SL: Big sound. Well, I think we oughta wrap up. I think we oughta let this guy off the hook.

EFC: All right.

SL: I think we've hit you pretty hard. [*EJ laughs*]

EFC: Yeah.

SL: You've been very patient. I appreciate you givin' us all this time . . .

EFC: Wished I could remember more but . . .

SL: Well, we're not [*EFC laughs*] done, really. [*Sound of ice rattling in cup*] I mean, you know, we'll wrap today, but we still have Ernie and I still . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . and I'll try and soften Ernie up about gettin' both of you together, and we don't have—you don't have to play.

EFC: Yeah.

SL: But maybe . . .

EFC: He won't.

SL: . . . maybe you could talk off of each other and help . . .

EFC: Yeah.

SL: . . . get the memory things back and all that but . . .

EFC: He probably—he might think of some of the childhood stuff, too.

SL: Yeah. And I'll run him through the same thing. I'll . . .

[05:34:48] EFC: Boy, Eric's got quite a collection there.

EJ: I've been—I've got all of the Cate Brothers, all four of those records. Got the two Metromedia records. Got this one—I forgot the laser disk of the live in Japan show . . .

EFC: Right.

EJ: . . . which is also on video.

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: Those are fun to watch. You guys . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EJ: . . . put on quite a show [*EFC laughs*] with those guys. And then . . .

EFC: I thought the . . .

EJ: . . . this . . .

EFC: . . . the Japan—yeah. There you go.

EJ: The Kenny Rogers . . .

EFC: I used to have that one.

EJ: . . . that has your—has the cover of [*clicks tongue*] "We All Got to Help Each Other."

[05:35:21] EFC: I thought that the Japanese . . .

EJ: Of course . . .

EFC: . . . back—*The Band Is Back*—yeah . . .

EJ: Yeah.

EFC: . . . the Japanese *The Band Is Back* you—did the better job on the sound. I mean, the Japanese . . .

EJ: You think so? [*Camera clicks*] Is it better than the . . .

EFC: I thought they did a really good—I thought, you know . . .

EJ: Yeah. I've just . . .

EFC: . . . better than—Vancouver's okay, but I thought Japan was ?great? . . .

EJ: Yeah, I think the Japan performance is definitely . . .

EFC: Yeah. Yeah.

EJ: Everyone seems a little more charged up, and the audience seems to be like they're more into it whereas . . .

EFC: Yeah.

EFC: . . . the Vancouver audience people are kinda . . .

EFC: That was a huge place, yeah.

EJ: . . . sittin' down clappin'.

EJ: Yeah, you're right.

SL: So who is this?

EFC: That's Bill Wright at the top and Terry in the stripes . . .

SL: That's Bill Wright? Wow. [*Sound of ice rattling in cup*] Huh.

Okay. We should go ahead and stop.

[05:36:06 End of interview]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]