

5-3-2018

## Dan MaLoon: Dayton Music History Project

Dan MaLoon

Chris Wydman

*Wright State University - Main Campus, [chris.wydman@wright.edu](mailto:chris.wydman@wright.edu)*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special\\_ms607](https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special_ms607)



Part of the [Music Commons](#), and the [Oral History Commons](#)

---

### Repository Citation

MaLoon, D., & Wydman, C. (2018). Dan MaLoon: Dayton Music History Project. .  
[https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special\\_ms607/2](https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/special_ms607/2)

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Special Collections and Archives at CORE Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dayton Music History Project Records (MS-607) by an authorized administrator of CORE Scholar. For more information, please contact [library-corescholar@wright.edu](mailto:library-corescholar@wright.edu).

**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Dayton Music History Project**  
**Interview with Dan MaLoon, May 3, 2018**

**Interview Information**

Interview date: May 3, 2018

Interviewer: Chris Wydman (CW)  
Special Collections & Archives

Interviewee: Dan MaLoon (DM)

**Interview Transcript**

**Chris Wydman:** My name is Chris Wydman, University Archivist at Wright State, it is May 3, 2018 and with us today is Dan MaLoon, who was a participant in our Dayton Music History Project Story Circle that we had back in November. So, we're following up with some one-on-one interviews and we're probably going to talk about all kinds of stuff. We're both from Kettering, we're here at Wright State-

**Dan MaLoon:** Undoubtedly, we'll be talking about a lot of different stuff.

**CW:** So, just when you came in you were talking a little bit, you grew up in Dayton? In Kettering?

**DM:** It was not Kettering at the time, it was called Van Buren Township, and my parents moved there, I think I was two years old. They ran an old Ma and Pa grocery store in an old farmhouse for a while.

**CW:** In Van Buren Township, whereabouts?

**DM:** The corner of Stroop and Dixie.

**CW:** Really?

**DM:** Catty-corner from the cemetery that's there now. There was an old farmhouse.

**CW:** Down there by Lamme Rd.

**DM:** That's part of Moraine now, but at that time there was no Moraine and there was no Kettering, it was all a part of Van Buren Township, and we lived there, I think we moved there in '54. We moved into the Huber development, where Deeds old airfield had been.

**CW:** You were born around here?

**DM:** Well, I was born in Dayton, but I didn't move there until I was two years old. But I attended kindergarten in what later became the Kettering school system.

**CW:** Okay, and do you mind my asking when you were born?

**DM:** 1948. March 10<sup>th</sup>.

**CW:** March 10<sup>th</sup>. Okay, very good. So, what kind of music was playing in your house when you were growing up?

**DM:** Well, it's really weird, because my father had always worked in retail, and at one time he was the assistant manager of the Woolworth's store downtown, and he was in charge of the records sales. And these were the 78 records, and these guys, these reps from different companies, would come in and give my dad these sample records, so he had quite a collection. And he had picture records, most people don't even know what those are, I don't know if you've seen them-

**CW:** I don't know what that is.

**DM:** It was actually a picture of the artist on there, like a trumpet player. I remember he had Clyde McCoy, *Sugar Blues*. It was like a white record, and it was air brushed- like, looking blue- of Clyde playing his trumpet. He had a whole collection of stuff like that, you know, and I don't remember when we got our first TV, but I was pretty young, there was no TV, we listened to a lot of radio and they played records. Wow, that makes me sound really old, doesn't it? People nowadays take things for granted. But yeah, I got one, too [*holding up a smartphone and laughing*].

**CW:** Well, it all comes full circle. A couple of weeks ago, I took my daughter to 2nd & Charles, who has just turned 15, and we went album shopping.

**DM:** Vinyl.

**CW:** She called it vin-L. She was embarrassed that she didn't know how to say it.

**DM:** She shouldn't have been. And they've got quite a collection there, too.

**CW:** Yeah! And I was always saying, "Albums are so cool", and the album art, and it isn't disposable music, you know.

**DM:** Yeah, and for a while you had a hard time finding a turntable, but now they're producing them again.

**CW:** Yeah.

**DM:** I bought a new receiver, you know, an a/v receiver that I run my whole system and everything through. I was surprised that they have phono jacks on them again.

**CW:** Yeah, that's great. And they're re-issuing and re-releasing a lot of classic albums.

**DM:** Right! But the true ones you find in stores like that. They've got quite a collection there.

**CW:** Well, and a week later I ran into you-

**DM:** At the watering hole.

**CW:** Yeah, up at BW3's, and I told you that I'd found that WTUE Homegrown album. Volume 2, and I think you guys were the first-

**DM:** Yeah, we were on volumes 1 and 2.

**CW:** Yeah, because you were the first or second song on that album.

**DM:** And we're doing a reunion, June 21<sup>st</sup>, at the Miamisburg Bicentennial.

**CW:** At the bicentennial, right.

**DM:** Down at the river, and the four of us will be doing that song.

**CW:** What was the name of that song? I can't remember.

**DM:** All-American Fool, written by Pat Kierstad.

**CW:** That's it. It's a good song.

**DM:** Yeah. We're pretty much- you know, he's rearranged it and stuff like that, but we said, no, people are going to want to hear it the way they remember us doing it, so we went back to-

**CW:** Trying to be as true as possible.

**DM:** Everything we're playing is stuff that goes back to our song list from 35, 36 years ago. No one would ever come to hear you play new stuff, a band that's been defunct for over 35 years. I put that band together, as a matter of fact it was May of 1978, so it was like 40 years ago, and we lasted until Halloween of '83, about 5 and a half years, and we've done a couple of reunions since then over the years.

**CW:** Okay. Well, we'll dig into that in a little bit. Do you remember what the first album was that you got? Maybe your dad was bringing home lots of them, but-

**DM:** No, but my father's music, you know, that wasn't my music, but that's what I grew up listening to. But I remember the first single, or 45, that I bought was Rick Nelson, *Travelin' Man*, and *Hello Mary Lou*, and maybe it was like 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Yeah, probably 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 1959 or 60. Maybe even 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The first album that I bought was Rolling Stones. *England's Newest Hit Makers*.

**CW:** *England's Newest Hit Makers*. I joked with Steve about that, because we have a photograph of the Rolling Stones playing at Hara Arena in 1964, and it was about two-thirds empty, and the local press said, "Who are these guys?" It's funny, and Steve told this whole story about, you know, the whole British blues invasion hadn't really taken hold yet.

**DM:** Exactly. And the following year they played Hara Arena again, and I went to that show, and I think it was sold out.

**CW:** Yeah, yeah.

**DM:** They played the afternoon here, and the evening in Cincinnati. Or the other way around.

**CW:** Right. Okay, so you said around 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, that's when you started getting turned onto music a little bit?

**DM:** Probably 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, yeah. Well, I'd listen to- everybody got a little transistor radio, you know, mono with one little earplug, and you'd lay in bed at night after you were supposed to be asleep and you'd have it under your pillow, listening to WING.

**CW:** WING. So, you're like 11 or 12 years old.

**DM:** Yeah, about then.

**CW:** When did you... is there any music history in your family? Any musicians in your family at all? How did you kind of first get into learning music?

**DM:** Like, when I was in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade I took violin lessons, and I played violin for a couple of years, and I liked the string instrument, but "this isn't for me", because I'd see the Everly Brothers on TV, or you'd see Elvis on TV, and you'd be like, "Yeah, I think I'd rather play guitar". But I didn't play anything for a couple of years, then I remember buying my first guitar. I mean a really, really cheap guitar that I bought at Sears with money I made from my paper route that I saved up. And incidentally, the amazing thing was I was in Guitar Center the other day, and they have that guitar. Well, that model, and it's \$800 now because it's a vintage instrument, and it's rare. I think I paid \$67, which is pretty tough for a 13-14 year old kid back then.

**CW:** Absolutely!

**DM:** That was a lot of money back then. But I never looked back. Like the song said, played until my fingers bled, and you'd lay it down because your fingers hurt so bad, and then an hour later you picked it back up and played some more.

**CW:** What were the first songs you were playing?

**DM:** You know, I can't remember. We were just learning chords, then I can remember getting together with another guy who was learning guitar, too, and we decided, "Well, we're going to have a band". We had two guitars, and he found a drummer that he went to school with, then we found this kid that wanted to sing. No bass, no keyboards, so we start, and we were doing stuff, you know, Beach Boys, stuff like *Barbara Ann*, and *Louie Louie*, by the Kingsmen-

**CW:** So, this was pre-Beatles.

**DM:** Yeah, that's what people say, "Wow, you didn't play Beatles and Stones like we did?" They weren't out yet, you know? [*Laughs*] And then finally, you're still playing that crappy little cheap guitar, it had the tiny little amplifier in the case, but you talked your mom and dad into letting you buy a good little Fender amp on sale, and you financed it, and you had to make the payments, you know, from your paper route and you're shoveling snow and all that stuff. Then somewhere along the line, I wanted to play bass, so I sold the guitar and bought a cheap bass. Well, then the amplifier I had wouldn't work, because it was not a bass amplifier. So, once again, I talked to mom and dad and they came through, and I got a cheap bass amp. And then over the years you just keep getting better stuff and better stuff.

**CW:** Yeah. I had that conversation with my mom as well.

**DM:** Oh really?

**CW:** Yeah, and it was in the paper and there was a bass and this big amp, and I got them both for like 350 bucks. And it was huge, this thing was.

**DM:** Well, you're a lot younger than me, \$350 back when I'm talking about would have bought the best Fender made, and then some change.

**CW:** Yeah, this was mid-80s. Right. So, about what age did you really kind of become committed, and said, "You know, let's get serious about this".

**DM:** 15.

**CW:** And you were going to Fairmont?

**DM:** Fairmont West, at that time. Yes.

**CW:** And then The Beatles came out. How old were you when The Beatles came out?

**DM:** I think I was getting ready to turn 16.

**CW:** What was that like?

**DM:** I remember watching- well, you know, I had heard the music on the radio and stuff, and people talked about them and that they were going to be on Ed Sullivan, and *everybody* watched them that night. Then the next morning, Monday, at school, at least 60 percent of the guys came in with their hair wearing bangs, [*laughing*], instead of combed back.

**CW:** Right, right. But you guys were already jamming by that point?

**DM:** I was already playing like junior high school dances at that time.

**CW:** Okay, so you guys were already-

**DM:** Just doing crazy stuff, just totally committed and having so much fun playing. Playing two gigs in one night. I'm not sure if you're familiar with Van Buren and with the old Barnes Building, which was the old Fairmont. My oldest brother-

**CW:** Yeah, right there off of Far Hills.

**DM:** Yeah, my brother graduated from that building, the last year it was open. But anyway, we played a dance at Van Buren over here, grabbed our amps and drums, and walked across the football field and set up and played a set over there, then did it all again and played a set there. That's how bad we wanted to play. We played a promo thing, there was an organ company at... there's a pet store there now, next to Kroger's on Stroop, and there was a Hammond Organ dealer, and they had some kind of a promo thing and we played out in the parking lot in front of the store. I remember because a bunch of kids that I went to school with came by and listened to us. We were horrible.

**CW:** You were horrible?

**DM:** We thought we were rock stars.

**CW:** Did you have a name?

**DM:** I don't remember. We had a lot of names [*laughs*]. And I remember we practiced in a basement up off of David Rd., on Wingview.

**CW:** I know exactly where that is. Right across from the studios there.

**DM:** You could see the tower, the water tower thing. Yeah. There wasn't any Alter [High School].

**CW:** There wasn't any Alter?

**DM:** No. Alter wasn't there yet. Very soon to come, or they were building it. And Ackerman Rd. didn't go through to Rahn yet.

**CW:** Huh. That's interesting. So, did you have a lot of other friends who were in bands? Were a lot of kids getting into that, that you hung around with?

**DM:** It didn't seem like it. Well, I hung around with them because they were musicians, but you had to find them. It was like, you know, most of the other guys, they were the football stars, or-

**CW:** So it was kind of like a music clique-

**DM:** Yeah, and that's how I knew so many people from other schools.

**CW:** But you never got into high school band, that kind of thing, after 4<sup>th</sup> grade?

**DM:** No. I'm sure you noticed at the roundtable thing we had, how many of us actually knew each other from over the years.

**CW:** Yeah.

**DM:** And that's because- and we all went to different schools, but you either played with those people, or you went to see them, or they came to see you.

**CW:** Do you remember at Fairmont... yeah, you were there- I'm remembering now- with Vicky and the Rest, and you kind of knew them?

**DM:** I did not know them when... they were from Fairmont East.

**CW:** They were from Fairmont East, okay.

**DM:** I saw them play in the Holiday at Home Parade, on a flatbed truck. It was the first time I ever saw them play, then I saw them play at a dance at my high school. But, gosh... anyway, then a friend of mine- who is now deceased, and he was one of the guys that we learned to play guitar together at the same time, when we were in some of the early bands- he introduced me to Fran, and the rest is history. I ended up playing or replacing... one of the girls left, I can't remember why, and they still had some gigs to do or somebody called them, and "Can you play?", "Yeah, I'll do it", and I played guitar with them.

**CW:** Yeah. I'd like to talk to Vicky again. Because it sounded like they were really kind of a shooting star, and then they kind of-

**DM:** Yeah, I mean, it was definitely a novelty act, because it was a rock and roll band, but it was all girls.

**CW:** Right, so everybody went crazy. Did you play in any of those “battle of the bands”?

**DM:** I can only remember playing in one, and that was at GBU Hall, which is now the Shamrock Club. I was just there a couple of weeks ago, to hear a band.

**CW:** So, you had your band, you were having fun in high school, what did you do after high school? Did you keep playing? Did you stay in the area?

**DM:** I kept playing, I went to school here at Wright State for a couple years, and I don’t know, school just... I was tired of school. I did okay, I just wasn’t into it. And do I regret it? No. You know, I developed a trade, and I went back and I took a few classes here and there. I took some at Sinclair, I took some at Miami, on and off.

**CW:** Some trade classes?

**DM:** No, no. Like, I took old English literature and stuff at Miami [*laughs*]. You wouldn’t expect that. I had visions once of becoming an English professor. But there was just too much school between that.

**CW:** Right. So, how were you paying the bills?

**DM:** Woodworking trade. I did that for most of my life. And I played music, but I didn’t make... it didn’t even pay for the stuff I spent on it.

**CW:** So, you were... in a lot of the conversations, people were talking about how all these bands if you were 18 you were an old man, you know, all of these garage bands. But you kind of grew into it a little bit later, in terms of when you really kind of came into your own. Did you ever take lessons or anything? Just self-taught?

**DM:** Not exactly. I had Sonny Flaherty’s younger brother, Mike- I met him at Fairmont, he was a year older than me- but he was playing with Sonny in Sonny Flaherty and the Young Americans, and he showed me some stuff on bass.

**CW:** Bass seems to be something-

**DM:** I love it.

**CW:** -it seems like there’s some people that can just pick up a bass and immediately there’s like an instant connection. And then there’s other people that- I could mimic on bass, you know, but I had to practice and practice to sound good, and there’s some people that could just pick it up and start playing.

**DM:** Well, you know, there's still a lot of people who say you must not have been very good on guitar if you play bass. That's like saying you couldn't make it as a doctor so you're a veterinarian, or a dentist, which is stupid. *[Laughs]* It's not the same thing.

**CW:** Right. So, the bass is what you fell in love with. What was your favorite, like, bass song? Your favorite bass licks?

**DM:** Oh, God. John Paul Jones was pretty good in Led Zeppelin. But there's some guys, you know, even fairly local guys that are really, really good. And I'm still old school. I play four strings.

**CW:** Four strings?

**DM:** And I play old basses.

**CW:** So, what were some of the when you first started going out and about, do you remember any of the good local bands? About what time did you start performing out in clubs?

**DM:** Clubs?

**CW:** Yeah.

**DM:** 1970. '69, '70.

**CW:** Okay. And what was your first band that was out playing publicly?

**DM:** It was called- it was a band I was in with Gary Hill, it was Gin and Company.

**CW:** Jen?

**DM:** Gin. G-I-N, I believe. We had a female vocalist, Gary played lead guitar, I played bass, there was another guitarist, a drummer, and a sax player.

**CW:** How did you hook up with Gary?

**DM:** I worked with the guy that was running the band, who was the father of the drummer, and he did a lot of bands. He started doing bands with his kids, and then he ended up- he was promoting. He wasn't booking, he had a booking agent, but I met him at work, and he invited me over to try out for a band, and I went over and tried out, and Gary wasn't in it, he came in later. Not much later. But I remember we played down in Wilmington, Ohio, and we played up in Piqua, Lima.

**CW:** What, you're 20, 21, something like that?

**DM:** Mm hhm. It was a good band. We had good vocals.

**CW:** What were some of the other good bands that were around at the time?

**DM:** Um...

**CW:** Or were there other bands that you tended to play with or play at the same places with?

**DM:** Everybody liked the Pictorian Skiffuls. But they changed so many members over the years, you know Ira ended up finally playing guitar for them.

**CW:** Yeah, because he went from December's Children to them, yeah.

**DM:** Right. But before that there was a whole different lineup of guys. But they had their Mick Jagger- Greg Harbaugh was his name- out front, and he did the dances and had the hair, you know.

**CW:** So, they were kind of the ultimate band.

**DM:** Well, at one time everyone thought they were. It was all British stuff that they did, but then people started using horns again, and then people got really into vocals, like Green Lyte Sunday. And there was a lot of guys that weren't there [*at the story circle event*] that you probably ought to talk to. Jimmy Wyatt, Jason Hollinger, those guys played in Green Lyte Sunday.

**CW:** Green Lyte Sunday.

**DM:** Sue Darby, she was the vocalist. I don't know if you've ever heard that song, *Chelsea Morning* that they did?

**CW:** I'm not sure. I don't think so.

**DM:** Yeah, she went to Fairmont, also.

**CW:** So, through the '60s-

**DM:** Well, I'm already into the '70s, by the way. Early '70s.

**CW:** But you were into the Beach Boys, then the Beatles-

**DM:** -the Stones.

**CW:** Then there was the protest music, but you were always kind of into rock and the blues.

**DM:** Yeah, yeah. Never played any country. A novelty country song we'd learn once in a while, just for giggles. You notice I'm keeping this interview very clean. [*Laughs*]

**CW:** That's fine. That's much appreciated.

**DM:** Not everybody will do that.

**CW:** So, with that band how long were you playing together?

**DM:** That was pretty short-lived. A lot of them were. The longest band that I was ever in was Bearcreek. That lasted five and a half years, all pretty much with the same guys.

**CW:** Who did you play with after Gary's- after the band with Gary in it?

**DM:** I played in a group with my brother-in-law, and he played guitar and I played bass, and we had a female and a drummer, and then the female and the drummer became a couple, and they were married later. But we played quite a few places there. You know where Flannigan's is? That one comes to mind, back then it was the Casbah, we played there, and we played at down the street from there-

**CW:** Flannigan's was called the Casbah? I just have this thought that Flannigan's was Flannigan's since forever.

**DM:** Actually, I went to Fairmont with the Flannigan brothers.

**CW:** Did you go with Pat?

**DM:** No, Pat was younger. I went with Mike.

**CW:** With Mike.

**DM:** Yeah. I'm friends with him on Facebook, as a matter of fact. He graduated the same year I did. But yeah, this was- I mean, I remember Sisari's Casbah, it was there forever. It was an NCR bar.

**CW:** Sisari's Casbah.

**DM:** Sisari's. S-I-S-A-R-I-S. And then I think Steve Kirk bought it. Kirk's [Casbah].

**CW:** Yeah? He was on... was he on WING?

**DM:** Yeah. WING. I think he bought it for a while. But anyway, yeah, they had bands there. Where else. We played out in Trotwood, I can't remember the name of the little place. We played- that was all clubs, by that time. That was like '74, '75.

**CW:** Was it just for the fun?

**DM:** Oh, yeah.

**CW:** Were you making any... I mean, I know it's just a blast to be on stage, but were you making some [money]?

**DM:** Yeah, we were getting paid. Yeah, we played out at the Salem Mall, at the Tijuana Lounge, I don't know if you've heard of that place, but it was an upscale, it was a nice club there, and you went up the stairs and the band played up there on a balcony thing.

**CW:** Was it in the Salem Mall?

**DM:** It was in the mall, yes. Of course, in the times it was nicknamed the Marijuana Lounge. Just because it was "Tijuana", you know. It wasn't because there were any drugs. Well, I'm sure everywhere there was drugs, but-

**CW:** But it was just because of the name. Right.

**DM:** Right. [*Laughs*] I didn't want to give the place a bad name.

**CW:** Right. So, how did Bearcreek start to come together? I found out why Bearcreek was Bearcreek. There is a Bear Creek.

**DM:** Well, two of the brothers lived on Bear Creek Rd.

**CW:** Really?

**DM:** Yeah. That's how we came up with the name. Okay, so after the married couple left, my brother-in-law and I went out and found another drummer and guitar player and put together a band. I don't even remember what we called it. We played some clubs down in Miamisburg and stuff, but my brother-in-law and the other guitar player decided they wanted to move to Texas. So, we're at like 1976, and I went down to Texas with the idea that I'd move down there, too. Then I changed my mind, I don't know, there was something about it that I didn't like. I eventually did live down there for a year, I don't know what I was thinking then, either, and came back. I hated it. So, then I took a job, besides my day job, I took a job as a doorman at a bar in Miamisburg there, that had a band every weekend, and I got to talking to people, musicians would come in and stuff, and a singer, this one guy, he had been a vocalist in the '60s in a band called Third Generation, he was wanting to get another band together. So, he and I scoured for musicians, and we found those brothers, the Jones brothers, drums and guitar and vocals, and then we added a guy named Mike Dowden- who recently passed away, on guitar, and that was the original five of us in Bearcreek. Well, Mike, after about a year and a half- he was the guitarist on the first Homegrown album- he decided he wanted to do something different. So, he left and we took on Pat Kierstad, who came from the Star City Band, which had just broken up and they had a pretty good following, and we played for almost a year like that, then one night we were playing in Kettering at a club, and I don't know

what got into him but our lead singer walked off stage and left. We had a set left to do so we did it without him, so there were four of us, and we decided-

**CW:** He got fed up with whatever, and he just-

**DM:** I don't know, he had a lot of problems going on, personal, but just the way he handled it, he never played with us again. So, we went on from there, and they were some pretty lean times, because we had to re-learn everything, and we added a keyboard player, and that went great.

**CW:** And he was your singer?

**DM:** No, we were all singers anyway. But it was just the arrangement of the material, you know, 'you do this' and 'you do this', and that all fell apart, and we had to re-do it. Yeah, and that band went real big. We were together a long time, we made a lot of money-

**CW:** That's what I was going to ask, when did you really start taking off with them?

**DM:** About 1980.

**CW:** Was it just from word of mouth from playing locally around here?

**DM:** That's how it all started, yeah. We really didn't have an agent at that time, but we worked solid. We didn't hardly ever have any time off, I mean we were working four or five nights a week, and then later on when we went on the road, we were working five or six nights a week. I remember, and it's in a bio I wrote years back about the band, the month of December 1981 we played every night, including Christmas Eve and Christmas.

**CW:** And that's just playing around here?

**DM:** Some of it earlier in the month was on the road, then we came back to town and played here, yeah. We did a lot of shows for WTUE, you know, big outdoor things. Of course, not in December. But, yeah, and we bought our own sound system, our own light system, I mean big stuff. Big, big concert stuff. And we bought a whole school bus, because the first time we went down to Tennessee to play, we lost our butt paying for the gas and the rental of the truck, so for like 850 bucks we bought this old school bus, ripped all the seats out of it, it hauled us and all of our stuff.

**CW:** So, you wrote your own music. When did you guys start writing original music?

**DM:** Real early, while we still had the lead singer, and it just progressed after that. After we added Pat on guitar, he had a lot of songs that he started penning. I don't write music, I just play. They'll say, 'Here's how it goes', and then I'll do my own thing.

**CW:** So, did you ever get a big break, or was it just kind of like a circle that kept expanding outward?

**DM:** We got to do some big shows, you know, and you keep thinking ‘we’re going to make it someday’, and you get so close, but after a while everybody got tired of each other. You know, when you go out on the road with like six guys, and you’re living in two motel rooms-

**CW:** Yeah, looking at each other every day...

**DM:** Yeah, or riding in the bus looking at each other, [*laughs*], that got old. But yeah, we got to do some pretty neat shows, played a big outdoor thing opening for Black Oak, Arkansas, and then we played Hara [Arena] a couple of times. Opened up for Grand Funk there, that was a pretty cool show. But that’s as far as it went.

**CW:** Did you have- what was the biggest tour? I mean, did you-

**DM:** They weren’t really tours. It was like, we had an agent down south- I don’t know where he was out of, I think he was out of Virginia, and he had all of these huge clubs down there, and he’d have like a circuit of bands. Then, plus we had the stuff here, because we played at The She on a regular basis, Obadiah’s, a club out in Miamisburg called Flashbacks, Brandy’s Water Wheel in Middletown. Those were all big clubs, and they would keep you... I think we played four nights a week at those. Then in the summer there was all the outdoor stuff. We did a lot of stuff at Island Park at the Band shell. I remember one year at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July I think they had 12 bands, all day long. I mean from like 10 o’clock in the morning until 10 o’clock at night.

**CW:** So, during this period was music your career?

**DM:** Yeah, because I’d lost my job, I got laid off, and I didn’t look for another job. I was just playin’.

**CW:** You were making good money?

**DM:** Yeah. We were getting a salary, we made a business out of it. Everybody got a salary, we had a sound man and a lights man, and we had a kid who tagged along, just because he wanted to be on the road with a rock band, fresh out of high school, much to his parents’ dismay. He took off with us.

**CW:** Did you have a following? Did you have your groupies?

**DM:** Well, yeah. We had a regular, regional... you know, people who would come out to hear us all the time, no matter where we’d play, within reason. But I remember playing in West Virginia and Knoxville, Tennessee, and seeing people from here come to see us. Now, I don’t know if that was related to a trip they were taking, but that was pretty cool, they they’d drive that far.

**CW:** Sure. So, what would you say would be the high point for Bearcreek?

**DM:** Like, I just remember in the summer of '81 or '82, and this is what I'm doing, I'm loving life, living the dream, you know?

**CW:** I'm playing rock music.

**DM:** I can sleep until 4 in the afternoon.

**CW:** I'm getting paid to do what I love.

**DM:** Right! Yeah, you can't beat it.

**CW:** Did you ever do any recording?

**DM:** Yeah, we recorded some songs in Chillicothe at Appalachian Studios, and then we also did here in Dayton at Cyberteknics, up on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Springfield St., you know where I'm talking about. And then we also did something for one of the TV stations here, one of those cable Dayton stations. It wasn't like ABC, and as a matter of fact, it was in the Barnes Building there. They had us set up and play in a room, then they did a remote and had cameras, and did audio out of another room there. Yeah, that was aired on TV, but I don't remember when.

**CW:** So, you just recorded some songs, then-

**DM:** Yeah, we started doing that to submit for Homegrown for WTUE.

**CW:** That's where I was going, how did the first Homegrown album come about?

**DM:** We had a song that we had learned and we'd been doing, and it had a good hook to it, and the radio station announced that they- WEBN had been doing that in Cincinnati for years. They called it *Album Project*.

**CW:** Of local artists?

**DM:** Yeah, they'd been doing it for years. So, WTUE jumped on the wagon and they did it, and we submitted the tape and they liked it, and they took us back to the studio.

**CW:** And this was, what, 1980? The first one?

**DM:** Late 79 is when we did the work, and it came out in early, '80, yeah.

**CW:** And you were on Homegrown I and II.

**DM:** Yeah, and then II was Pat's song, *American Fool*. Yeah, Bill was gone by then, our front singer.

**CW:** Your biggest song, probably?

**DM:** Yeah, yeah.

**CW:** How many of those did they do? They did three or four of those?

**DM:** Four, I think.

**CW:** Did you ever get any local airplay?

**DM:** Oh, yeah. Now that was a neat feeling, when you're driving down Far Hills and hear your own group come on the radio.

**CW:** Yeah, because I don't ever remember, you know, I was born in '68, and by the time I started listening to the radio- it was WTUE, WVUD, EBN- but it was all the big bands. I don't remember hearing any local music being played on TUE.

**DM:** I haven't heard them do it in a long time. It's been a couple years since I've heard anything.

**CW:** But it was still fairly common for them to play some local music?

**DM:** Right. You know, back in the early days when it was just AM radio, WING, I can remember very early on, there was a group called Teddy and the Roughriders, out of Fairborn, I think, and they had a song called *Money and Gold* that WING used to play, which I thought was pretty cool. You know, to be a star and listen to this music, your own music on your own radio station.

**CW:** So, you said it was '83, '84 that you guys kind of-

**DM:** We did our last gig on Halloween of '83, and then the next summer they wanted us to do a show down behind the Y [YMCA] and the river, they've got a stage out on the river, and they played several bands, so we threw together an hour act and did that. Then we didn't do anything until 2000, we got together and rehearsed and did an hour long show at Spring Fling on a Friday night on Market Square in Miamisburg.

**CW:** Really?

**DM:** Yeah. We had our old sound man and our old light man back, our pyrotechnics, and everything.

**CW:** So, when you kind of wound down in the '80s, did this kind of happen like, "Well, we're done". Had you guys been talking about it? Did you just called it quits?

**DM:** Yeah, we just kind of got burned out. And most of the guys kept playing, I just really didn't. I'd go out and see them with their other bands, and I'd get up and do a couple of songs, but I was really just concentrating on my work.

**CW:** So how old were you in '84?

**DM:** Oh, I was about 35. Yes, thirty-something [*laughs*].

**CW:** So you concentrated on your woodworking.

**DM:** Yeah.

**CW:** And were you playing at all?

**DM:** Just at home. Like I said, unless I went out to see them, and then I'd get up and do a song or two.

**CW:** So you didn't forget how to play bass?

**DM:** No. No, I always played it at home. And I didn't ever get rid of my-

**CW:** That's the thing about playing bass. Bass is a hundred times more fun to play when you're playing with somebody.

**DM:** Exactly. But you've got to play by yourself before you can play with other people.

**CW:** Right, play along to your favorite album, or your favorite songs.

**DM:** Nowadays people got it made. You can go on the internet and learn bass tabs. There's even video! I didn't have that luxury.

**CW:** I used to go and I'd get a list of songs I wanted to learn how to play, and "Randy, show me how to play these". So, then 2000 came along, and you said you guys played a reunion show. Did you start getting... was that just a one-off?

**DM:** We talked about it, and it never really... because everybody was working a regular job. We were just trying to be regular guys. And then in 2006, they did some kind of a big deal down in Miamisburg, and they wanted us to get together to play, so we did a Thursday night in a bar, 2 sets in a bar down there, and then that Saturday we did a set at the old library park there for the Spring Fling. That went over well, and then we talked again about it, and then we actually got together and rehearsed in '09 for a while, and then that fell apart because someone got in an argument. So, then when I retired, and one of the guitarists called me and he said, "Look, I'm playing acoustic guitar and I'm singing, do you want to play bass with me and do some singing?" And I thought, "Well, why not?" So then his brother- our drummer, Doug- he thought, "Well, I want to get in

on that, too.” So we rehearsed that for a summer, and then Greg, the guitar player, he got sole custody of his son. I don’t want to discuss that right now, it was a medical thing, and it didn’t have anything to do with it, but it’s not my business so I don’t want to discuss it.

**CW:** That’s fine, okay.

**DM:** So, that kind of fell apart, then Doug said, “Hey, I played in this band back in the late ‘90s with this girl, and she’s wanting to get something going again”, and so we got together with Tina, and Dirt Linville on guitar, which is another guy that Fran and I are trying to get to talk to you here, because he’s been around.

**CW:** Dirt?

**DM:** His name is Phil, but that’s his nickname.

**CW:** Phil Linville, or Dirt?

**DM:** Yeah. Anyway, so we formed a band, Cuest, and we’re going strong right now. I played last Friday and Saturday, and we’ll be at the Phone Booth on the 19<sup>th</sup>. We play as much as they’ll hire us. That’s C-U-E-S-T.

**CW:** I saw you, because my brother-in-law’s band, the Elderly Brothers, were playing at the Dog’s Breath Tavern, which is now the Phone Booth, and I happened to-

**DM:** You were there and you saw us play?

**CW:** No, I saw them, but I saw some flyers about you coming up, and then I think on Fran’s Facebook page I heard her talking about the band, and that’s when I put it together that was your band. But you seem to be going strong.

**DM:** Yeah, here’s me and Tina [*showing photo on phone*], on stage. That’s at the Phone Booth, I think.

**CW:** Yeah, that’s great. So you said now you’re... Cuest, you’re playing as often as-

**DM:** As often as they’ll let us.

**CW:** -as they’ll let you. Are you playing every weekend?

**DM:** No, about twice a month.

**CW:** Twice a month. You said there’s a couple of bands, you were talking about Cuest, and the reunion for the Miamisburg festival coming up.

**DM:** Yeah, Cuest is playing a Tuesday evening, Bearcreek is playing Thursday evening, and then I think we're playing at the Brick Tap and Tavern in Huber that Saturday night. It's a busy week.

**CW:** Yeah. Are you and Bearcreek rehearsing? Are you getting together?

**DM:** Yeah. We're just learning an hour show. And then Pat wants, you know, "Let's start doing this regular", but we're already working hard.

**CW:** You're already working hard enough.

**DM:** Everybody nowadays plays in more than one band, so you can play all the time. I don't like it. It detracts and it gets in the way, you know, you get a call "Can you play this date?" and you call everybody, "Well, I'm already playing with the other guys", you know.

**CW:** Yeah. Jim Foreman-

**DM:** Yeah, I know Jim.

**CW:** He used to be in the Elderly Brothers.

**DM:** Oh, really? I didn't know that.

**CW:** Yeah, I think he was one of the original members, and my sister got remarried, and married Don Snapp, who is in the Elderly Brothers, so we'll go up and check them out wherever they're playing.

**DM:** I haven't heard them.

**CW:** They play a lot of roots, Americana music. They're really good. But there's a core group of them that's been together a long time. But I've noticed the coming and going, and it's like, "the keyboard player, he'll be with us next Saturday, but the next time he's got something", you know, and they're all kind of filling in.

**DM:** Yeah. I don't like it, but that's how it is.

**CW:** Yeah, and I think I was joking with you that they're like, "Yeah, we'll play about once a month, but I'm getting tired of carrying that amp around and getting home at 4am". But they're playing as often as they want to play.

**DM:** Well, we're not. I want to play more. And I had to unload the amp at 3 o'clock in the morning by myself last Sunday morning.

**CW:** How many members do you got?

**DM:** Five. We've got keys, drums, bass, guitar, and then she sings.

**CW:** Do you do any original stuff, or just cover stuff.

**DM:** No, not yet. We may, but not yet. It's all covers.

**CW:** What are you playing?

**DM:** Oh my. Everything.

**CW:** Everything you can think of, okay.

**DM:** We're doing some modern country. I mean, I refuse to play that old George Jones, cry in your beer stuff, honky-tonk. But we do... Yearwood?

**CW:** Trisha Yearwood?

**DM:** Yeah, stuff like that. And, you know, we do some novelty songs, like, I sing *Cover of a Rolling Stone*, that gets everybody going.

**CW:** Yeah, that always goes over.

**DM:** Stuff like that, but we do Pat Benatar, we do Pink, we do Lady Gaga, and then we-

**CW:** Does- is it Tina? Does Tina do all the singing?

**DM:** No, we all sing. And then Jeff, our keyboard singer, he's probably the best vocalist, male vocalist. He does a real killer job on that *Walking in Memphis* and stuff like that.

**CW:** Is there a venue you play at more than most for Cuest?

**DM:** Ziggy's, Phone Booth, the Brick Tap and Tavern up in Huber. Trying to get into some other places.

**CW:** Do you feel like there's fewer places to play now?

**DM:** Definitely, yeah. I don't know if you know this, but the Library, you know about that?

**CW:** That they're moving to the old Phone Booth. Because I live- I'm walking distance from the old Phone Booth.

**DM:** Oh really? Where do you live?

**CW:** We live off of Stroop. We live on Robertann Drive. It's one street past Woodman.

**DM:** Okay, yeah, I know where that is.

**CW:** Yeah, if you're coming up, like, from the Greene towards Wilmington, it's just before you get to Woodman, it's on the right there.

**DM:** The old Meadowlawn Elementary School is right there. It's a church now, but it was a Kettering school.

**CW:** Yeah. My wife she grew up on Glenheath, and we go to that Crestwood Swim Club up there.

**DM:** Doesn't everyone in Kettering?

**CW:** Yeah, my daughter is a lifeguard there. We're looking forward to the pool, that's for sure. And I can't let you go without asking you about Wrightstock. Did you play at Wrightstock?

**DM:** I did not, and I did not go, so I'm not the guy to ask. I remember hearing about it, I just- I don't know why I didn't. Because that's when I was married to Fran, and we went to about anything music-wise. You know, we went to all of the stuff at Island Park, before I played there, we used to go there to concerts. I don't know why we didn't go.

**CW:** Yeah, because that was a pretty big- it was huge. And it's funny how people remember things, but that was really a big promotional thing, to get people to-

**DM:** They should have kept having it.

**CW:** They should have. The reason they didn't is that it became such a big thing, that Student Council basically sponsored it and lined up the bands, and it got to the point that all they were doing the whole year was planning Wrightstock, and they weren't able to do any other Student Council activities or whatever. But yeah, originally it was to get people to come out to campus and to see the campus, and be like, 'Hey, this is kind of a cool place. Maybe this is somewhere I might go, or my kids might go'.

**DM:** It was cool. I'm overwhelmed by it now, you know?

**CW:** Yeah, because you were out here in what, '67?

**DM:** Allyn Hall, Oelman Hall, maybe Fawcett Hall.

**CW:** The Quad, and that was it. Was the student center even there?

**DM:** When you went to get a cup of coffee or eat, you went in the basement of I think it was Allyn Hall. And they had tunnels, you know. Yep, and they didn't have- there were no stickers for your car, you just parked. They did have some cops to patrol, but nothing like nowadays where you have to have a permit.

**CW:** There's funny stories out here, because they were kind of flying by the seat of their pants a little bit when they first got started, and when they built the first dorm, you know, there's nothing out here. All of a sudden, you've got all of these partying 18-year-olds living in this dorm, and there's nobody out here to-

**DM:** -yeah, to control anything.

**CW:** I think it got pretty wild.

**DM:** Yeah, but it will never hold a candle to the partying at UD.

**CW:** Oh, no. That legend continues to grow.

**DM:** They don't burn sofas in the street or turn cars over.

**CW:** That was an interesting time here, because they talk about like after Kent State and during the protest era, and the students were generally a little older than the students at most colleges, were basically coming here to go to class then going back home, and they didn't really know how to protest. And it was kind of an interesting place where the faculty were very young, and then there were these first-generation college students, and they were all kind of learning together with this new university, and it was still kind of taking shape and growing. It was an interesting time.

**DM:** Is Dr. Jacob Dorn still here?

**CW:** Unfortunately, he passed away just last year.

**DM:** Oh, wow. Because he was... when you said the young- because he had his doctorate, and he had coal-black hair, and he was slender and thin, and he couldn't have been 25 years old, and I had him.

**CW:** That's what was funny, a lot of the faculty weren't that much older than the students.

**DM:** And he was kind of a fixture here, wasn't he?

**CW:** Oh, yeah. Because he retired just a few years before he passed away. It was a big surprise. Because he was very active, he was traveling all over the place-

**DM:** Other than being too young to pull it off, he was the image of the professor. He had the leather patches, he had the bent pipe, [*laughing*], and I'm like "Wait a minute, what's wrong? Oh right, he's not old, that's why it doesn't look right".

**CW:** Right, he looks like a kid pretending to be-

**DM:** He was a good teacher.

**CW:** Yeah, because I had him in the '90s.

**DM:** I remember a book- well, this was in the '60s, so yeah, he persevered. He had written a book, called... I don't know, it may be out of print, you've probably never heard of it- Washington Gladden: Pioneer of the Social Gospel. You ever hear of it?

**CW:** I took a Fundamentalism course from him, and yeah, that was his guy.

**DM:** That was his first book, too. He talked about him in every class. [*Laughing*]

**CW:** Yeah, I took a bunch. I took, like, The American Religious Biography from him-

**DM:** I can't believe he passed away.

**CW:** I know. It was very sad.

**DM:** How old was he? He couldn't be that old.

**CW:** He was... I think he might have been 80, 81, maybe? I mean he probably came here in-

**DM:** '65?

**CW:** Yeah. But he was on Facebook all the time, and he was coming out to campus all the time for various events and-

**DM:** The last time I remember reading about him, but it must have been before he retired, he was like the dean of the history or some department here.

**CW:** He may have been chair of History.

**DM:** He was a hanzo of some kind.

**CW:** Yeah, and I know he was very active on the commencement committee and would always help them with the honorary doctorates that they would give, and they would bring in a big speaker, and he chaired that committee for a number of years. And he may have been chair of the History Department. It's interesting to work in the university archives of a young university, because we can still go back and talk to people who were here when it started.

**DM:** You just did!

**CW:** You know, you can't do that at a lot of other schools. But it's like the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which was a little over 10 years ago, and then we just had the 50<sup>th</sup>

anniversary this year, and in just that span of time, we lost an awful lot of people. There were some people who were still working.

**DM:** Oh, yeah. I told you I was here 10 years ago and took an OSHA core. I couldn't show you what building I was in, but I remember it was a week-long thing. I had a step-daughter, she went to UD, and she got a 4 year, full academic ride. "Yeah, you're going there". [*Laughs*]

**CW:** Right! There's not much to think about.

**DM:** Well, what would you tell your kids?

**CW:** Yeah, absolutely.

**DM:** Because it's a good school, but she got her bachelor's there, and then she wanted to stay in school and get her masters, and she came here for three years and got her masters, and she was going to go ahead and get her doctorate, but then she told her mom, "I'm tired of school". Because she went straight from kindergarten through her masters. She said she liked Wright State better than UD.

**CW:** Really? Yeah. A lot of people are really devoted to this school. It's very much a school about Dayton, and serving the needs of the Dayton community, and, you know, Dayton is a different kind of school. It's a much smaller school, and-

**DM:** And at UD you get a lot of kids from the east coast, you know, from New York, and Connecticut-

**CW:** Yeah, it's a fairly prominent Catholic university. Notre Dame light, you know?

**DM:** I remember the most impressive thing or one of the most impressive things I've seen in my life is at the UD graduation, they did all the bachelor's degrees, then they do the master's, then they did the doctorates, and there was some Asian kid there that got three doctorates at the same time. He was 24 years old. [*Laughs*]

**CW:** Oh my lord. That's impressive.

**DM:** Yeah.

**CW:** You've got to slow down and enjoy things while you can, you know?

**DM:** I'd be afraid to talk to him, I'd feel intimidated about any given subject!

**CW:** I don't even know how that's possible at age 23. Three doctorates, that's-

**DM:** 24. Don't give him too much credit.

**CW:** Yeah, well, then that's different. Not nearly as impressive.

**DM:** He started at UD when he was 16. You don't suppose he was gifted, do you?

**CW:** Sounds like it.

**DM:** Well, she got a chance to take- the summer before her senior year, she got invited to take a class, because she was academically- plus she came out of Chaminade-Julienne, I think. But like I said, the full ride convinced me. There was no more discussion, no more looking at schools.

**CW:** Well, was there anything else you thought about prior to coming in that you'd like to share with us?

**DM:** No, I wish I had some materials to show you. I just don't. I have a few pictures of one group from the mid-seventies, before Bearcreek, but I have to find them.

**CW:** Well, if you come across some materials, whether it's about Bearcreek or anything sort of related to the Dayton music scene that you've experienced-

**DM:** How far back do you go, and how far up do you go, you know?

**CW:** Yeah, we don't really have any strict parameters. As long as it sort of relates to popular music in Dayton.

**DM:** Because you realize that a lot of us that started in the '60s are still doing it.

**CW:** Yeah, absolutely.

**DM:** There's Gary, Steve's not playing anymore, I don't know why. He's retired.

**CW:** Yeah, he said he's-

**DM:** He flies his airplane.

**CW:** He flies his airplane?

**DM:** He's got one of those ultralights.

**CW:** He said he dabbles, and there will be like a little blues-

**DM:** The Blues Jam, at Taffy's in Eaton.

**CW:** Yeah, exactly. It sounds like he still goes out as lot.

**DM:** He came and heard us at the Phone Booth the last time we were there. He lives right there by the old Dog's Breath and the Phone Booth. Yeah, being retired sure makes it a lot easier.

**CW:** Sure. Well, I'm glad you're having so much fun with it. And I can only hope to be having so much fun.

**DM:** But you know what? I will say this, off the record and on the record, you know, retirement is not all what it's cracked up to be. You spend a lot of time looking for something to do. Yeah.

**CW:** Right. Well, again, thanks for joining us today, Dan. And thanks for the ideas and any help you can provide connecting with other folks that we should talk to.

**DM:** I'm going to talk to Phil, "Dirt". We already have, me and Fran both have, and he said, "Yeah, I should have gone to that". And we said, "Yeah!"

**CW:** Phil? Yeah, we'd love to talk to him.

**DM:** Because he was playing with a band probably back in '65 called the Yeoman Warders, doing British invasion stuff.

**CW:** The Yeoman Warders?

**DM:** I've got a picture of them, if I can find it.

**CW:** Warders.

**DM:** Yeah. The Yeoman Warders are the Beefeaters, they wear the big hats. The guard.

**CW:** Okay, yeah.

**DM:** I don't know if I can ever find this.

**CW:** I love the names of the American "Brit bands". The Pictorian Skiffuls.

**DM:** The Shillings.

**CW:** Yeoman Warders.

**DM:** Yeah, well, that was the plan, and if you had a guy that could fake a British accent, even better. Alright, I guess we're done. Oh, here he is. [*Showing a photo*] This is a picture also out of a yearbook, this is the Yeoman Warders playing at a dance, that's him right there in the middle, playing their little Fenders. [*Laughs*]

**CW:** Yeah, and like you said, everybody's got their Beatles cuts.

**DM:** Oh, God. We had so much trouble with parents and schools over that.

**CW:** Steve kept joking about every time the new music of the day hit, everybody the next Monday would show up with a different haircut at school, as the times were changing.

**DM:** I remember getting sent home from school for hair, you know? And then, my mom taught at Fairmont, she started the year after I graduated. “Phew”. Yeah, and then I went to school to... I had to take her something, and this was around 1980, many years after I was out of there, and there’s kids walking around with hair down to here and full beards, and I’m like, “What?” You know, “How come you’re not throwing them out?”

**CW:** Right. Times have definitely changed. That’s for sure.

**DM:** And you go there and girls are wearing shorts and jeans. I never saw anything but a girl in a skirt or a dress when I went to school.

**CW:** Well, now having tattoos all down your arms and a beard down to your belly, that’s like typical now. That’s fashion now.

**DM:** No ink.

**CW:** No ink. Me, either.

**DM:** I did have an ear pierced, but I let that grow back. From my wilder days.

**CW:** Alright. Well, thank you, Dan.