

**LAWTON M. CHILES CENTER FOR FLORIDA HISTORY  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**Interview with: Jon Corneal**

**Interviewer: James M. Denham**

**Location: Florida Southern College**

**Date: May 15, 2020**

**JD=James M. Denham**

**JC=Jon Corneal**

**JD:** Interview with Jon Corneal, this is May 15, 2020. Basically what we are going to do today is start right from the beginning and take a look at your music career.

**JC:** My name is Jon Corneal and I was born August 30, 1946 at the old Lakeland hospital on Lakeland Hills Blvd.

**JD:** What was the name of your parents?

**JC:** D. H. "Bud" Corneal, everybody always called my Daddy "Buddy. But Donald Harvey that probably why they called him, Buddy. My mother was Marguerite Jane Corneal; she had been Marguerite Jane Wasmund from Winter Haven.

**JD:** They were living at the time in Auburndale Florida, is that correct?

**JC:** No my mom's family were in Winter Haven, my Daddy's an Auburndale guy.

**JD:** So when they took the baby home, you went to Auburndale; correct?

**JC:** Nope.

**JD:** Where did you go?

**JC:** Wasmund's home was available for my parents to live in so it actually close to Polk State College. Right around the corner from there and that's where we lived.

**JD:** How long did your father and your mothers parents live in Polk County?

**JC:** My Daddy came, I think about 1920, after his father, his father came down, he was Harry Corneal my Grandpa. He came down from Philadelphia in 1920 and he got off the train in Auburndale, Atlantic coastline station went cross the street and checked into a hotel. He was brought up in Pennsylvania in Lancaster County.

**JD:** With other Yankees?

**JC:** Yeah, you know but my father was born a Yankee but he didn't stay one.

**JD:** Let's go back to your mother's family then.

**JC:** Well they came in the early teens, her parents. My momma was the last of 9 kids, I think and they had come from Nebraska, I think. My Grandmother Wasmund and my Grandpa Wasmund were in the Indian service. That's what they called them back then. A lot of people called them Indian agents. My Grandpa Wasmund taught school, and taught the Indian kids which was rare. Back then they used to ship them all away. So this was on the reservation and it was one of the other reservations they used to work with. One was Pine Ridge in Nebraska and one was Rose Bud in South Dakota Reservation. Somewhere I got a picture, black and white photograph of my Grandmamma. She had black hair, long braids she was wearing the most beautiful outfit, the most beautiful dress. She's covered with bead work and she's wearing the most beautiful beaded moccasins.

**JD:** Was she Native American?

**JC:** NO! But she was just made up, they helped her dress up. She got a picture dressed up, she got a picture looking just like the rest of all of them.

**JD:** When was your parents married? Do you remember? Would you know that information?

**JC:** I guess, during the war, or before or at the beginning of the war maybe. I wasn't born until 46.

**JD:** You were born one year after the war.

**JC:** Yes!

**JD:** Did your father fight in World War II?

**JC:** Yeah, he was in WWII. He operated the radar to detect incoming planes from Germany. After D Day, he took a whole radar installment with troops. A bunch of trailers and all of his equipment. He used to tell us stories. He crossed German lines and didn't know it. The map wasn't right about where they were. He said they even went through some mine fields. Nobody got hurt.

**JD:** Did he talk much about WWII when you were a little boy?

**JC:** Yeah, before he lost his memory. He's kind of lost it now. But he was a man with hundreds of stories. Ya, know, it's in the family, it's a gene thing you know. My Grandfather was a great story teller too.

**JD:** So you knew your grandfather.

**JC:** Yeah, my grandfather Corneal. I never met my other one. I just barely met my grandmother, other one, Mrs. Wasmund. When I was a little kid, we go over to Orlando, through Kissimmee the old way on HWY 92 to see my grandmother. Usually my Daddy would keep us outside and mamma would go visit with her. I remember seeing her but I never got a chance to bond with her. I remember she was an old lady with long hair that looked like she hadn't cut it in a long time. The story was she was and back then they didn't have toilets in every room and back then they had the boxes. The toilet boxes and you open it up. The story was she tripped, and fell and hit the corners of one of them and it killed her. Hit her head or something.

**JD:** What was growing up in Auburndale like when you were a kid?

First of all, tell me about what your Daddy did for a living, what his profession was?

**JC:** Ah, he bought the Auburndale lumber company. As a young fella he was a book keeper. He went to work as a book keeper. Back then he worked all hours. He told me he was the first traveling salesman that had a calculator. He said, "Listen, I want that calculator to stay here". That adding machine, ya know. I don't want you to bring me a new one, I need that one; no this is the one I want right here. He needed it right now, ya know. But anyhow, he bought off three owners for the company. He paid them off one at a time and my grandfather mortgaged his house for 1000.00. My Dad always paid him at least 100.00 a month. He felt like he needed to do that and he did. Anyhow he turned that old raggedy business into a real business.

**JD:** Did you work there as a little kid?

**JC:** Oh yeah!

**JD:** Hanging around?

**JC:** Oh yeah! I started working for my Daddy when they would pay in cash in those little pay envelope and I never had any green in mine. All I would get is some rattling change. Enough to go out and get a RC and a moon pie and a bag of peanuts.

**JD:** I bet it would have been a fun time just to run around and see people and all that.

**JC:** Oh, I knew everybody in town, by first name.

**JD:** Did you make deliveries and things like that?

**JC:** Growing up, yes I did, yes. I didn't drive the trucks for the longest. Later on I did. I got to be friends with all my Dads drivers. Some of the trucks had radios. I remember "Waterloo, where are you?" Stonewall Jackson.

**JD:** So let's get into that when you were a kid listening to radio. Was it something just clicked and you thought, "Wow" this is really cool this is what I want to do.

**JC:** Yeah! Somewhere along the way, I always loved music.

**JD:** What was the first time you remember when you actually performed? Um. We may be getting a little ahead of ourselves here.

**JC:** I don't know.

**JD:** Let's leave that back a little bit. Now what about church, did you go to church a lot? Did you sing a lot in the church?

**JC:** As a kid. I remember as a little boy. Oveda Caldwell, her husband Walter Caldwell, had a school named after him. He was a cigar smoker. He helped a lot of people in Auburndale. He was a good guy. Every time Leroy Collins called and said come to Polk County, he'd pick Walter up. He'd have supper with him.

**JD:** What was his profession? Was he a banker, a lawyer or something?

**JC:** He was a Realtor and back when people couldn't get mortgages. He would give them mortgages, a personal mortgage. My Dad did that too. Lena Vista is full of houses that the mortgage got satisfied from my Daddy. What he would do he'd front the materials, draw up a mortgage and they would pay him a payment.

**JD:** Then they would build a house on their own or figure out some other way to get it.

**JC:** Yeah, back then the banks weren't letting loose much money. You had to be real special to get any money. It's political, I think as much as anything.

**JD:** You mentioned Leroy Collins. Were there any other state politicians that you remember in that time frame? I don't want to go too far ahead. Leroy Collins would have been somebody that you saw. He came through sometimes.

**JC:** Yeah he is an impressive guy, I remember him, Roy Collins. We were really proud of our governor, he was a good governor, and I never heard anything bad about him. That was a pretty good deal.

**JD:** Yeah I know. What about local politicians, were there any? Who would have been the member of Congress, James Haley, perhaps? Does that ring a bell?

**JC:** My Daddy took my Grandfather to Washington to meet Spessard Holland and they got to ride on the little subterranean train. They were treated special. I remember my Dad bought both of them brand new Fedoras to go up there're. They wore suits back then, they all had Fedoras. My granddaddy wore a 7 and 1/8th quarter, it wouldn't fit me, my head was bigger. I got a picture of him in an Auburndale history book. He was a politician, and my father was at one time. They were into it for a season and then they got out.

**JD:** Like County Commissioner, stuff like that, or city commissioner?

**JC:** My grandfather in 1947 was mayor of Auburndale. There's a picture of him in the history book of him holding his Fedora, it was around the waterworks, and they were really getting in on their waterworks. Back then they had a water tower right down where people stay, Auburndale is. They also had a 12:00 whistle. They would start the siren and let everybody know it was time for lunch. They had a lot of citrus workers.

**JD:** Now another person growing up in Auburndale was Bobby Braddock.

**JC:** Yeah.

**JC:** So are you and Bobby Braddock in age? Is he older than you?

**JC:** He is a little older, I don't know maybe 3 or 4 years, I am not sure but he got out on his own before I did.



**JD:** Have you read his little book *Way down in Orbandale*?

**JC:** Yeah, [laughter] I wish he'd use the right name. It ain't "Orbandale." I had never heard of "Orbandale," what a bunch of crap. It didn't help Auburndale to be called "Orbandale's". It's a factious town now! I knew a lot of facts about his history, I knew the girl. I knew her name, blah blah-blah.

**JD:** You mean some of the people in there but he didn't name names, but he knew the names.

**JC:** He named his old girlfriend, he had so long. She'd sit so close to him driving down the road, you wouldn't believe people use to do that. The girlfriend sit so close they just like grew to 'em.

**JD:** Bucket seats messed that up didn't it.

**JC:** I remember he had this old Ford, old blue Ford and you'd see Ol Bobbie coming down the road he hunkered down and he is messing with the radio. [Laughter] I'm not kidding even though he was coming round the curb he was most interested in that radio. Of course it paid off for him. He really cared about the music. He went to Miami and played with a bunch of guys down there and that's when we found out about the and Rexall Inhalers. They had Benzamine or Dexedrine in that cloth. They would break it open and pull that thing out, cut a little piece and chew on it. They would say, "Oh I was just chewing the rag" that's what they were talking about. Chewing the rag. Well he came back home, to get well, get free of that stuff. That's when Doc. [Paul] Tanner wrote a book, he had a practice from the early 50's up until not too many years ago. He's about 96 now, he's a board of our elders and he's taking his baby steps. You know how it is when you get old with a cane.

He was a good guy. I remember when office calls were \$35.00 bucks. His story he started out \$5.00 office calls. And sometimes he'd have to take a chicken in trade. A lot of doctors had to do that sort of stuff, whether they were farmers or whatever.

**JD:** Now let's get back to your family. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

**JC:** One brother Chuck, 4 years younger. See, that's kind of funny. Chuck was mayor of Auburndale in the 70's when the tornado hit in Auburndale. Chuck was the youngest mayor they ever had first of all. And then my Daddy was in 1960. In fact I got a ticket for reckless driving. Driving my sisters MG. I was in a 4 wheel close to the high school. Coming around that corner I hit a little road which is now the main road that goes by the stadium, Stadium road is what they called it and back then it was just getting started. Driggers gave me a ticket. You'd never believe who was the judge. The mayor was the judge. My daddy charged me 25.00. I thought I got this made, No boy, I was disappointed big time.

**JD:** You mentioned your brother, you mentioned your sister, you have a sister?

**JC:** Yeah, Annie, she was Ann, I knew her growing up she was Ann. Somehow along the way she got that nick name and she always wanted to be called Annie. She's got a gravestone. We wanted to put something out that says Annie. My daddy paid for the gravestone. He never grabbed a hold of the Annie, how much she really wanted to be called that.

**JD:** So she passed away?

**JC:** She passed away in O6. She had an asthma attack and dropped dead, with a heart attack.

**JD:** Now let's get back to your music. So walk me through your 13, 14, and 15 kind of years and you're trying to figure out what you want to do. Walk me through some of that. Where does music come into that?

**JC:** Well, when I was in primary school. Mr. [Bill] Miller from Auburndale High School band. He was the band director, for all of the bands. He came to the primary school in Auburndale on, uh. It used to be Bartow Avenue, now I think they call it Main Street. Uh, Uh Give me a jump start, I just lost it.

**JD:** Band and Auburndale high school.

**JC:** Yea, yea all the way back to primary school. If you wanted to take band. You had to start out on song flutes.

**JD:** The little recorder kind of thing?

**JC:** Yeah, so sort a like a thinner, black plastic everybody had 'em. After we started to learn to read a little bit then they had the day that some instrument company came and they ordered everybody's instrument and everybody got an instrument but me. As it turned out. Mr. Miller wanted me to play Baritone horn because I had the right kind embrasure. And I hated that thing, it was the smelliest old thing. It smelled like ... I hated it so bad, I tied my belt to the handle and drag it across the road. I'd get off the bus and drag it on home. I about wore

the bottom of the case out, I just did not like that thing. I wanted to play drums, all along. My momma told me when I was 4 years old we went to see the Winter Haven marching band practicing in the day time and she said I told her then that I wanted to play the “dwums”. I kept ruining the furniture beating on it with knives and forks and I said, “Hey listen, you don’t have to buy me any drums” I will work for it, I’ll save for it. Just say “yes” so that’s what they finally gave me permission to start over and I reckon I was a junior in high school and Mr. Miller would take me in that old Chevy in a 56 he had to the Primary school and it was a beginning band and I started all over. I caught up in a couple of months probably. Before you knew it, I was in the intermediate band after that playing drums, I was on my way then.

**JD:** I guess you had friends that you played music with.

**JC:** Oh yeah!

**JD:** A bunch of Fellas, how did you all do it, did you go from one little place to another place? Did you play in the back yard, or in the garage, how did you do it?

**JC:** First of all, there was a whole network of teen centers to play. Those were our venues all over, all over. Every city had one, Lakeland had one. Police dept. it was right across the railroad from the police dept.

**JD:** Ok, So what’d you do, just sign up for a day?

**JC:** Well we’d book em.

**JD:** Did you have a name for the band?

**JC:** The Dynamics!

**JD:** The Dynamics! How old were you when you were doing that? 14, 15, could you drive yet?

**JC:** When I turned 16 my momma would let me use her Oldsmobile. 60 to 63, I guess. Before I had my own car I'd use one of momma's Oldsmobile's. She had a couple of them during that period. One time we went down and played a Democratic convention. We were just kids down in Bradenton, boy I was a big time traveler. Ya know we thought we were really something. They were having a Democratic convention in the hotel next door. They heard us playing music and a couple of those people came over and ask us if we wanted to play some more. We said," what you got?" They said we can pass the hat and pretty much guarantee you at least a hundred bucks. I can't remember how much money they got, but Claude Pepper was at the party.

**JD:** Oh my goodness!

**JC:** What a nose he had. [Laughter]. He had pin cushions on his nose.

**JC:** It was kind of funny my Dad was such a Republican and here I am playing a Democratic convention in Florida.

**JD:** So that was a kind of an odd ball, Republican, kind of unusual. Was that because he was a Yankee from Pennsylvania.

**JC:** It's because he was conservative.

**JD:** He liked the low taxes, all that kind of stuff! Right?

**JC:** Presbyterian back then, conservatives.

**JD:** This was in the early 60's what was it like to grow up? Everything's segregated, what was it like to grow up that?

**JC:** Well, unless you lived through Jim Crow

**JD:** Did you think about it? You didn't even think about it did you?

**JC:** Later, little later it was after high school after I moved to Nashville. I was living in Nashville when they had those first sit ins in Nashville at the McCrorys and Woolworths, in fact at McCrorys there was a blind, colored blues singer, would sang out there with a tin cup. Even before they had the sit-ins years before. But you know there are some big colored colleges in the Nashville area. Fisk, Tennessee A & I. A number of them, I think Oprah graduated from one of those. She probably had been going to school about the summer of 1964.

**JD:** Now if we go back to the sawmill. Did your Daddy employ black folks in there and how did all that work?

**JC:** At the end of the war Dad couldn't buy wholesale lumber so he leased a 1000 acres up Highway 33 in the green swamp for a while. And he started a saw mill up there. They'd bring that lumber over to the lumber yard in Auburndale, Auburndale Lumber Company. It was rough sawn, so they'd have to dry it out so they stack it up like tic-tac-toe and after a period of a month or two. If you didn't do that all of the lumber would bend and you can't use it. It's no good anymore. So they had a shave mill and when we were kids, we would climb up on the

roof and jump into the shavings. Big pile of shavings so you don't want to do that with saw dust but you can with shavings. So every day I'd come home and I'd have my jeans all doubled up. Momma would always buy them too big and you supposed to grow into them I grew the other way "more quicker." Then lumber freed up and you didn't have to go through all that hassle to get lumber.

**JD:** So around here though in 62, 63, 64, and 65. Could you sense some things were going to change or was segregation pretty firm, and entrenched?

**JC:** Jim Crow, Yes, very deeply, very deeply in fact when we were teenager's 42<sup>nd</sup> street which connects with Dairy road in Auburndale. Right at the corner, directly across from Commercial Carriers main office was the Twinkle Star Drive-In, which was the colored people Drive-In, there was a black community right there. And they had a cross burning right there. On the east side of Auburndale and these guys were wearing their fancy weird looking outfits covering their head like a bunch of chickens. Of course you know, I am sorry to say I thought that way too for a long time. Until, I guess it took me having friends that were "colored."

**JD:** And seeing other places and seeing other kinds of people.

**JC:** Yea in fact I had some friends in LA in the 60's that were very nice, very good to me. Very kind and they talked whiter than I did. They had that western, you know Los Angeles people had that real south western type of speech, hard to describe.

**JD:** Well of course Governor Leroy Collins was governor at that time. So he was a kind of moderate kind of person.

**JC:** He had to live with it.

**JD:** And didn't use the race card in his elections or anything like that, like a lot of other politicians did. Of course, as they say he was for segregation but he wasn't as extreme as others. Well let's get you out of high school as you are getting into your Senior year of high school, what were you thinking about? Were you thinking, " I just want to stay here in Polk County and be a sawmill man all my life, Right? No.

**JC:** I started getting good playing drums. You know I mean, I worked at it. It wasn't long before I was better than anybody else around. That time we played in Bradenton at the different kinds of Conventions. There was a reporter at the teen center and did a little story: The drummer Jon Corneal was so much better; one of the best in the state. Just enough to pop my ego pretty good. I was hot, you know. By the time I was 15 I could play anything Gene Krupa could. Compared to Buddy Rich—Gene Krupa was like kindergarten when you get right down to it. I remember setting a metronome to Krupa playing. The tempo varied it didn't really lock in to the tempo like I learned too, in Nashville. That was the one thing that happened in Nashville for me. I had to simplify what I did. "Keep it country boy! Keep it country!" So I just thought, well, what is that I can do to make it sound consistent. I could have my rim shot sound the same every time. Actually I got to where I could make it go back then they had V meters. My back beat, "bac, bac," was always in the same place. I worked to develop that. And I did.

**JD:** Now the kind of music you were playing when you were going to Bradenton and stuff.

**JC:** Rock –N- Roll!



**JD:** That was Rock –n- roll, not country, it was Rock n roll. Who were some of the bands or the individuals that you kind of modeled yourself after? Did you all write your own stuff or did you just play others.

**JC:** Mostly everybody else's tunes.

**JD:** Who was some of the people that you really liked?

**JC:** One that I remember, actually I remember us playing down there in Bradenton was Ray Charles. A few of Ray Charles' tunes, a lot of the black artist.

**JD:** Rhythm and Blues

**JC:** Rhythm and Blues and many other, like Del Shannon, Buddy Holly.

**JD:** Now did you see any of those guys coming through?

**JC:** Yea, a few.

**JD:** Who was some of the concerts you would have gone to and where did you go?

**JC:** We use to go to Lake Mirror that was where the Civic Center was. The First time I saw Roy Orbison there he didn't even have a whole band. He just arrived from Tampa as a backup. He had one guitar player with him and he was traveling in an Oldsmobile sedan, I think I followed him out.

**JC:** Do you know who had me playing guitar with, Bobby Goldsborough? Before he had "See Funny Little Clown," which was his first hit. Then later on, we got to see him after he started having those wonderful records. He had "Candy Man" then, he had already had been recording on Sun records. I don't know if he had another hit. But I remember, we played Candy man and Jerry Lee. I saw Ray Peterson there, "Tell Laura I Love Her." "Fever" was another one of his hits. The Four Seasons, they were their own band. The Four Seasons and they played their own music too. All singing and playing together, that's pretty impressive.

**JD:** Tell me about the girls, were the girls coming around, were they coming to the shows?

**JC:** It was a lot of fun.

**JD:** It was a lot of fun, yea. They were inspiring, right?

**JC:** I remember one act I saw a song, it wasn't great or anything. But it was a hit song, it's called, "My Boyfriends Back". The Angels, and they were there, girls from New York. They weren't much singers. A lot of those groups some producer just put some people together and called it a group. Phil Spector was famous for that. A bunch of those groups that he produced were, the girl that Letterman so many times sang "Christmas without you baby" or something like that. A lot of those groups that he produced.

**JD:** Okay, you graduated from High School, and you don't really have any contacts with out of state people or do you? What inspired your decision to go to Nashville. Walk me through the process. How did your

family react? How did you make it happen?

**JC:** Well you know. When I told my Daddy I wasn't going to be in the lumber business, it was really a major disappointment to him, I think. By then he had 2 lumber yards. He thought I was going to be in the lumber business and follow his footsteps. But it didn't turn out that way. I just wanted to do something. I thought I wanted to do something different. I had a couple of choices. One was, I loved Dixieland music too, I never got to play much of it but I have played some. So I told him I was going to New Orleans. But then in Nashville, I was thinking, "Well if I go to Nashville I can get a job with band like the Everly Brothers. It never happened. Later on, I was offered the job twice by Warren Zevon when he was the Everlys band leader.

**JD:** So you and Jim had known each other and played together in bands.

**JC:** Yea we had known each other. We had a group called the Legends.

**JD:** The Legends. What was he like as a kid, a young kid like you? Ya'll were pretty much the same age, right?

**JC:** He was funny

**JD:** Yea! He was always funny, was he always kind of a comedian?

**JC:** Yea! Well he was a joker, well back then. Plus we all said funny things. Ya know we enjoy a laugh.

**JD:** So who besides Jim that you played with and so forth, who were some other people that you'd like to talk about? Lets go back a little bit

before Nashville, and talk about the two groups you were involved with, the Legends and the Dynamics. Is that right?

**JC:** The Dynamics!

**JD:** Which came first?

**JC:** The “Dynamics!”

**JD:** Can you tell us a little bit about who was in the band and the kind of music you played and where you played and all that?

**JC:** Yeah! We played teen centers. Ah, Gerald Chandler’s on bass. Back then he played a Montgomery Ward’s guitar with 4 bass strings on it. Oh man its Hank Williams. This guy that I knew named Charlie Stokes he was singing Jambalaya... I thought, what a cool song.

Oh yeah, Charlie Stokes, waiting on the bus. He was taller than all the rest of us. He ended up being a real tall man with a real low voice. Anyhow, he was singing Jambalaya. I thought what a song! Those funny words, what funny words. I never knew hardly anything about country music until I moved to Nashville. Oh, Buddy, I started like studying it.

**JD:** So you were a rhythm and blues guy, you are playing at these youth places and all of a sudden you’re in the middle of Country music that must have been kind of a shock.

**JC:** It was. Basically.

**JD:** Did you know what you were getting into?

**JC:** No but I knew I needed to work. I knew that, I wasn't going to make it if I didn't work. It wasn't like it was too hard for me. No, it was the opposite.

**JD:** Well let's go back, we forgot about the Dynamics, I think. And also your memories of coming around to this campus at Florida Southern and playing and practicing and stuff like that.

**JC:** Yea, Jerald's older brother, his name was Billy Joe. He and Billy Joe would sing Everly brothers songs together. Billy Joe was a nice guy. He sang nice, he sang good. Anyhow he's no longer with us.

**JC:** Anyhow we were rehearsing at Auburndale Teen Center, which was the Municipal building, we all called it the Teen Center of course. And Gran came in while we were rehearsing. He said, I'm Gram Parsons and I heard this hall was rentable for bands to rehearse.

**JD:** Okay so Gram Parsons comes in and introduces himself and you all playing and practicing at the Teen Center?

**JC:** Yea, I think it was that night we were rehearsing there and then were supposed to drive over to Vero for a gig. It was a sock hop at the high school gymnasium under the water tower they called it the Tigers Den back then, it was a sock hop. We invited Gram to come along. So

he brought his Fender guitar and I remember when he pulled it out of the case it had gold everywhere that would normally would have been chrome. That's the first time I ever saw one like that. I don't know that I ever saw one since then, it was white but anyhow, so we went out and did that gig and first of the week, I heard he called and said, hey you want to join the band with me and Jim Stafford, my lead player? I said, "yeah, well maybe so, I'll check it out". He said, "You think Gerald might be interested"? I said, yea probably. As it turned out, Gerald was and we became a really good band. His first Fender bass, Gram bought it. Took him to a music store and bought him a Fender. He still got it, he hangs it on his wall at home.

**JD:** Is that the first time he met Jim Stafford?

**JC:** Yeah, it's at that rehearsal. I don't know that Stafford was even there at that first meeting. Gram had plans that we might fit in.

**JD:** What was the name of the band?

**JC:** The Legends.

**JD:** Oh the Legends, of course. So how long did you stay and hang out with them?

**JC:** 62' and parts of 63'.

**JD:** What were some of the places you played?

**JC:** Pretty good ones. I remember the winter before, Christmas holidays, 62' and we made some money, playing some real good gigs. Gram was good at getting good gigs because he was connected. Like the horseshow banquet. The horseshow lady she wore a mink stole. He got us good money. We made like 300 bucks during the week, that week.

I came back after New Year's, we worked New Year's too. I had a pocket full of money. I had a coach, we had the most red neck coach in Auburndale, Coach... he was a winning coach, but my goodness he did not like musicians at all. He called me a sissy. He just thought I was a waste. I probably was on the football field. But not as a musician and finally I had just had it up to here. Ya know I had come back from making some money and he did that last time and I said, "Hey Coach how much money did you make last week"? I betcha he didn't make more than 100.00 bucks. And I said, "If you didn't make 300 bucks I made more money than you did". Never again, did he call me a sissy. Never, Never.

**JC:** I guess it must have been during the period of time, I can't remember exactly the timeline on this but maybe it was after Gram quit the band the legends in '63 but that's when I played with the Shadows from campus, Florida Southern College with a bunch of those guys they were older than me. But they knew I knew how to rock. Mike Starks, the piano player, played an old Fender Rhoads ... the kind you screwed the legs on, I don't know what it's made out of, it was made out of wood or something, but anyhow. He had longer hair than anybody else and he got his girlfriend, her name was Lynn, to do a bouffant on his head he wore a madras shirt and penny loafers. Buddy that cat was

cool, oh yeah! Gram got in some trouble in 63', I don't want to talk about what the trouble was, somehow miraculously this stories been left out of the history and I should not be the one to spill the beans on this. But anyhow all of a sudden he couldn't stay in Winter Haven so his momma sent him to Bolles High School in Jacksonville.

He was already in Bolles, he was already getting into Folk music. The last gig we played at the Legends was at the old Winter Haven women's club. There's a museum there now. It's a big pink building on the right, you could see it from McDonald's. It's a pretty building, and it's a little auditorium, it was another nice little sock hop. Gram, Patty Johnson and Dick McNair had a Peter, Paul, Mary act. They even looked the part almost. Dick McNair was skinny back then, anyhow and then after that. By that time was when the bird hit the fan so to speak and by the fall Gram was in another school, another town.

**JD:** So were you about the same age?

**JC:** Exactly!

**JD:** Ok so you didn't go to the same high school.

**JC:** No, he's Winter Haven.

**JD:** He's Winter Haven and ya'll were Auburndale.



**JC:** Yeah but I think his junior year he skipped school all the time. Maybe it was his senior year. But anyhow he had to redo his senior year and he did it at Bolles. That's why I got the jump start on him moving to Nashville in 64 cause he was still going to school in 64. Anyhow when I played with the Shadows, Kappa Sigs, I remember, it was like everybody in the place that had a record player was playing James Brown live at the Apollo. Actually I know the producer for that, I've met him since then, his name was Hal Neely. He was with King Records, most of James Brown recordings were on King.

**JD:** James Brown?

**JC:** James Brown.

**JC:** Then later...even recorded there some. Hal Neely, they recorded live at the Apollo twice. Two shows, anyhow. You just heard it, just rocking the walls man. That was pretty cool stuff.

Anyhow they got a summer job at the Checker Board Lounge in Daytona and they got a condo on the beach, apartment on the beach for the whole band. My Daddy wouldn't let me go do the job cause I wasn't but 16, I could drive with a borrowed car. My Dad said, "What I will do is take you over there and let you sit in with them." I'll check you in somewhere.

**JD:** With, James Brown? With who?

**JC:** No, The Shadows, the group from Florida Southern.

**JD:** Oh the Shadows yeah, Daytona Beach. Did they have a special place that they played?

**JC:** Yeah, called the Checker Board Lounge.

**JD:** The Checker Board Lounge, were they near the beach?

**JC:** It wasn't AIA, It wasn't on the beach but they were staying on the beach. But I remember, "Do the dog" was hot stuff and people were doing the dog and I thought that was the dirtiest dance I ever saw. I mean you know, unbelievable. I remember the place was so smokey, and my eyes would water. It was 10:30 at night to 5:00 in the morning. What a gig, huh? You had to be young to do that stuff.

**JD:** So when you went over there did you spend the night somewhere?

**JC:** The Holiday Inn, my Daddy checked me in.

**JD:** So you stayed with your Dad in the Holiday Day Inn. Well, he made it happen for you.

**JC:** Yea, he gave me a little chaser. Of course, I wanted more but, you know how that is...

**JD:** So when you look back at things, your parents were very supportive of your music within reason.

**JC:** Yeah, when they realized I was serious about it. My mother she was always supportive, she could sit down at a piano and just play and play and play all in her head. "Autumn Leaves," "Deep Purple," all those beautiful old songs my mother played 'em and played good. She played real well. Ya know She introduced me to Glenn Miller, Bennie Goodman and all those...That is how I got to hear.....Bennie Goodman.

**JD:** Okay let's go ahead and get in that car and let's get to Nashville. Walk me through your thinking, your preparation. Were you really prepared or did you just say, "I'm going tomorrow" or whatever. Walk me through your thinking of how you are going to do this.

**JC:** I'd been working, pretty much all year. When Gram left, it wasn't a group anymore so I had to do a little this, a little of that and I worked for my Daddy. I saved every penny I could, back then he had me in the truss plant. I was nailing trusses and whacking my thumb and not happy about the whole deal. It was before he got a truss roller. Anyhow, I saved enough money and I felt like I could go to Nashville and hold out until I got to working. It just barely worked. A friend went with me, went with me and we stayed for 2 weeks, seeing all the sights and we went to Phillips University in Oklahoma from Nashville, camping all the way. He flew back home and I took my little trailer back to Nashville.

I got to park in the same spot I had E15 on the corner. Perfect right across the street from the steel player for Porter Waggoner and next

door to me was “Cousin Jake” Tullock, I remember, when he drove up, it was a brand new 4 door Chevrolet Impala, dark blue and he had a Bass fiddle on the seat. I thought, “This guy is the real thing here”. We got to be friends and before I knew it I got down to my last \$20.00 traveler’s checks, Jake lent me the money to join the union local 257. He also started putting the word out about me. Friends started to give me a chance and I started getting some work.

**JD:** How long were you there before that started to happen? Was it a year? 6 months?

**JC:** Not even that long. July 5, 1964 I head up there and in August of '64 I joined the union Cousin Jake lent me the money, \$125.00 to join the union. Mr. George Cooper, the union President, he had been President for 40 years or something and he was like a southern patrello. He’s one of those guys you want him on your side. If he told you what was going to happen to you if you did a job off the card. He told you how much it was going to cost you. The way he said it, it scared the fire out of you; it did me.

**JD:** Now how many other people would you estimate, like you in 1964 were up there trying to do the same thing that you were doing? Kids coming up there, hanging out, were there a lot of people like you?

**JC:** Not many, as young as me it seems like everybody I worked with up there then was 40 years old or more. I was just a teenager.

**JD:** Were there a lot of people like you trying to make it like you were or did that kinda come later?

**JC:** Not really, they come later. They weren't as young as me. I think that is one of the reasons the people were helpful to me cause I was a kid. I had a lot of friends in the trailer park, I had one Lady named Ruby Self; she had a kid my age, and Mike was his name. She told me she'd be glad to wash my clothes for me.

**JD:** you were 18?

**JC:** No I was 17, yeah I turned 18 in September but I was seventeen when I went up there. Anyhow Ruby Self told me if I ever needed some washing done just bring it on over she'd be glad to do it. Just that kind of stuff, they had me over for supper and Jake Tullock and his wife had me over for supper. People were good to me, people were nice, ya know. People were friendlier back then and more thoughtful I guess. I was treated well by my friends up there. Ya know, it just took a little while. It seems to me though, I think it was fall of 64, one of the friends I got introduced to was Hillous Butrum. He was in that movie with me "Music City, USA." He was wearing the tux and he was the band leader, that's Hillous Butrum. He got me quite a bit of work over the years. He was connected, he knew everybody. I met a lot of people because of him. I used to go hang out at his office every day. I met Autry Inman, who was a recording artist from the past, real funny guy. Penny Martin, the great fiddle player. He played the eight string fiddle. That guy, he was a hoot, but you didn't want to be around him when he was drinking but anyhow. Hillous got this great job. Well we thought it was great anyway. We had some complications later about getting our

money. Vegas, I think it was fall of '61. We shot a pilot for a television show but we never got a sponsor so it never happened. We filmed a lot of people. They converted an old mine into a studio. That's where I met Earl Ball, the Piano Player who played on the International Submarine Band album, later in 1967.

I met him back then earlier, he was playing for Eddie Hodges, the child actor who was in that movie with Frank Sinatra, that little red headed kid. That is where I met him, but anyhow we were there a couple of weeks, shot a bunch of stuff. I remember I spent eleven dollars on nickel slots that's all I played, was nickel slots nickel slots. I lost eleven dollars all together, I kept up with how much I was putting in it. I did alright I guess, if only lost eleven dollars gambling. Clean ya out boy. Anyhow, that was a great opportunity. "65" came along and man I did all kinds of diversified playing. Well the summer of '65, I remember we played in a tent in Maggie Valley, North Carolina. I was with Clyde Beavers. We played 6 days a week 5 shows a day and dodged the rain puddles. Nobody really was a tent man. There was a tent set up and Clyde had rented it but ya know tents need at least one guy that knew how to tighten them up. Because they start loosening and then it puddles when it rains. You know in North Carolina it rains through the summer a lot. So I remember back then the standard uniform, before you could get you a real uniform was black pants, white, short sleeve shirts and the black string tie. I remember the skinny little ties in the 60's. I remember I saw a documentary about when Dr. King did his big speech in Washington all the kids, ya know young colored people back then they had that outfit. They had the black pants, the white shirt, short sleeves and the little skinny tie. That's what we wore for uniforms. I ended up with a grey pair of black Beatle boots so I wore them, till I about wore them out. I was still a Beatle's fan. I was still a Rock n' Roll fan as well.

**JD:** Well how was that transition to you, when you go up there and you are an R n B guy and all of a sudden here's country? So did you just kind of adjust?

**JC:** Oh yeah, you just go with the flow.

**JD:** And you liked it?

**JC:** Well you know, it grows on you. Ahh it just grows on, before you know it. I don't think consciously trying to talk like Hillbilly but buddy you're working at it. It might be subconscious but I mean you want to sound just as country as they do like East Tennessee, its own thing man. It rubbed off and I'm sure I speak a lot more southern probably than I did when I moved up there. Today and you know it's a combination of many things it's a combination.

**JD:** Okay tell me what it was like to be in the union. What did it really mean? Why was it advantageous to be in it and why was it maybe not advantageous? Were there any people that didn't want to be in it?

**JC:** Well I'm sure there were but they didn't know what the union can do for them. All of the key players in Nashville that did all of the recording sessions--they were union members, in fact that's where they got paid. The record companies would send the checks there. You sign a time card and you pick them up at the union, and you pay your work dues. You paid a percentage, I'm not sure what the percentage is now. I forgot, it wasn't much, one or two percent something like that.

**JD:** Did you have insurance?

**JC:** No.

**JD:** Did you have disability?

**JC:** No

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**JD:** Were there different prices or rates for different jobs?

**JC:** Yeah, the point was that we got paid and not get stiffed. The business would follow union contract and pay these players a union wage. Back then, there were not free gigs in Nashville. That's how strong the union was. Everybody got paid a minimum of \$25.00 bucks to play a joint or something. The union President he said this to me. He said to me, "Jon you are not joining this union for us to get you work, you're joining this union to be able to play with the greatest musicians in the world. That is a fact that he told me. And you know he was right, I knew a lot of great country pickers who played just as good at Rock N Roll and blues. In fact, I knew a guy. Steve Blalock, ol' friend he played with me in '75 when I had a band and we were playing at the Sam Davis hotel down in the lounge. There's no more Sam Davis hotel it's a Stouffer Hotel where it used to be now. But anyhow, Blalock used to play in that colored section in Nashville, north Nashville. Ya know, back when it was segregated it was north Nashville. He'd be the only white guy in the place. Back then Jimi Hendrix and Billy Cox were both in the Army at Fort Campbell and they would come down on furlough and jam



around. We had all kinds of good joints back then ya know, to play. Jimi was in the 101<sup>st</sup> airborne. He loved Blalock's guitar playing.

**JD:** How did the union work with that with the big stars?

**JC:** Same way.

**JD:** Ok so there was a pay scale for them? For the big stars?

**JC:** It was a pay scale for what they paid their players basically, even though they were union members too. All the money above scale they kept. I had a job with the Wilburn brothers in '66. They paid me \$100.00 a week and kept my Opry checks. Back then they paid \$12.00 per 15 minute spot and they divided the whole Opry into 15 minute spots. They were hosted by different Opry stars who ever the star was, they would have a guest star on their spot and they'd do a song to introduce them. But anyhow they kept my Opry check and I got paid for recording sessions. I was always glad to do that.

**JD:** So 1965, what great things happen to you in 1965? You'd been up there about 6 months. How did you get to be the major drummer in that Music City, USA? There would have been a lot of competition for that, I'm sure. Were there any other drummers that were jealous of you for that?

**JC:** Nah, I don't know about that but there were plenty of drummers in town.

**JD:** And you're only 18 years old, right?

**JC:** Yeah, Hillous was good to me, he used me, boy in those early years, alot. I made real money too on that one. They paid, I think after scale was a lot, we made some money on that. I was really in high cotton back then, I had a new car, and I had wrecked the other one. I hit 3 cows, I was driving to Tallahassee from Fort Benning Ga. I had played NCO club, was getting sleepy and I drove too fast and I hit some cows and I killed 3 of them. I totaled the car, I left it there so I ended up getting a Fairlane 500, 1965 brand new wagon right off the showroom. It was a "n-i-c-e car", good car. I wish I had never sold that thing. ..It was 289 on it. Anyhow, by then I think I had an airstream, it was the early 50's airstream my Daddy got a good deal on so I swapped trailers. So I had a pretty decent place to live and things were going good. I was the backup Drummer on that Music City, USA movie. As you know just about every scene, if it was live music you saw me. And back then, they didn't sit the drummers in the very back. You could see me over on the side. The base player was Roy "Junior" Husky, he was wearing the big glasses, what a nice guy. He was so encouraging to me, he helped and if I ever had any nervousness on anything that was a big deal. He'd talk me out of it, he would say to me, "Aw man you got the goods", "you and me together we'll be fine, don't you worry." It worked so, then the Wilburn Brothers offered me a job. You could see me playing behind them, it was pretty cool. They hired me and I became their drummer for a little over a year. Pretty much the year of 1966, I was their drummer.

**JD:** So you went on the road with them.

**JC:** Oh yeah!

**JD:** Where did you play? What were some of the neat places you'd play?

**JC:** Auburn, everywhere, a lot of Texas. We could work twelve days at a time in Texas, one nighters, boom, boom, boom, boom. There were more big Ol' clubs in Texas that hired full time bands. Played six nights a week. They got the works, everyone's bands were so good, it just kind a blows you away. Aw they were so good. Texas just loves their players and they were supportive and they always have. I hope that Florida would wake up and realize, ya know, some of us need to make a living. Ya know, Florida is a right to starve state.

**JD:** Right to starve, yeah.

**JC:** So anyhow, enough of that. So we got into 1966 played through that. I saved my money.

**JD:** So Wilburn Brothers pretty much all of '65. After Music City so right after Music City, you went with the Wilburn Brothers.

**JC:** Yeah.

**JD:** Okay and that took you up to 66. Back to the Music city USA, who were some of the big people that you remember and what their personalities were like? Like Loretta Lynn. What was Loretta Lynn like?

**JC:** She was sweet as pie. She's a sweetheart.

**JD:** Now was her Husband around?

**JC:** Yeah, Doolittle

**JD:** Yeah, Doolittle was he just kind of hanging out in the back or whatever?

**JC:** He was her driver.

**JD:** Driver?

**JC:** Yeah, they had alternates back then and that was before she got a bus.

**JD:** She was really a sweet lady, huh?

**JC:** Oh yeah! She put together a band including her little brother J. Lee Webb who to not so many was Jack Webb. Jack Web was on the MCA label and he forced the label the Decca Records.

**JD:** You mean Jack Webb, like the Dragnet guy?

**JC:** Dragnet.

**JD:** He's kin to her?

**JC:** No! Her little brother was Jack Webb too, and the other Jack Webb forced MCA which told Decca to make him to change his name to [Jay Lee Webb].

**JD:** Oh, okay.

**JC:** So he changed it to Jay Lee Webb. Anyway we had a rehearsal in Goodlettsville before Loretta bought that Hurricane's Mills property. Ya know, it was about 1000 acres or something. Hurricane's Mills, they had her little farm, a country house you had to go along a gravel road in Goodlettsville to get to her place. In a brand new Cadillac with dust all over it, ya know.

**JD:** Was that close to Nashville?

**JC:** Yeah, Goodlettsville, just up the road, up Hwy 41 is Goodlettsville, I think. We had a rehearsal to go cause there was a big club job that we could do. We went and backed her up. She didn't have her own band then see. We were gonna back her up in Cincinnati, at big club up there.

So we had a rehearsal early in the morning. Loretta asked us, "Boys have you had breakfast?" [laughter] She said, "I can't let you boys do a rehearsal and be hungry". So she cooked us all breakfast, biscuits and everything man, I mean eeh. Well, come to find out she was a cook in a logging camp out when she first started with a career out in the West Coast, Washington, Oregon, that area. Doolittle was there too.

**JD:** So, was she a good cook?

**JC:** Yes? Biscuits, mmmm buddy!

**JD:** Ok, did this happen about the same time as the Music city program or was it before or after you got to know her.

**JC:** Little after that, when I first met her I was playing drums behind her for that movie. Music City USA. The agency that booked Loretta, she was assigned to, that's the Wilburn Brothers they owned that agency. It's called Will Hem Agency. Smiley Wilson was her broker, he was a nice guy. He was an old entertainer, Smiley and Kitty Wilson.

**JD:** Who were some of the other people or your impressions of some of the people in that show or that you met for the first time? Was Porter Waggoner on their too?

**JC:** He wasn't on that show.

**JD:** Johnny Cash, wasn't he on there?

**JC:** He wasn't on that movie, No. but I was exposed to those people. Johnny Cash, they used to have the Cerebral Palsy telethon in....Auditorium. He was skinny back then, he carried one of these little hand bars, it's got a little suit case handle on it. Got enough room in there for a jug and some glasses, but he didn't have the glasses but he had the jug. He had a jug of Mogan David wine in there and he had a couple of big bottle of pills and a check book. I remember that, because he opened it up and he challenged people. He said he would give \$10,000 to Cerebral Palsy fund if somebody would match him. This guy, they called Guilford Dudley CEO of Life and Casualty on Church Street in Nashville supposedly wrote the check, and he found out later that it wasn't Gillford Dudley but he honored the check. You know its people in the movie that we backed Dave Dudley. A lot of different people, we had 6 days on the road, but we didn't get to visit much. It was just taking care of business. I met a lot of them over the years. I did some freelance in '65, I worked for Roy Drusky, he was a Grand Opry star and a few odds and ends for different people.

**JD:** So the Wilburn brothers was probably your first real gig, regular job.

**JC:** Yeah! Salary.

**JD:** Everyday salary job and you are with them all the time.

**JC:** Yeah!

**JD:** So it was you, you're a drummer and did they have any other band members?

**JC:** Yeah! We had a guy name Roy Pylant, who played piano, base-stack piano. He had a Fender key bass with a Farfessa organ and a Fender Rose electric piano.

**JD:** Did you play Texas?

**JC:** Yeah

**JD:** Did you go all the way out to California?

**JC:** Not with them, later on. I went out there and did a long tour with Tommy Smith in 67, right before I moved to California.

**JD:** So after Wilbur Brothers, what were they like as people, as men? What were your impressions of them? How were they similar or different from each other?

**JC:** Well he was one of the first people I ever knew. When his feet hit the floor in the morning on the bunk bed, he'd take a 90 proof Smirnoff and go gluck, gluck, gluck. That was the start of his day. It got worse over the years. His personality was great as far as I was concerned. Later on, I'm sure he got in trouble drunk driving and all that. But after we got the bus we had a driver. Don Helms was mostly the driver, he was a still guitar player in the band.



Don Helms was steel guitar player for Hank Williams. Don told me that he called in an ad in the *Montgomery News*. I'm not sure if that's the name of that newspaper but it was Montgomery Newspaper. The ad said, "Putting a band together, if you are interested meet me in such n such a pawn shop." He introduced himself to everybody, and he said, "Come on in boys" and he bought every one of them a black jack. What He said was one time they were playing this joint south of Montgomery. He was from Bonifay, Florida. He said, "This guy on an Indian motorcycle kept riding through the gravel parking lot stirring up dust." This big Ol' bouncer said, "Man you know, you need to quit stirring up that dust and the guy didn't." He was just going back and forth. I don't know if he was showing off his motorcycle or what. Finally the bouncer ask, Don he said, "You still got your black jack?" he said yeah, and said, "Let me borrow it." [Laughter] It wasn't worth keeping, after he did what he did with it. That guy came through one more pass and buddy he knocked him off that thing. Then he commenced to beat it to death, just ruin it, the tank, ding it all up.

**JD:** What did he say about Hank?

**JC:** He told me a lot of stuff about Hank.

**JD:** A lot of Hank Williams stories.

**JC:** Yeah, he told me one story.

**JD:** What was some of the ones you had heard for the first time that maybe you had not heard before?

**JC:** They rode in a 48 Packard limo. They had to put the bass fiddle on the roof. Sammy Pruett, a big guitar player. Later on I got to work with him a little bit while I was doing the freelance. There was road kill happening, there were buzzards on the road. He purposely aimed at the buzzards and that Packard took piece of windshield and the driver side busted. Hank of course, he ride in the back seat with a baseball cap on and some tennis shoes like we use to wear, reading funny books, comic books, we use to call them funny books. When they hit the buzzards, he said Ok, you are going to have to live with that, we're not going to get that thing fixed until we get back to Nashville so whatever happens, when it rains, whatever, you got it! That's what happened, he got wet and I think Sammy did a lot of the driving. When we were still driving 66' in Cadillac pulling an equipment trailer, Don Helms did most of the driving, he was a good driver. I learned a lot about smooth driving from Don Helms.

**JD:** So, in that Packard, the whole band is in the car, and there are 4 or 5 of them in the car.

**JC:** Yeah, they got jump seats. They took whole back seat.

**JD:** Is Helms still alive?

**JC:** No he is gone now. When I knew him, he had a 59 white Cadillac, that's a coveted Cadillac my friend. I never got to ask him did you still have that Cadillac.

**JD:** Did he stay in Nashville his whole life or did he go back to Florida, Alabama?

**JC:** He stayed in Nashville. He got aligned with Jet Williams, she was the illegitimate child of Hank. Hank's sister made sure she did not get any inheritance. Irene was his mother, and she ran a boarding house and she promised Hank she would look after the baby and Hank died shortly after this and the baby was born and she was taking care of the baby but then she died. One of the sisters, wanted to adopt her out and washed her hands of this kid so she couldn't claim the fortune that the family was gonna make. She's college age, she sang and played music. Actually surprisingly, very good, she was very talented. When her adopted mother finally told her the truth, she ended up meeting a lawyer and ended up marrying him. It took them over 5 years all the way to the Alabama Supreme Court to make her a beneficiary. Hank Junior has never acknowledge her as a sister. She was a threat to his money and the whole family, she was a threat. She finally started collecting parts of the royalties. Which you know it wouldn't take much of that to make you glad about things. Anyhow she put a bunch of the ol' guys together from the Drifting Cowboys. Put a band together and called them the Drifting Cowboys, and they wore cowboy hats like Hank made them wear a uniform. Hillous did some of the touring with that. Hillous Butrum, he had been one of the upright bass players along the way. There's another guy named Cedric Wainwater from Pennsylvania he did it some of the time and Don and the Ol' scratchy fiddle player,

Jerry Rivers. You hear his fiddle on the records, all those records it was just barely good enough. It was just country, country, and country. Anyhow they toured in a shuttle bus, a bunch of Ole guys. That must have been some hard riding man, a shuttle bus.

**JD:** Yeah, Yeah. So now leaving the Wilburn Brothers, take me through that time period of when you left the Wilburn brothers and what did you do after that? You still had your base in Nashville at that time.

**JC:** Yes I did. The Wilburn Brothers had a big television show. They were in 65 markets they were big stars. They could hardly go anywhere in the southeast or southwest without being recognized. Every time we stopped at a truck stop it was.... home week. That's where I learned to like Chicken fried steak. Ya know that's a Texas national meat. Chicken Fried Steak, Breakfast, lunch, supper, chicken fried steak.

**JD:** Okay, so Wilburn Brothers, what other places did you play with them besides Texas? I guess Arkansas, Oklahoma, places like that.

**JC:** Oh Yeah and they were big in North Carolina.

**JD:** North Carolina, yeah. So your tour lasted probably about what? 6 months?

**JC:** Mostly, they go out for a few days and come back for a few days. Back then the Opry still expected their artist to be available 26 weeks out of 52. So it messed up a lot of tours, a lot of bigger artist quit. They quit the Opry.

**JD:** So they still had their base in Nashville and you had your base in Nashville, they'd go out for a couple of weeks and they would come back.

**JC:** Oh yeah.

**JD:** I think that's probably all the time we have for today. We'll pick up in a few days with your time in California.