

**Oral History Interview of  
Harold “Lucky” Floyd**

**Interviewed by: Andy Wilkinson  
October 11, 2012  
Dallas, Texas**

**Part of the:  
*Crossroads Music Archive Interviews***

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## Interview Series Background:

The Crossroads Artists Project encompasses interviews conducted by the Crossroads of Music Archive Staff members. They hope to document the creative process of artists and songwriters from all across the Southwestern United States.

## Transcript Overview:

This interview features Harold “Lucky” Floyd, drummer of the rock and roll band “The Sparkles.” A native of Seagraves, Texas, Lucky discusses his early life and how he became involved in music. He recounts his career with The Sparkles, their rise to fame in the mid-1960s, and his later years as a high school band director.

**Length of Interview:** 1:03:24

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### Keywords

Rock and roll, marching band, West Texas music

**Andy Wilkinson (AW):**

Because good things always happen when I have it off and [laughing]. Let me slate it by saying it is the 11<sup>th</sup> of October, 2012. Andy Wilkinson here with Lucky Floyd at his home, beautiful home in Dallas. On a nice, cool, overcast day.

**Lucky Floyd (LF):**

Mm-hm.

AW:

Yeah, it was a great rock and roll band and I remember you know, that's where we went. We went to the Village Swinger and the Music Box and the Elevator.

[Speaking at the same time]

LF:

The Music Box.

LF:

I remember when we left the Music Box, I hated to leave them because [inaudible] the Village Swinger, and the Music Box people thought that their music box was the reason people were coming, not because of the bands.

AW:

Yeah.

LF:

And I told him, I said, we were getting 200 a night back then and I told him, I said, "We want 250 and half of the gate after 500, ya know we'll split it with ya," and he said, "No we're not doing that." And I said, "Well, we been offered 275 over at the Village Swinger and half of the gate after 550," whatever it was. And they wouldn't do it. They thought it was their Music Box and we went over there and everybody started going to Music Box and he started hiring like the Everly Brothers, Bruce Channel from "Hey Baby," and they wouldn't have anybody the nights we played there. Everybody would be over at the Village Swinger hearing The Sparkles and so it was—we were real popular in Lubbock I will say that.

AW:

And the great thing about the Village Swinger was you didn't get your butt kicked in parking lot as often as you did at the Music Box, [both laugh] and I'm not sure why. It was the same crowd, but it was always a devil of a time getting out of the Music Box without some scuffle breaking out, but the Village Swinger was never like that and you know, how could you explain that?

LF:

Well I like that ole guy, and then years later the Music Box came back with a guy, what was his name? It was uh—came out of Amarillo and oh he had a couple of hit type records that was like us. I can't think of his name right now and he was pretty popular. What was his name? From

Amarillo—Ray Ruff.

AW:

Oh, Ray Ruff.

LF:

Ray Ruff. And they hired Ray Ruff to come and talk to me and Bobby to try and get us to come back to Music Box after about six months to a year. And I told 'em I said, "No," I said, [chuckles] just being stupid but I said ya know I said, "You don't even send us a Christmas card or send us anything, and the guy in the Village Swinger sent us Christmas cards to our families." And they offered me and Bobby, not the rest of the group, they offered me and Bobby 25 inch, 26 inch color TVs or something, each to come back and we told 'em, No. And Howard Ragland who had actually booked The Sparkles—the first you know, he was friends with Ray Ruff and Ray Ruff went on to do really well in religious music as a producer.

AW:

Yeah well he also produced I think, did he not, David Box?

LF:

You know I don't know.

AW:

I think he may have

LF:

I just remember he was into gospel and stuff like that doing real well.

AW:

Yeah. I think he may have. In fact, I think he may have been involved with getting trying to get David Box a record deal. And David had died in the airplane crash in Houston.

LF:

Yeah.

AW:

If I'm not mistaken.

LF:

Yeah. I really don't know. I just know Ray Ruff was really real big with KOMA type stuff. And they'd advertise on KOMA. That was our life line. When I was a kid, I'd listen to that at night laying in bed. Listen to KOMA.

AW:

Let me get a just a snatch of information from you real quick.

LF:

Okay.

AW:

So that a hundred years from now when people are listening to this they'll have the right Lucky Floyd.

LF:

Alright.

AW:

What is your date of birth?

LF:

July 22, 1944.

AW:

Okay, and where you born in Seagraves?

LF:

I was born in Lamesa.

AW:

Lamesa.

LF:

I was the only one in my family born in a hospital.

AW:

Oh really?

LF:

Yeah. I was the last one. I'm the youngest.

AW:

How many brothers and sisters?

LF:

I had 4 sisters and 2 brothers.

AW:

Wow.

LF:

I'm the baby of the family.

AW:

What were your folks doing? Were they farming?

LF:

My dad kinda— he farmed. Had a little old farm, about 23 acres out there but he was also a mechanic. He had a wrecking yard on the Brownfield highway coming out of Seagraves.

AW:

Yeah.

LF:

Had it for years and years. And old Howard Ragland used to go by there. He loved my mother and daddy. He'd book our bands and he'd send my dad a letter saying, "To the Rolls Royce dealership in Seagraves, Texas." He was always giving 'em—my mother and daddy just loved him. He was funny. Howard says that my mother's the one that got him interested in me. He said he had stopped there at that Dixie Dog and get a hamburger. She was always saying, "You need to hear my son sing," you know and doing stuff like that and I don't know if that's true or not. She probably did. But how I actually got in The Sparkles—I had a little band called the Twilights in Seagraves. In a little bitty town like that, there were two rock and roll bands.

AW:

Wow.

LF:

There was the Twilights and the El Dorados. And Bobby Smith, the bass player of The Sparkles had a group called the El Dorados and I had a group called the Twilights which was my brother and one of my best friends, James Petty and some of them. Well anyways, Bobby wrote a letter to Howard Ragland and when Charlie Hatchet and Gary Blakely left The Sparkles to form a group. 'Cause Charlie was a pretty smart businessman. He became an attorney and booking agent up in Austin, you know. Well anyways Charlie started a group called the Raiders at Texas Tech.

AW:

Yeah. That was smart.

LF:

Yeah. A three piece group and he was booking that. Well they needed a bass player—something. I don't know how that worked but anyways Bobby wrote Howard Ragland a letter at WT, West Texas State, and told him about himself and old Howard came down and tried him out and let him play and then Bobby he said they needed a drummer and he said, "Well I know a guy that can really sing and play drums." And so they got me and I went and played and so I started playing when I was a junior in high school and Howard paid us fifteen dollars apiece a night and he'd make like he'd book for an oh—150. Well he'd pay the band ya know 15 a piece. Except I found out later Stanley was getting 20. [Laughs] The lead guitar player that was so good. Anyways so we found out about that.

AW:



Now was this a version of The Sparkles?

LF:

Yes, sir. This was the original.

AW:

Yeah.

LF:

This was the root that started doing it. Stanley and Donny and Bobby and I.

AW:

Yeah.

LF:

And when Howard had me he was paying us all fifteen dollars apiece and he was giving Stanley 20, we found out later but anyways. I'm not a business man at all and none of us so I'd kept doing that forever. But anyways Donny Roberts was a real good business man, the rhythm guitar player. And he said we need to quit him do this week and make this amount do this and I said I'm scared to tell him that. Ya know I was a big coward—

AW:

Yeah.

LF:

And anyways we ended up doing that. And then we started making real good money.

AW:

Yeah.

LF:

And started playing. We were the—one of the unique things—we was on a panel one time with the Fireballs and a bunch of them at Buddy Holly Center one year and we was talking about that and we were one of the very few rock and roll bands back then that didn't have a daytime job. Music was our way of making a living. And so we had to be good [chuckles] and so we ending up going—we'd play in an armory in Artesia, New Mexico. And then we'd got to where we was doing real good there. And so we'd say okay we're going to play there again the next month on the 15<sup>th</sup>. And then we'd play in Lubbock somewhere and we'd say well we'll play there the 22<sup>nd</sup> and then we'd go to Carlsbad. And so we was playing Carlsbad, Artesia, Roswell, at the air bases there some, and then at just different proms in Hobbs and that kind of places. And it just kinda built from that. And then Bobby and I, I remember we got some—I don't know why we did it—we started doing a Righteous Brothers show with the Music Box. We'd put on our Righteous Brothers show was to put on some tan jackets a lot [laughter] that was our show. [Laughter] just to sing the Righteous Brothers stuff but those were good memories. Those old days those were good memories.

AW:

Do I remember The Sparkles doing, "Walking the Dog?"

LF:

Yeah. I sang that, yeah.

AW:

That is, to me—I wish there was a recording of that because no one has sung that song like you do. I've listened to , what is it? Albert—no—Thompson—whoever did the original cut. Big, big, black guy that did the whistling.

LF:

Rufus Thomas is who did that, yeah.

AW:

Rufus Thomas. And I've listened to all other versions but I've never heard a version as good as The Sparkles.

LF:

Well we had a lot of people that really liked us you know. And of course we loved to play you know, put on a show. But we just—the one thing I regret with The Sparkles, we recorded some but we never worked on it. We would stop on our way to Odessa to play for a prom or to play at a dance. We would stop in Odessa at the recording studio and record there for three hours and go on to the gig you know.

AW:

Whose studio was that in Odessa?

LF:

That was—I can't think of—

AW:

Ben Hall was in Big Spring wasn't he?

LF:

Yeah this wasn't Big Spring. This was—I can't think of the guy's name. And then Roy Orbison—

AW:

Tommy Allsup had a studio—

LF:

Tommy Allsup's is where we recorded, yeah.

AW:

Yeah, 'cause he had a studio there for a while.

LF:

Yeah Tommy Allsup's studio. [door opens] 'Cause I remember him having an echo chamber out in a deal. That's my son coming in I guess. [lowers voice] Yeah he's divorced and having a hard time. Anyway he came and -hey!

Son:

What's happening?

LF:

Chad this is Andy Wilkinson. He's from Texas Tech and he's doing a—

[voices of Chad and Andy in background]

LF:

He does historical archives about rock and roll music in the '60s and he's—we're doing a deal and he's gonna come out and hear us tonight.

Chad:

Oh really?

AW:

Are you playing also?

Chad:

No but I have a lot of people coming out.

AW:

Oh good. Yeah I'm bringing at least two folks from McKinney.

Chad:

Are you really? That's great.

AW:

Well it's nice to meet you.

Chad:

Nice to meet you. Nice to have this stuff recorded.

AW:

Yeah we'll see you later in the evening.

Chad:

Alrighty nice to meet you.

LF:

Damn, anyways I don't know what I was saying or where I was at but—

AW:

That you regretted not working on the recording.

LF:

Oh, I regret not working on our recording part of it more. You know and Bobby and I wanted to do that. And we really got into our writing when we, right before we broke up. And I thought “Daddy’s Gonna Put The Hurt On You,” I thought that was one our best songs that we were getting into more of that. Like “The Hip” was just I showed it to my high school band director and it looked like a drum solo the melody. [Laughter] ‘Cause I was the drummer and it was sort of a little rap thing you get looking back at it you know [inaudible] “twist anything that you can do”—like a little rap thing. Anyway I was so excited when we saw the published music on it you know for the first time. But— then they started doing crazy stuff. The Hickory Records—we went out there to record and one of the—old Wesley Rose, it was Rose and Acuff had that label and he said, “What exactly does that mean?” And I thought, I don't know what you're talking about. It's just a song. [Both laugh] He was trying to find some deep meaning you know and I said, “There's not one.” [Laughter] But those were good times and old Jimmy afforded me a chance to when we used to start doing two drummers—Jimmy Marriot. That's when I got to come out front and start doing stuff out front and singing. And [Phone rings] I'm sorry.

AW:

That's alright.

LF:

Buddy of mine. [Answers phone] Hello Ed. Well I'm being interviewed by this professor from Texas Tech right now about rock and roll music. I know you guys don't believe me. [Laughs] No he's sitting here. He's putting a deal for the archives or stuff. He does all kinds of groups you know. They got country and he's gonna do one with Gary P. Nunn and stuff. What's going on with you? [Pauses] I did. 11:10 Saturday. No, 11:10. Oh I got— you got one too? [Laughter] Well I was just talking to Greg and I said put us down. I said I hadn't talked to him yet but will you let Bob know? [Pauses] Alright [Pauses] Yeah 11:10 Saturday. Alright buddy. Alright thank you Ed. I'll talk to ya later. Bye. [hangs up phone] He's a mechanical engineer that played—he does contract work and he got put out of work for a while. And he started playing every Tuesdays and Thursdays. He kinda hated getting a job again. He got laid off from Verizon. Real good guy though. I've made a lot of friends out there playing golf.

AW:

Where do you play usually?

LF:

Mesquite. I started playing there because you can play as a senior at fifty-five so I'm a starter out there on Friday mornings. And so you get play free. You know if you work four hours you get a free round of golf which it doesn't come out to about five dollars an hour I don't know why I do it but I don't have anything else to do anyways so I started doing that.

AW:

How did you get interested in music in the first place? I mean how many—

LF:

I'll be honest with you the first time I ever thought, "Boy I like this," was I was in the fourth grade. And we walked into a little music room and it wasn't a choir it was just a bunch of unison singing stuff but the music teacher started playing piano and we started singing this song and I'm a little country boy and I'm just looking around here and these people singing and I'm going, "God I like this." I mean I love that singing part and then when I started band, Bill Woods, my high school band director, was a good jazz musician and he—I took private lessons from Paul Lovett in Lubbock, Texas, took private drum lessons from him and took guitar lessons from one of The Four Teens up at Earl Ray's music store for a while. Bobby and I took some lessons up there. My mother and daddy didn't have any money but one thing they did and I don't know how they afforded it but we would take turns going to Lubbock every Saturday and I would take drum lessons and later on I took some guitar lessons. You know but I really appreciate them doing that. I don't know why how it came about or whatever.

AW:

Because did they play music, or?

LF:

My dad played piano a little but I found out later and my mother played a little bit. He could play, he'd sit down and play "Under The Double Eagle" on the piano and we always had a piano in the house. And I'd sit down and kinda chord around on the piano and stuff and then I got a guitar and I played my first talent show when I was in sixth grade. And then had an old black guitar and I don't know whatever happened to that guitar. To this day I wished I had it because it was a really good guitar, and but anyways I would play and then another guy would come and play guitar for me and or something he had a little band out in Loop, Texas out by Seagraves. And he was Leon Bagwell and Leon would come over and play guitar for me and stuff and I'd go to talent shows. My mother would take me to talent shows in Brownfield and all those different places. I think one of the first tunes I remember singing was old Ernest—can't think of his name. Not Ernest Tub but it was that, [sings] "you load 16 tons and what do you get."

AW:

Tennessee Ernie Ford.

LF:

Yeah Tennessee Ernie Ford. Yeah and I sang that song at one of my first talent shows I think. You know but that, I just developed a love for it and my second year in school when I was in the seventh grade, my—I had done so well on drums my high school band director got me got me out of class and I taught beginning drummers the next year. When I was a seventh grader I was teaching sixth grade drummers. Giving them lessons and he'd give me a dollar for each one.

AW:

[Laughs] So you already had your career mapped out to teach. [Laughter]

LF:

Yeah I knew it was gonna be in music you know and I just—and then when I started playing with old Howard Ragland he could—I was scared of my band director and he was a very good musician but Friday nights we had football games so one time he had a gig for us after I first started and he said, “Come on we gotta go play,” and I says, “I can’t miss this football game. I’m president of the band,” or vice president or whatever it was or officer. He said, “No we go.” He says, “I’m gonna go offer your band director some money.” [Laughter] He got on the bus. And I’m sitting there, scared little kid and he gets on the bus and offers old Bill Woods money to let me go and Bill says, “He’s not going anywhere. He’s going with his high school band.” So anyways they stop in Lamesa, Texas to get some gas and there was a drum kit set up in this station. And old Howard Ragland and them asked him, he said, “Do you play drums?” He said, “Yeah.” And he says, “Well how would you like to make some money tonight or something to play drums? And he says, “I’d love it”. And he said, “Okay.” And he just closed the station got his drums and went with him and played with them that night. [AW Laughs] It was pretty, pretty wild. But, no after we got into Sparkles it just started blooming you know and going and we just kept playing and I went to West Texas State and went to college and we got the itch to go to California. We was always trying to make it big or do something ya know so we went out there and—

AW:

Who was in the band by the time you went to California?

LF:

The first time Gary, and Louie was going to go with us but Gary—I can’t remember he just wasn’t going to go and Louie wasn’t going to go. They was going to go stay in school and stuff and that’s when we hired Al Perkins and Jay Larimore. He was a good organ player. He was a drummer also in Odessa Permian.

AW:

Yeah where did you know them from?

LF:

They, a guy named—I think I got Alzheimer’s. What was his name, he had clubs all over. Herb Graham. He had all kinds of clubs all over Dallas down on the west end and stuff. He became a millionaire but he had a little group. Al Perkins and them played at his club outside right there on the Andrews highway coming into Odessa. There’s a little club and Al Perkins and Jay Larimore and them were playing there. And he told us about em and says you need to talk to these guys. And so I never did even, I don’t think I met ‘em. I don’t remember hearing ‘em play or do anything but anyways they auditioned for us. I don’t remember it but Bob said they did. Maybe they auditioned for Bobby I don’t remember but we hired them and they went to California with us and Herb Graham went with us too and we was driving with trailer and stuff and we’d never gone to a big city and we’re pulling in to L.A. now one of the suburb cities out there I wanna say. I don’t know where it’s at but it was the first time we’d gotten to an interstate thing and we looked up and our brakes pulled real hard to the right when you’re driving that thing and I looked

up and I said, "Oh my God. They're all stopped." We had to go. We went a mile past everybody. We was going so fast we couldn't stop with that trailer down the side of that road. [AW laughs] That was the first time I'd experienced traffic. 'Cause we'd never seen a city like that and we got out there and we liked to starve to death that first time. We'd call this manager supposed to help us out. He would answer the phone and say he wasn't there. [AW laughs] And so when we finally got a gig playing at a club we started, when we was playing those clubs, we would start playing other bands nights off because we needed the money so bad and then we got—that's kinda where I got a little bit burned out cause we just played seven nights a week in those clubs trying to make it and stuff but I saw some great musicians and singers out there. Golly and then we had an audition later on for the *Hanna-Barbera* cartoon show the—Here I go again, can't remember the name of it. the Banana Splits. It was a cartoon show and to this day Bobby and Jay are still singing on that the music on it. Yeah and what we decided, they asked me to do it, and I said, "No." I said, "Bobby's a better harmony singer than I am ya know I'm more of a lead singer and he's a better singer in harmony because we're gonna split the money anyway." That didn't happen. Anyway we were supposed to. Anyway Jay and Bobby they got their first checks and stuff and they didn't even give us a dime of it. I was pissed. And anyway they—Bobby and Jay would go in those new Hollywood stores and get some brand new bell bottom pants and all that stuff and always go out and shit that pissed me off. [AW laughs] Excuse my language but golly that made me mad. But they're still on that deal. They made some pretty good money. I never did know exactly what they got paid. And then we did a TV show, *Judd for the Defense*. You remember that show?

AW:

I saw that. I remember the show and I saw on the web that y'all had done that and—I wanted to ask you about it because that was cutting edge television. You know?

LF:

It was?

AW:

Yeah it was. It was—

LF:

Well see our manager's ex-wife was screwing the director of that show and that's how we got into it. Anyway we got paid to go try on clothes. I couldn't believe it, being a kid from West Texas. Yeah you're gonna go try on these clothes, cause they have certain colors for TV. You should try these on. [Coughs] Excuse me. We got paid for trying on clothes. And then we got in there and they were gonna give us a line and whether you say it or not, if you say it, you still get the scale for saying something. I've never been so embarrassed. One of the guys I still see to this day on some of the shows. They were good actors in that show. And this elevator was supposed to open. And we're sitting around playing in front of this dead body you know singing this song. They wrote the lyrics and we put music. And we got paid for that. Going in the studio and doing it. But anyway they walk in that elevator and there's supposed to say our manager Archie. Where's Archie? Well we're supposed to act confused and so, "Oh he's over there, he's over there." And I'm not kidding you when our line came out it was, "He's over here, He's over here" [says with an accent] [AW laughs] and these directors, these actors were going, "What in the

world?” And of course they cut all that out. But but anyways it got us to scale. I remember we made real good money doing it. And then we’d got into the Factory, one of the top elite clubs in California. I mean I got to know Bill Cosby, I’ve sat and talked with him, drinking drinks and smoking a cigar and I’ve talked to the “Million Dollar Man,” old what’s his name. Never would get my name right. He called me Rocky all the time. He wouldn’t call me Lucky and—

AW:  
Lee—

LF:  
Yeah Lee Majors. Yeah I’ve sit and talked to him many a times. They let our wives come on Wednesday nights and—

AW:  
So were you married when you went out to California?

LF:  
Yeah, yeah. My wife was with me.

AW:  
How many of the band were married?

LF:  
All of us.

AW:  
Whoa. That was hard cause—

LF:  
Yeah and Al’s first wife, Al Perkins, his wife ran off with a pilot from Crosby Stills and Nash. [Laughter] Al, Let me tell you about Al and I don’t know if you want to put this in there or not. Al is a religious guy. He never, he didn’t push his religion at all on you or nothing but Al never drank, never smoked, never did a drug whatsoever. And he’s been married 3 times [Laughter] so he’s got some flaw somewhere. I don’t know what it is, but he’s a good dude and I introduced him to his third wife like I said and well we were playing a reunion and my wife’s cousin which is not the prettiest thing you’ve ever seen, and her and Peggy, my wife’s sister is real pretty. Peggy and her friend who he married: Pamela. Her name’s Pamela too. My wife’s name is Pamela. Anyway they were all sitting out there in the audience acting like little giddy girls. You know about stuff and Al was asking about ‘em. My wife was trying to push her cousin off on him you know and stuff. And he liked old Pamela and so they started talking with each other and I told Al he called me one day and he said, “We’re gonna get married,” and I said, “Al for God sakes man.” I said, “You haven’t known her three months and you’re already talking about getting married. This gonna be your third one. Anyway they been together and it’s just worked out great. You know—

AW:



Yeah that's good.

LF:

But anyways. I was getting into some story and I forgot. I got off on that tangent.

AW:

You were talking about the Factory and also the—[inaudible, speaking over each other]

LF:

Oh that Factory, man it was just amazing. And I was getting a pack one night. It's so big. Real rich, rich, rich psychiatrists and doctors go but it was mainly movie stars. First time we ever played there Jim Brown the football player heard us play and got us in there. That's how we got in there the Factory was from Jim Brown the football player. He liked our band. So anyway we're in there and I'm seeing people that you've seen on TV constantly. You just see them all the time. They're not a big star and you're going, God he's on this and he's on, you know and we're just like this, looking all around you know. And so it was like that every time we played there. And then one day we were—I saw Edward G. Robinson there. You know and that dates us but I saw him and Wilt Chamberlain and they had had all these different—I remember one night we was playing and Elvis Presley was supposed to come. And people, this is how big Elvis was, the people were lined up outside to get in the Factory because Elvis was going to be there tonight and so and I was behind Tommy Smothers talking to him for a minute and he wanted to book our band later on. Wanted to be our manager. Anyway I'll get into that in a minute. But we were sitting out there talking and I said what in the world's going on here to Tommy Smothers and he says Elvis Presley's coming tonight. And I said oh and so I get to go ahead in line because we're the house band. And so I get in there and we get up there and Elvis doesn't show up. He doesn't come but his wife does, Priscilla, and that's back when I smoked and I was getting a pack a cigarettes during the break and I have this tap on my shoulder and I turn around and its Elvis's wife. And she says, "I just want to tell you you've got a lovely band." And I went [makes gasping noise] you know thank you but that was unbelievable to get that. And it was pretty neat. That's how big he was. The movie stars wanted to see him.

AW:

That is big.

LF:

That's real big.

AW:

And think about that because many of us would say well I'd really rather see Tommy Smothers but—

LF:

Yeah but I'd ask those waiters because you know how bands are. We get around all the waiters talking about all the different people. And I says who's the best tipper out here on this [inaudible]? And you know who they says? Its old Jackie Gleason and back in the sixties he would tip a 100 dollar bill. That'd be like 1000 now. You know and they said he was the best

tipper in the club.

AW:

Yeah, well the *Judd for the Defense* was, it was one of the first groups to deal with edgy social issues like homosexuality, drugs. All kinds of things that nobody had done on TV before. That's why they say it was a ground breaking series.

LF:

But we were—my mother saved the TV guide. I don't know where it's at now but she had it showed that we were in the thing you know and stuff and it was just a big deal. And we was calling everybody and telling them we was going to be on national television and all this stuff.

AW:

You didn't happen—you don't have copies of any of the shows you were on do you?

LF:

No I don't.

AW:

It would be fun if we could find some. Were you, now straighten me out on when you were in L.A. Were you still The Sparkles or had you changed your name to—?

LF:

Well the first time we were The Sparkles I believe. Yeah we were The Sparkles. You know what I can't remember. I probably need my wife here to help me refresh my memory but the first time we were in L.A. was with Al Perkins and them we played all those things but we became the Pearly Gate at one time. [Talking in the background.] Anyway I forgot where I'm at again. I told you I think I got dementia.

AW:

The Pearly Gate.

LF:

Yeah he wanted to name them called the Pearly Gate. And we had the typical Hollywood manager at this time. I mean his shirt was unbuttoned down to his gut and he had all that jewelry on. Oh he thought he was hot stuff. And anyway he kept saying he wanted us, he wanted me to leave the group. And go with this Jimmy Dutch and do a duo and I said, "I'm not leaving my friends. I grew up with these guys." These are you know and if I'd had been smart I'd probably broke off and gone on. But looking back on everything, I'm scared I might be dead now if I hadn't a comeback. [Laughter] 'Cause we were just into all kinds of stuff you know. And—

AW:

So what would be the years that you were in LA.?

LF:

I don't remember to be honest with you—

AW:

'Cause you were still playing in the late sixties.

LF:

And then we came back to Texas and lived in Austin and that's when we got Steve Weisberg who played lead guitar for John Denver. And Steve was playing with us and we was playing in Austin— those fraternity gigs and stuff like that again.

AW:

Now were you doing that as The Sparkles?

LF:

Yeah that was The Sparkles again.

AW:

So you're back to Austin and The Sparkles again.

LF:

Right. And then I just kinda got burned out. I just thought we're not gonna make it. And I just decided I wasn't going to do it anymore. I was very depressed ya know because everybody I had ever sang for told me I was going to be a star. As a matter of fact, the way I went back to college— Howard Ragland who actually discovered me and booked me and stuff—when he heard I was coming back to Texas—well let me get this straight, when I came back to Texas, my wife had left. She said we're coming back to Texas and you can either have your music or your family. And I said let me finish this album. [Laughter]

AW:

A true musician.

LF:

And so when I finished that album I was just miserable. I missed my kids and my wife so much that I just, I had a lot of hallucinations on the way back. [Laughter] I won't get into but I was the happiest human alive coming back home. And I had my sister, my oldest sister gave me a haircut at the house before I went and got a real haircut in Texas because it was so long and stuff and when I got back I went to work in construction stuff in Odessa. And I got a call from Howard Ragland, he said, "I heard you were back." He said, "Lucky I always thought you were gonna be a star." And he said, "I'm gonna send you the money to go back to college." And we was living with my wife's parents then and I was just, I'd moved up enough in the construction business, I was fixing to become a bidder to bid on jobs. And I said, "Howard I'm not gonna go sing with somebody. I'm not gonna play. I'm not playing anymore." And he said, "No [you] don't have to do anything. You don't have to pay me back." And I said, "Howard," 'cause he's that kind of guy, anyway he sent me the money like I think I wanna say like 1900, 2300 dollars and we moved back up to Canyon and I started working in construction, helped building the library there at WT. I was scared to death of heights. And I mean we had this Mexican guy. This big old cement as big as this room would come sliding and that guy would say reach out there and grab a

hold of that. Hold it over there. And I'm, I've got my arm wrapped around twice around this thing reaching like this with alligator arms. I'm scared to death I'm gonna fall. [Laughter] That Mexican guy rode out in the air on that thing. And he said, "Lucky go down to the first floor and sweep." Because I wasn't going to grab a hold of it. But anyway I was doing that and I was making like 119 dollars a week going to school and working. And then I got a call from Donny Roberts, our old rhythm guitar player and he had a little country band in Levelland. He says, "Lucky how would you like to sing again?" He said, "We got a little country band." He said, "I'll send you some albums of the songs I want you to learn to sing and stuff." And I looked over at my wife and I said, "Well how much will I make?" And he said, "What are you making at that construction?" And I said, "I'm getting about 120 dollars a week." He said, "I'll give you 120 plus I'll buy your gas and feed you." And I looked at my wife and said, "Can I do it?" Because she knew that construction was hard work. She said "Yes." You know so I started driving back and forth to Levelland and and started playing country songs with them. I learned some Johnny R— Matter of fact I'll be doing one of them tonight, that "Riding my thumb to Mexico."

AW:

What was that band called do you remember?

LF:

Uh—yes but I cannot think of it to save my life right now.

AW:

So about what year would this be?

LF:

That was like in '71 I'm gonna guess. Somewhere in there. 'Cause I started teaching in '73 or '4. Somewhere in there I think. I can't remember. But anyways we started doing that but I'd be playing drums and we'd be playing a country song and just couldn't help myself. Pretty soon it was [sings a drum beat] and Donny would go, "God almighty!" But I'd have the whole band cooking. You know and he's say, "No stop!" [Laughter] "We gotta go back. We gotta do this simple country." And he goes, "I just get to cooking and have that band going with me in no time." You know. But yeah we, I enjoyed that and I learned a lot of country songs that I liked. And but that sure helped me. And then Donny passed away you know Bobby died of throat cancer and then Donny died of cancer and it was somewhere I can't remember where it was in his back. And his funeral was in Levelland. You know and but Donny went on to make millions. Man he was a smart business man. He got in the oil business out there in Levelland somehow and he told me one day, we were playing one of our Sparkle reunions and he showed me a back hoe. He said, "Lucky that's how I made it." He said, "When everybody else was going under in the oil stuff and they couldn't make it I was making forty dollars an hour using that back hoe and it kept me in the deal." And then he got him some Arabs that bought that and he sold it and he got in some other stuff. And so he did he had about eight or nine million then. You know so he did really well. And his wife, I've been wanting to call her and invite her and Junior to come hear me sing because I haven't. This is the first time I've played in years and—

AW:

That's what you were telling me on the phone.

LF:

It's like my third thing you know. And what I'm really proud of—I was real popular in The Sparkles and people—I had a career there you know. But then I went on to band directing. And my bands are—I still judge. In fact the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> I'm going to Mt. Pleasant to judge 3A down marching contest. And I used to go to Texas Tech and judge the marching contest all the time and I had two honor bands which is the best concert band in the state. I had two of those at Iraan and then I had five state marching championships but I looked online on UIL thing and only two or three of them were recognized. And so my wife, she was pissed. She called UIL, old Dick Floyd and said, "Well what's the deal here?" And he said, "Well those in '80 and '81 and in '83 when I won those years, he said that was a University of Texas marching contest." And I said, "Well that trophy says state marching contest." You know but there's only two recognized by the UIL. The others were just a Texas Tech festival really. Not Texas Tech but Texas, and so that kind of burned me because Nelson Patrick who started UIL and was a head of it gave me my trophies the first two times you know.

AW:

So did you, was your teaching career all at Iraan?

LF:

No, no I started out in Odessa. I taught two years there. I also had a little band on the side there, a little country band. One of my best friends, I taught him how to play guitar and we played a little bit of stuff. But anyways I played—I worked there for two years and was at a black school and J.R. Macintyre who was my mentor who's the greatest band director I've ever known.

AW:

Yeah, I've played music at that school.

LF:

Oh really?

AW:

Yeah, for a while I toured with Texas Commission of the Arts and played some schools. In fact I played in Iraan too and that—

LF:

What year was that?

AW:

Well it would have been, what is this 2012? It would have been around '98.

LF:

Oh I was way gone then yeah.

AW:

1998 to—It was late but that school in Odessa, that was an experience.

LF:

Oh let me tell ya.

AW:

[Laughs] It was an experience.

LF:

We had, now here's how J.R. Macintyre—old Bill Dean at Odessa High School had an opening for an assistant [inaudible] and here I am, I'm 30 years old. I'm scared to death it's my first teaching job. I'm doing a real job now. And I said, "Which school should I take?" I mean he's got an opening here at —God my memory is awful. I wanna say, [speak over each other] Blackshear but it was Ector. Ector High School and he said, "We got an opening at Ector in Odessa and Odessa High." And I said, "Which one should I take?" He said, "Buddy, you wanna learn how to teach?" I said, "Yes sir, I wanna learn how to teach." He said, "Well you need to go to Ector then," and he tricked me into that because Bill Dean I could learn a lot from him. Anyway I got over there and this black guy, he was a real nice guy and I liked him and stuff but he would show up late to school and I was a first year teacher and he'd belittled me in front of those kids one time. I just got out a technique book and started writing because I didn't know what I was supposed to do. He was late to school and he said don't play that. You'll never play that stuff. And he did it in front of the kids. That was buried in my head for years. And so that second year they said there's an opening in Iraan. And I'd never even heard of Iraan before. So anyway I go down there and my brother, he rode with me and he sat on the park—and we drank beer on the way down there I mean on the way back. He sat on that park bench out there waiting on me at that Alley-Oop park. And so I went in there and did the the audition thing or the interview. And so we come back out and I got a call and they offered me a job and so I took it and the rest was history. And we just—I worked my butt off though boy. I mean—

AW:

When did you leave Iraan?

LF:

'87 or '88. I won the last two years which was really neat. I won, that's when state marching contest, you couldn't—Class A was one year and class AA was the next and my band won the Class A that year and then we moved up to AA so I got 'em to go again the next year and I won that year too. I won it in A and AA and then that's when they hired me to go to Monahans and I went there for seven years. And then I came up here. And I—I was kinda burned out to be honest with you and I just did middle school. I didn't do any marching. That marching band's for young guys.

AW:

It is. What school did you come to here?

LF:

Cary Middle School. A friend of mine was the supervisor of music.

AW:

Was this in Dallas?

LF:

Yeah, it was DISD and I thought, I'm gonna make a difference. But I couldn't. [Both laugh] But I taught there for about fifteen years so I taught about thirty-six years. I retired in 2004 because there was a loophole in the social security law where I could get social security because all those years in The Sparkles and working I had enough quarters to do social security so there was a loophole in the law and thousands of teachers, I don't know if you remember this in 2004—retired and went to different schools. I went to Iraan and retired from there. I went there and worked one day and I paid them three or four hundred dollars to work there that one day and then they gave me a check for like thirty-five dollars or something but that was my final check. And I was scared it wasn't going to work and it actually did. It saved me so, that was a good deal. So I actually retired from Iraan. But—and then when I quit playing I needed to do something you know and I tried. I went to get the license to do a limousine. I thought that'd be fun you know. Driving these people and god this guy I got he'd sent me on taxi runs and I was scared to death I was going to get murdered or robbed and I told him I said, "I'm not doing night stuff." But it'd be a twelve hour shift. I'd have to get up at 4:30 to be in Arlington and I did great on Cowboy game day and stuff but you didn't make any money but I took some interesting people you know. I didn't work but two months 'cause he—you only made like five dollars an hour everything was tips and I just got tired of doing that. And so I just quit doing it. And then I thought, well you know what I'm a go by some of these old folks homes and see if I can't play set up and play for some of them. This is what's funny, they're booked ahead for a year. [Both laugh] Who'd of ever think it. But they got people booked that, you know like me that go in there and play once a month and they got 'em booked for the next twelve months and then another guy does it. So I'm a look into doing some of that too. I just want to work maybe two days a week. 'Cause I play golf Tuesdays, Thursdays and usually Saturday or Sunday and I really got into golf and I really enjoy it so really cheap pastime.

AW:

When did you pick that up?

LF:

Well I did it when I came to Dallas when I quit doing marching band. Marching band—I was in that band hall til eight or nine every night. And one of my assistants, he had an honor band over here at Hebron High School in Carrollton or Lewisville. I guess it's a member of Lewisville, I'm not sure. Andy Sealy. He was my assistant at Iraan the last year I was there and then he was my assistant at Monahans. Real good band director. And he's a Texas Tech boy. And he was under old Jim Suddeth.(38:55) Jim Suddeth was a great band director by the way. And I knew the old marching boy too pretty good. His wife worked for me at Monahans. Dean Killion. No not Dean Killion—after that. Way after that. What's his name? I bet I think I got the Alzheimer's. Well June Henry—

AW:

Well I think I have the "sometimers." Sometimes I remember and sometimes I don't.

LF:

June Henry married him. She was a drum major at Texas Tech and they were messing around. And anyway, I can't think of his name. You'd know him if I could think of it. He did the marching for years there. And he retired about two years ago or three too.

AW:

Well the Panhandle, WT, Texas Tech, and then of all things Plainview High School has a very long history of marching bands.

LF:

Oh yeah Plainview had—

AW:

In the 1930s their director who's a friend of the Tech director—

LF:

I know him. I knew him. That was Bill Wood's band director. Bill Woods my band director was a Plainview graduate.

AW:

And the Plainview guy was friend with a fellow in Michigan, who ran that whole program and who was best friends with John Phillip Sousa.

LF:

Yeah. You talking about Reveille? (40:00)

AW:

That's not the name that pops in my head but—

LF:

I wanna say it's some funny name my band director would say [pause]. I wanna say Doc Phillips but it was some kind of a name. I can't remember the band director's name at Plainview that taught Bill Woods. But Bill Woods was one of the finest musicians I've ever met. I mean that guy could, he made All State on tuba, bass clarinet and all kinds of things. And played the jazz piano and he was playing the jazz band around Lubbock all the time. I went out to his car one time when I was teaching school for him. Like I was telling you I was in the seventh grade and he had an old Corvair. He said, "Lucky go out there and get something out of his car pocket for him," and I opened it up and some whiskey fell out and spilled on his floor and I came, of course and me being the smart ass I brought back and I said, "Mr. Williams you had some whiskey in that car pocket and it fell in your floor." [Both laugh] of course I was a little kid that ain't know nothing about it. And he just started laughing.

AW:

Well it was a storied program and you know they did summer band camps in Plainview. In the



thirties and forties that were, I think some of the first in the nation where they were doing that and bringing kids in so I—it's pretty interesting coming out of that tradition as you have.

LF:

I wish I could think—it's on the tip of my tongue that band director in that taught my high school. He's an original one of those type guys too. And—

AW:

Well that's really—

LF:

But the band director was really—and what was interesting about, another interesting thing about my band director and all those state championship bands was rock and roll songs we did. I did a Beatles show. I won with the Beatles show twice, and I did the show *Hair*. [sings] “When the moon is—” and had featured my French horn out [sings notes] da, da, da, da-da-da. And it was—I did all rock and roll shows.

AW:

Was that unusual? Were very many people doing that?

LF:

Well they were after I did for a while [AW laughs] you know but not a whole lot did it but it's like when I did *Hair* Bill Woods actually judged in the state marching contest that one year and he said, “I don't know about those other guys but I love this.” You know and—

AW:

Did you write the arrangements?

LF:

No, I'd buy arrangements and then I had, I hired a guy out in Arizona, or no—not Arizona. Santa Fe, New Mexico. 'Cause there was a guy that did arrangements that I found out about and I had him do it. And then there was a guy from Tech that was, went on somewhere else to be a band director. I had him do some you know I'd find out who were good arrangers and tell 'em what I wanted to feature. I said, “I want to feature my French horns in this and do this this and this.” But I did all rock and roll shows you know basically. My first year that I ever won we was doing twenty-five or six to four and I had some good trombone players but J.R. Macintyre the band directors at Permian he taught me everything about band directing. He's one of the greatest ever in my opinion. Yeah and he was my mentor and I didn't do anything against him. And he's the one that told me, he said, “You need to get low brass.” None of these bands, like all of these class A, AA high schools, they're going back doing the same—if I went back now I could win again. Because all they do is they have flutes and cornets and clarinets. They don't have any trombone, baritone, and tubas. And he said, “You need to build a bass clef band,” you know. So hell I'd have eighteen trombones out on that field and we'd blow—we'd sound like a 4A band out there you know playing our songs. And so I'd work real hard you know. We'd rehearse like mad men you know and—so it was, I loved it you know. But I'm enjoying doing this again too. I really am. And I can still really sing. I hope I can tonight but this allergies have had. I'm hoping

my throat's okay 'cause I was worried about it yesterday. I just been so sick and my eyes were watering and itching for—I mean it's been going on for two weeks.

AW:

Well I—everybody I talk to, all my musician friends, are in the same boat and I think it's—we've just had weird weather.

LF:

Yeah. But out there in West Texas they don't have any trees and up here it's that ragweed and I think I'm allergic to that stuff for some reason.

AW:

And cedar.

LF:

Yeah.

AW:

And there's all, it just—

LF:

But see, I never was allergic to anything till I got old. I think our immune system just keeps getting worse and worse. And I'm telling you, and then my wife got sick and I thought, well maybe it's contagious. [Laughs] She had a sore throat and stuff.

AW:

Well I've got all these pals in Austin and who've lived there for a long, long time but they said it's worse this year.

LF:

Well they said up here that's the worst the ragweed has ever been. And I've never gone through anything like it. And I finally, I just had to go to the doctor and get antibiotic because you know I think I had a sinus infection on top of all of it.

AW:

Yeah if you don't take care of it you'll get an infection because it's ripe for it.

LF:

I need to sign this for you. Listen ya'll need to be there cause I just play 6:00 to 8:30 and I take a couple of breaks.

AW:

That's longer than—I thought it was just 6-7:00. No we're going to be there at 6:00.

LF:

My best songs are the first ones. I mean I—you know what I mean.

[Both laugh]

AW:

We're gonna drive over from McKinney and—

LF:

Yeah there's a couple and I've already got my two groupies. My first groupies. People there with hair like yours and he and his wife they were there two weeks ago and then they came the next week and sat the whole time. They stayed the whole time I played. And then I had another couple and they said they were from Lubbock and they got talking to me and they put, I got good tips from 'em and everything you know and that kind of thing.

AW:

So tell me where this place is because I looked for it—

LF:

It's at 7<sup>th</sup> and Main. Like if you're coming—I don't know how you'd go from McKinney.

AW:

We'll probably take 380 down to the toll way. Maybe-

LF:

Ok when you get on the Dallas North toll way take the Main Street exit. It's the Main Street exit and you'll go east on it and you'll go across some rail road tracks.

AW:

So go east from the toll way?

LF:

Go east from North Dallas toll way which will be if you're coming from McKinney I would think would be left. And you'll go east and you'll go across a couple of railroad tracks and then you'll go down and you'll see a Chevron station on the right and it's called the Frisco City Grill.

AW:

I think they said, it used to be—

LF:

It's at 7<sup>th</sup> and Main. It used to be a Mexican food place I heard.

AW:

Okay they knew it as something else 'cause when I looked it up on the web it didn't have anything called the Frisco City Grill there were all kinds of other grills.

LF:

Well anyways its 7<sup>th</sup> and Main in old town McKinney. I'm going to go ahead and sign this then I'll read it.

AW:

[Laughs] If you don't like it you can unsign it. Yeah we'll be there. Is it a good place to eat too? Or is it mainly—

LF:

It's got good food. It's not expensive. They got tonight it's ribs I think is their thing but everything I've eaten there is real good 'cause I was talking to the kid that owns it and he said, "We'll keep doing this through October and stuff but I can't save this place." And he said, "You know I knew when I bought this I can't make it if I don't have good food." He said, "We got good food." And because he called me to play on a Saturday and it was real cold and rainy up here that day and I didn't wanna do it. I said, "I'm babysitting my wife." He was with me. He's a downs syndrome guy and he's like in his fifties but I said, "I just can't do it tonight." Not till tomorrow 'cause it was raining and cold and I you know. He wanted me to come back that Thursday 'cause he likes my stuff you know. But [pause] yeah everything is fine there.

AW:

Well how do you want this—do you want this called Lucky? Or—

LF:

Yeah that's fine. I signed "Harold Floyd" for some reason. I guess that's an official signature.

AW: Well I'll put Harold—

LF:

—Lucky Floyd.

LF:

Yeah something like that because these some pretty good pictures here aren't they? I hadn't seen these in a hundred years.

[papers shuffling]

AW:

How did you get to be called Lucky?

LF:

I've been called that ever since I was born. And I had a crazy uncle that I understand named me because it was in a drought, real bad drought and it rained the day I was born and they he said, "Y'all ought to call him Lucky," or something. [AW laughs] I've heard that and then I tell the people at the golf course that the doctor named me, he was the first man to see me naked.

[Laughter]

AW:

We were talking before we turned on the tape about you being on this garage band, Beat 66, which I've seen advertised on the web and I had this question the first time I saw it and you mentioned it before I could even ask you about it and that is: I never thought of you guys as a

garage band?

LF: No we never practiced in a garage.

AW:

To me well, and not only that you were, you know you think of a garage band and you think of a ragged and sort of unpolished music and I thought that—

LF:

Yeah, just guys that got together to practice some music.

AW:

Yeah, and I always thought of The Sparkles as being slick in a good way, as in “tight” and so I take you’re not too happy about being a garage band?

LF:

I didn’t like it, no. I didn’t know where it came from. I just thought that’s what they call ‘em. And but I’ll get Rick to send you the digitized— all The Sparkles stuff he has.

AW:

Yeah I’d really appreciate that.

LF:

And I’ve got a CD in my car and I’ll show you the songs that I wrote, I mean that track coach wrote lyrics to a bunch in there, but I’ll just let you have the ones that I did. I mean I’ll tell you the number on them and you can just digitize them and send them back to me.

AW: Sure. Yeah I’ll do that.

LF:

I wish I had some pictures of this group here’s the one I can’t find. And that was the group that built The Sparkles. That’s the one.

AW: Before you got into it?

LF: Well one guy may come out tonight, Gary Blakely that played before me. And he and I are good friends but their band wasn’t that big. I mean you know—

AW: Was he come kin to the Blakelys or is he kin to the Blakelys that had the Palm Room in Lubbock?

LF:

I don’t think so. No, his family was kinda messed up. I don’t think so. But Gary may come. He came out a couple of weeks ago and he and I became good friends—

AW:

I'd sure like to meet him.

LF:

And but he was in The Sparkles before me and he kinda got pissed and he thought that we'd stole the name. He said he had it trademarked or something I don't know but we said whatever. But this is the group right here that took off and made The Sparkles what it was. And then it just kept growing and it ended up, seemingly, not bragging, but it seemed like it was me and Bobby that made the group.

AW: I think so. What is this line up?

LF: That's Stanley, and that's Bobby, and Donny and me. They had a little old cheap mic that probably condenser type mic now. It went around my neck I remember getting it back then. And it hung around my neck so you can see it and these guys were singing harmony over one mic you know. And we used to sing out of an amp and everything just like I'm going to do tonight.

[Laughter]

AW:

Oh yeah. Oh, no I remember in Monterey High in the mid-sixties the singer was the one who owned the microphone [Laughter] and I didn't know, it was a long time before I saw a band where the singer didn't sing out of the same amp the bass guy was playing out of. [Laughter] Um I also read that you were playing in California in the hotel the night that Bobby Kennedy was shot.

LF:

No, we were invited to play. We played—it's called the Coconut Grove. And that's how I met Lou Ralls by the way. Lou Ralls was playing upstairs and our band, The Pearly Gate, was playing downstairs. That was with Al Perkins and them. We wore white suits, blue shirts, blue polka dot ties. I mean it was high class. And we were playing there like when we were playing at the Factory, we'd play there too. And, Schlesinger or whatever his name was, one of the main political men, he called our manager and called and said he wanted us to come and play. And I told him I said, "No." I said, "I'm real sorry but," I said, "That's the only night we have off and we're gonna have time with our families." And I'll be damned if Bobby Kennedy didn't get shot. We were supposed to play at the party. We were invited by Salinger's—

AW:

Oh Pierre Salinger. Pierre Salinger had been the press secretary for—

LF:

Some Salinger guy had got a hold of our manager and we told him, "No." and I said, I told Pam, "I feel bad about not playing for that." You know and then I said, "Oh my God, I'd have been in that kitchen smoking pot you know when he got shot." [Laughter] We smoked pot back then some but I got, I couldn't ever perform on that stuff. I mean Jimmy Barrett just loved it. And I mean he would just go out every, I'd go, "Jimmy good God, I can't remember the words to songs now." And but we'd have been back there breaking or doing something you know. But yeah I that was sort of our claim to fame we always said. Because we were invited to play at that party

and we didn't do it. We turned it down 'cause we played so much you know.

AW:

Who were the best of the musicians you worked with over the years? The ones that really stand out to you.

LF:

The best musicians were Stanley Smith and Al Perkins probably and Bobby—there's nobody loved it more than Bobby. Matter of fact Bobby and I grew up together in Seagraves. And we've known each other since we was five years old, six years old and I don't think any **Sparkle**, anybody loved music better than Bobby. I mean he just loved it and when he got throat cancer he and his wife would come here to this house and stay and he would come in with I mean a deal of medicine this thick, with IV and stuff coming in and stuff and he said, "Lucky get your drums out we're gonna record." [Laughter] I said, "Bobby, my drums have got black widows in the cases out there." Next thing I know I'm getting my drums out and he's got a recording thing set up and we're starting to write a song. [Laughter] 'Cause he just loved it and he loved this guitar that I had. He said that's the best sounding guitar I've ever heard on a recording.

AW: What's that?

LF:

It's a Gibson Hummingbird and it's a real nice guitar.

AW:

Is that what you're playing tonight?

LF:

Uh-huh. Yeah it's just me and a guitar there's no karaoke **to** it all. There's no, like I went, I was trying to get in this place called Arthurs. Just perfect and I blew the chance the way I did it because I went down when I first to do this and my son knew the guys because he was always doing something and I went down there to meet him and he never did come in for two hours we sat there, two hours at that bar and he never came in. So I said well you know what? I just gave him my number and stuff so I just kept calling back and this lady calling back with this woman answering the phone. I said, "Well I understand he needs somebody for happy hour." Now I'd heard the guy there and to be real honest with you he was like a karaoke machine. He just played a little bit of guitar and he had a very vanilla voice. He could sing in tune but he was just very vanilla. I don't know how to explain it. It wasn't very good. And I thought this is perfect for me. Play happy hour not a band thing but a happy hour and so anyway I kept calling and I'd say, "This is Lucky Floyd again," I said I wanted to talk to him. She said, "He's not in right now." I did this about five days six to seven times and the last time I called it was a maître d', a real up class, nice place and he said, "I think he's in his office, let me transfer you." When he transferred me that girl answered again. And she said, "I talked with him and he said we don't need anybody right now," because I kept pestering him so I'm a wait another month or so and I'm gonna go down there and actually tell him I'll play free for him, if he'll let me play free. You know and then I'll hook him. But anyway I wanted to play there because they played our kind of music, I mean and the people are wealthy. If I got there my tips would be real good and I'm trying to get

into that cigar lounge at Chamberlain's Steakhouse here. And he already, he said I'm real loyal to my, I talked to the guy, and he said, "I'm real loyal to the guys. They've been with me for years but if they do have an opening," he said, "I'll keep you in mind." He said, "I've got another guy that wants to do it too but," he said, "I'll keep you in mind." But he said he's got to be loyal to these guys. They've been good to him and I understand that and I appreciate it. But no, I think Al Perkins is probably one of the best musicians—but I used to, my standard was always Stanley. Stanley was, just had a, I mean I'd learn a song literally and I'd say, "Stanley I wanna sing this song with The Sparkles," you know or our group. I wanna learn this song. Here's the chords. And I'd play it and he said, "Lucky that's not the chords." And he'd add about four more chords that I didn't know where there you know what I mean. He just had an ear for that stuff. He was and then Al Perkins kinda idolized Stanley too. He emulated himself like Stanley. And now he's probably better. Al is very good and he went on to play and he told me about playing steel guitar. He had a steel guitar in his house sometimes. He never played steel with us but he wasn't, that's what he played with Crosby Stills and Nash was that steel and he's got two or three Grammys that I saw at his house and—Bobby got a Grammy for playing bass on LouAnn [LeAnn] Rimes "Blue."

AW: Oh really? I didn't know he played on that.

LF:

Yeah and let me tell you another funny—Here's another musician story for you. Bobby was living in Clovis and working. I got Bobby a—that's another story. I got Bobby a job as a music salesman for May and Duncan. At first and then he went to work for that group of out of Pampa that had a music store and then they had one in Clovis. I can't think of their name either but anyways he was working at that music store and they needed musicians for LeAnn Rimes. This was when she was just a kid and he went and played on that deal and they said and this is typical how they do musicians—they said, "Do you want part of the record or do you want to be paid?"

AW:

And he says, "I want to be paid." [Laughs]

LF:

And he says, "I wanna be paid," like we all do. We want the money. You know and then that thing went platinum or gold whatever it did and he ended up getting a gold record for playing on it but he didn't get any money. And that's typical with musicians you know. You guessed it wrong.

AW:

Yeah but how many times have we taken points that didn't amount to anything. [Laughs]

LF:

Well my first royalty check from, "The Hip" and all that stuff. Our records would sell in Norway for some reason when we was on Hickory. That's the darndest thing I'd ever seen.

AW:



I did a tour of England one time playing as a solo.

LF:

What are you playing?

AW:

Guitar. And I'm mainly a writer, I play guitar out of self-defense. I'm too cheap to hire anybody else.

LF:

Well I'm too embarrassed to play guitar in front of anybody now. Remember I'm a drummer.

[Laughter]

AW:

But I met a whole bunch of Norwegians there and a bunch of Norwegian musicians because I'd play these things. They called them, it's what you'd call a fan weekend or something here and they would do that in England and a bunch of bands and groups would come together and people would come hear all of them and hear different—it was like a festival but a lot of the people that came to listen were booking bands. They would be booking for their clubs and things and so I got to meet some of those Norwegians and then I ran on to a lot of American singers who were making a pretty steady living by going over there.

LF:

Well ya know Gary hired my son, my oldest son, not this one he's a real good singer by the way too. He sings just like me. He doesn't sing in tune all the time but he's a good singer and my oldest son was a musician. He's done several CDs.

AW: What's his name?

LF:

Cary Floyd.

AW:

K-E—?

LF:

C-A-R-Y and he lives out in L.A. now. And he does entrepreneur stuff you know. Both of my kids think they're that kind of guy. Anyway but he got up and sang when we did one of the reunions at the Cactus Theatre in Lubbock. Of one of the reunions we did—me and Bobby went out with Al Perkins. He was playing with a country—Tommy Allsup and them everybody at some club and me and Bobby went out and sat in the night before we did our reunion and blew our voices out. I mean I was singing crying singing the crap out of it and Bobby singing this and next night we couldn't hardly talk. And so my son who was introducing everybody that night, he can sing real good and Cary Don sang the Righteous Brothers tune with me instead of Bobby and

old Johnny, that real good blues guitar player, the last guy I didn't get to play with him long, I quit right after he got in the band and he told me after old Cary sang. He said, "God that apple didn't fall far from the tree did it?" [AW laughs] I said, "No." They're pretty good little musicians and singers.

AW:

It'd sure be good to round up some more—

LF:

Pictures? Well we got some in that garage somewhere but I don't know where.

AW:

Well pictures, or Sparkles recordings and get a compilation ya know that would be a fun thing.

LF:

Well I don't have "No Friend of Mine," but I know my brother-in-law does. But "Jack and the Beanstalk." Now that went to number one in Lubbock. [Laughs]

AW:

Yeah, no and I remember that one quite well but I couldn't find that on the tube—YouTube to listen to it.

LF:

And this one's the one I was always proud of me and Bobby wrote that. "Daddy's Gonna Put the Hurt On You." And then this was the first one we ever recorded. We stopped in Clovis and recorded it in a garage. Maybe that's where garage band came from.

AW:

[Laughs]

LF:

This guy had a little studio there.

AW:

Now this is Bob Morris?

LF: Bobby's middle name was Morris and that was his show name for a little while. He was gonna be Bob Morris but it's Bobby Smith. Now his wife, like I was gonna tell you a while ago—I was gonna invite Jenny and Donny's wife Linda Kay. I was gonna invite them. My wife said, "You know I don't think that's a good idea right now 'cause it will bring back too many memories and stuff," you know because they hadn't been dead that long. I said, "Oh okay." 'Cause I know Linda Kay would love it.

AW: Yeah. Well—

LF:

I don't know what else to give you here. Here's—

AW:

This will be good. I'm gonna go ahead and stop the tape for just a minute while we're looking through these things.

LF: This is Seminole, Texas, at the Youth Center and that picture right there is Seminole. This is the Youth Center I think.

AW:

And this one, that's Louie?

LF: Yeah.

AW:

And this one, this is you right?

LF:

Right.

AW: And is that Gary P. I think? I think it may be.

LF: Yeah that's Gary. That's Gary and me and Bobby and Jimmy and Louie. And that's Bobby and Jimmy. I don't know who that is. That's Johnny, that real good rhythm, and they hired a black singer girl to take my place.

AW:

How long was that again?

LF:

Not very long. After I left it split up pretty quick. But the, I'll tell you what, if Bobby was still alive, he'd be doing this with me and we could really be putting on a show. 'Cause don't nobody sing harmony with me. Now my son here can sing a little bit of harmony but he doesn't, I'm scared to get him to doing stuff with me 'cause he has a tendency to overdo everything. [Laughter]. But I don't know. This is all I got until I find some of that stuff. That Glamour photo. Isn't that good.

AW:

That's very sixties. Well on all this—

LF:

I think this should be cool to take. [inaudible]

AW:

I'd love to take it all and at least copy it.

LF: Okay—let me get you the CD out of my car about that—it's sort of a country deal.

[phone rings]

AW:

And I'm gonna stop the tape right now.

End of Recording



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