

Transcript of interview conducted September 7 2017

Interviewees: BRYAN ADAMS (BA)
Interviewer: JAREK ZABA (JZ)
New Malden, England

Transcription: JAREK ZABA

[0:00:00] JZ: OK this is Jarek Zaba for the Kingston RPM project. I'm here with Bryan Adams in his home in New Malden. Bryan could you just state your name and your date of birth for the tape please.

BA: My name is Bryan Adams and I was born in October 1936. So I'm just coming up to 81 now.

[00:22] JZ: Right Bryan. Were you born here in the Kingston area?

BA: No just across the river in Fulham. Born in Fulham. In fact the whole family drifted west. So we went from sort of Fulham to Putney to Wimbledon. We came here. I married a girl from Thames Ditton. So we're very much part of a family drift to west London.

[00:44] JZ: So what year did your connection to the Kingston area start?

BA: Well really when I went to college. I went to the architectural department of the arts school. To Kingston. Knight's Park. Long before it became even a polytechnic, let alone a university. And it was the art school. It was nice because I came across to their - basically from school - an all boys school in Wimbledon - to discover that there was serious music there even though we at school my best friend, his brother who was an elder brother was into traditional jazz. And Bessie Smith and King Oliver, all the big names of trad jazz, he was into. So he rather sort of educated in traditional jazz. As I went through college I moved away and I continued to move away from traditional jazz to modern jazz. And now in fact I can still sit upstairs on the computer and recommend jazzradio.com. Continuous jazz music. And you can select your genre from gypsy jazz to traditional to piano jazz and what have you. It's a nice programme on the computer and you just keep it running in the background.

[02:09] JZ: So was traditional jazz the first sort of music you remember really becoming familiar with or?

BA: The first music I took seriously yes. And then of course as I say the American Forces Network started to bring this American big band jazz. And we started to go on from there. But there is a point for this programme - when the Americans started to leave Bushy Park they - because they had plenty of money - dropped a lot of things in the second hand market in Kingston. And there was a passageway of second hand shops of - of second hand furniture shops in - which is now Eden Walk. Which runs through from Eden Street through Eden Walk. It was a very small passageway with shops either side - small shops. One of those shops bought up loads and loads of the records - the 78 records that the Americans were getting rid of as they went home. And it was an absolute mine of real good music. American music was - you couldn't really get, you had to listen to either the AFN or Radio Caroline or something like that - was a bit later, Caroline. But you could actually get these records there, that was quite something.

[03:33] JZ: So just going back to when you first heard trad jazz - did you say it was your brother, did you say that-

BA: No I was at school. Before I came to the arts school. By the time I got to the art school we were into rock n roll.

[03:49] JZ: So those very first jazz records that you heard. How would they have - how would you have come across or where would they have come from?

BA: Well really through friends. Almost sort of a jazz group at school which was looked down upon by the school because they were more into serious classical music. And we were the rebels that liked jazz.

[04:09] JZ: And how old would you have been at this exact point?

BA: About 15.

[04:13] JZ: So you would have become familiar through this informal network that you had.

BA: That's right.

[04:22] JZ: And then - so then when you - when do you remember this sort of Armed Forces Network first playing a part in your life?

BA: Well it was at that time - we were a gang and we all went round together. Young teenagers. And I tell you where we used to go often. In Clarence Street there was a record shop. And I'm not sure if it was a Decca Records but on the first floor there was a series of listening booths. And we used to pack half a dozen or so into each booth. And get a pile of records and play the records. And there - I tell you, from there we used to go down to Bentalls Silver Cafe. Now your older listeners will remember this Bentalls Silver Cafe. And we used to go in there for coffee and things. It was before really the era of frothy coffee in everything. The coffee bars were a little later. But at that stage just the records were important.

[05:22] JZ: So there were numerous ways of accessing this music essentially.

BA: Yeah basically - well that, yes there were. There were certainly the record shops. But I'll tell you another one. Because just on that same sort of period we all went over to Tolworth. Now Tolworth - there was a big garage which is on the junction of the road as you go towards Surbiton there, it's now got an office block on it. But in the older days it was a petrol station. At the back of this petrol station was a cafe. And in that cafe was a jukebox. They managed to get quite a number of good records. And we went in there especially to listen to Elvis Presley's Heartbreak Hotel which was the first real rock n roll record I can remember hearing. It's a great record. I played it back off the computer - it was a good record. Good record, Heartbreak Hotel. He went on to do Jailhouse Rock after that. And then we were really into the starts of the rock n roll - and then not far off again we got Bill Haley and the Comets.

[06:35] JZ: We'll back to how the music progressed but I'm just interested first of all just your memories of some of these individual places.

BA: We didn't really have much to do with - just put it on record - didn't have much to do with the Americans. As they were arrivals to us teenage English boys, they had the money to flash around for the girls. They used to put on these parties and things at Bushy Park. The girls used to flood along, it was a bit of a honeypot for them weren't it? Lots of presents and good food and all the rest of it. And the girls went along. They were surrounded by good looking well dressed American youth. So they - we didn't - we weren't really happy with them. Was it oversexed and over here was the thing.

[07:21] JZ: Yeah I've heard that one before. Just going back to some of these individual localities that you spoke about - I just want to see, just to jog your memory of. So for one of the shop in which you could access 78s that came from the States. Was this a - do you recall, was it a big shop?

BA: The old records, second hand records. No, it wasn't. It was a dirty little second hand shop with

furniture all over the place. But on the side there were boxes and you put 78s in boxes and you flick through them to look at the record labels.

[07:58] JZ: And do you recall who ran that shop?

BA: Oh no. Just someone. Yeah there was a series - a lot of shops down there. It was the width of the Eden Walk but very small kiosk type shops going right the way through to the back.

[08:12] JZ: And the Clarence Street record shop that had the listening booths. Similar kind of -

BA: No no no. That was a proper shop. It was something like Decca's or something like that. It had proper booths and the counter and racks for all the records. You'd say, we want the latest this, the latest - they could listen to the record before you bought it. We never bought them.

[08:34] JZ: That was going to be my next question. [Laughter]

BA: Goes without saying doesn't it?

[08:39] JZ: You'd use the listening booths as your way of accessing this music.

BA: Before we went downstairs to have some coffee.

[08:47] JZ: And that's the cafe you were speaking of with the jukebox where you first heard-

BA: Oh that was Tolworth. That was Tolworth. There must have been a proprietor that had access to some good records, good latest records. So it was worth going to Tolworth for a - have a coffee and a listen.

[09:06] JZ: Ok let's talk about - going back to that Elvis moment and first hearing rock n roll. How did rock n roll make you feel?

BA: Actually I tell you what, I distinctly remember. I was still - we were just finishing school - I was about to leave so I was just coming up sort of 16. And my best friend said - at school said oh there's this new music coming in from the States. It's really really wild. It's called rock n roll! So I said sounds silly. He said no no, it's the big thing. And then he sort of came and I think - the first really rock n roll I think was Bill Haley. I think that was the one that first really - I remember as rock n roll. Because of course - I don't know whether you describe Elvis Presley as rock n roll, I suppose you do don't you? Just a great sound. And great songs. And he was a great image wasn't he? Greasy hair and slim and wiggles and the rest of it, do you know?

[10:12] JZ: Did you sort of feel differently hearing this music than you ever did hearing jazz for example? Trad jazz.

BA: The answer really is no. I still, as I say, jazzradio.com on the computer. And I listen to jazz for hours. I've got a room at the top of the house which is what they call my man cave. I do all the things I do. And I just keep jazz running in the background. We went to a jazz gig about a month or so ago in Fulham. At Fulham Palace. There was the - what was the - Jazz 606 Club had a concert, they had a gig there. And the only thing was it was open air and the heavens opened. And we quit halfway through getting drowned. But I mean that's part of the scene, the 606 Club. Have you heard of it?

[11:15] JZ: I'm not familiar with it I don't think.

BA: And you must have heard of the Bull at Barnes. They play the Bull at Barnes quite a lot. So that's the sort of south London or west London crowd.

[11:28] JZ: I just want to get a sense of the context in which you heard this music. Would your parents have played music in the house when you were growing up at all or -

BA: Oh yes. Victor Silvester. [Laughs]

[11:43] JZ: Who's Victor Silvester?

BA: We hated it! [Laughs] They hated - every generation hates their children's music. Our children - well not quite so far away. But David Bowie was the great - son's great idol. That sort of generation. Ok that's better probably than what rock n roll was to my parents.

[12:06] JZ: So what would your parents - who was it you said they listened to?

BA: Victor Silvester. Yes he played a very strict tempo so you could do your dance - strictly dance steps.

[12:23] JZ: Would listening to trad jazz - would that have been a rebellious kind of thing to do? Or -

BA: Yeah. It was more so to school. School taught sort of Sibelius, Vaughan Williams and all that sort of stuff. And we said no, no, we prefer Bessie Smith or something like that. King Oliver. Basin Street Blues was a favourite.

[12:53] JZ: And was it always just listening for you or did you try playing or do you play at all?

BA: I'm embarrassed to say that I played the trumpet. I played it so badly that thinking back, I hardly wish to even mention it. We played in a pub in Kingston which was near the Odeon cinema. I think it's still does a - I think it's the side and back of the Minima Yacht Club. It's somewhere there. And I think I was walking in Kingston one evening and I did hear a big noise coming out, there were bouncers there and crowds there. And I think they're still doing music there. You probably know better than I do. Do you know it?

[13:36] JZ: Is it - what -

BA: I can't remember the pub. It's a pub venue. And it backs onto the river. Opposite Jamie Oliver's.

[13:48] JZ: Oh it might be - I know historically there was the Cellar Club around there. I'm not sure if that might be what you refer to.

BA: I don't remember the Cellar Club. But when you played at this place in a room above the room. I played bloody awfully. He didn't get - it didn't get to a gig. I'm pleased to say.

[14:12] JZ: Was that as part of a band did you say?

BA: Yeah we formed a band.

[14:16] JZ: And just the one gig?

BA: No we didn't do any gigs. We just practiced. We didn't get good enough really to offer ourselves to a gig.

[14:28] JZ: Were you - in terms of venues, pubs and that sort of thing, what was the Kingston sort of scene like for -

BA: Very very good. I mean to be honest from the art school we used to go down to the town and we used to - where shall we go tonight. We may go to the Fighting Cocks or the Swan or something. And if

there were any decent girls there we'd push off to another club and you could do two or three clubs and they weren't very expensive. So you could go in there, listen to a bit of the music, see who was there, whether it was - the scene was good. And push off - it wasn't.

[15:05] JZ: And were these mostly jazz bars or clubs or was there a variety of music played?

BA: No - it was very much the music which we were listening to shall we say which must have been some sort of rock n roll sort of thing. It was just loud and we danced to it sort of thing.

[15:29] JZ: And were you familiar with Eel Pie Island down the river?

BA: Ah, Eel Pie Island. Yes. Got across there on a chain ferry in the old days before they had the way over. And that was interesting because I went over there with my wife - we went over there for an evening, there was a good band and what have you on Eel Pie. And moving around there was loads of Teddy Boys there. And Teddy Boys were dangerous. And I turned around and I kicked over this guy's beer. And I thought argh! I won't get out of here alive! Anyway I - so sorry, let me get you another one. So I got him another pint of beer and he seemed to be mollified but - they had a - Eel Pie Island had a sprung floor because before the war they had had proper dances there so they had a proper dancefloor which was sprung. So if you were leaping up and down in jazz or jiving then the whole floor went up and down.

[16:30] JZ: So this would have been in your college years when you were going to -

BA: Yes. I met my wife halfway through college. I met my wife at the Commodore Club which was at the back of the Odeon cinema. You must have come across the Commodore Club - it was right on the edge of the river. They had slightly better music there. I don't know what - probably the man who ran it had a better ear and he had the better bands. He liked the better bands. But yeah I went there with a girlfriend. And my wife was there with her sister. And the girlfriend and sister knew each other because they were both at the art school. So they were chatting away, leaving me with my wife to chat. I came away thinking yeah - it's a bit of alright. So that was 60 years ago.

[17:23] JZ: What was the Commodore Club like then? What kind of vibe was that?

BA: It was fairly mainstream as I said. It was music that you danced to. It wasn't a specialised modern jazz - it wasn't specialised club as such. But it had good music. Good quality music. Because you didn't - at that time you didn't categorise it so much as - we would go to the Fighting Cocks and we knew that there was a good noisy crowd and you could dance to it. It wasn't necessarily put it in a compartment in those days.

[17:58] JZ: So outside of the music, what do you remember about the fashion? Was that an important thing for you?

BA: Oh yes. Very much so. Yes you see the art school divided itself into two really very much. There was the artists and the architects. And us architects - we used to dress with black trousers, white shirt, black sweater. And we were cool, man, cool. The art side were all scruffy paint covered smocks and the rest of it. The girls wore long hair. The blokes had - often had long hair too. So there was two tribes. We - as we went through the art school moved towards modern jazz. West coast [cool Molly?], Gerry Mulligan. The king of all was Dave Brubeck. Loved Dave Brubeck. In fact I gave my set of 75 records to my son and he went oh, well these are worth a bomb. The original Dave Brubecks, [dead] Jazz Goes To College and the other ones. They were really great. Was it Take Five made the hit parade, didn't it? And that sort of thing. And we would sit there on chairs like this going sort of listening intently to the music. This cool music. And of course the great icons, the great gods were MJQ - Modern Jazz Quartet and people like that. That sort of west coast jazz which we loved - listened to seriously and took seriously. While the art school was still into [really] loud headbanging rock n roll.

[19:48] JZ: So that division - the two tribes - that's reflected in the music as well was it?

BA: Oh very much so. Not only the music, it was also reflected in the dance steps. You jived differently for the two. And unfortunately because of all the art school crowd that I mixed with I tended to jive with them. Went to the Swan. You know it, the one, Swan at the bottom of Mill Street which was very close to the art school. And I had a lot of gigs at the Swan. They were quite good gigs too. And one evening I was there and pulled this girl out to jive with her. And she suddenly turned and said you jive trad! And walked off the floor. Well the difference between us - just quickly technically which you - would be foreign language to you. The modern - she was a shop girl. So it was different between girls that worked in shops and offices. And the kids that went to the art school. There was sort of a big difference socially between them. And she was part of the shop girl crowd. And they jived very tightly. Tight dress, tight skirts and things. While the art school girls had big flowing dresses which span. So she would be on a much tighter little circle, she was spinning. High heels. Tight skirt. Everything rather than big blouses and [] skirts and things from the art school. So there was a difference. And you danced a tighter circle. So there was technicalities when you're 17.

[21:33] JZ: So within the art school you sort of had the tribes. But I guess outside of the art school - you mentioned the Teddy Boys. So they're a completely different - are they associated with music of any kind?

BA: Oh yes. Hard metal. Yeah.

[21:52] JZ: Just tell us a bit about - what do you associate with your memories of them, what -

BA: Oh they were dangerous. Wimbledon Broadway sometimes on a Saturday evening - 30 or more Teddy Boys would go down the streets and they would clear the streets. Everybody would run to the other pavements. They would openly carry razors and bicycle chains as weapons. And the police wouldn't stop them. Because of the numbers, they would have to call the army out. So the police disappeared. And they used to go round in twos with dogs in Kingston. So you could see two policeman and an alsatian going the streets. But they were out of hand. And a law unto themselves for a long time before the police got serious about controlling them.

[22:48] JZ: Who would these guys have been?

BA: Ordinary blokes during the day. Do you remember, Saturday Night Fever. Ordinary guy works ordinary, and then Saturday nights he gets his jacket out which went down to his knees. He had this long velvet jacket with lapels and the rest of it and a shirt with a bootlace tie. And a massive oil on his hair, slicked it up in a big quiff. And he had big top pocket, probably usually with a razor stuck in it. And they were a dangerous crowd. We went to Wimbledon - a friend of mine - we went to the cinema in Wimbledon and there was about 15 Teds in the front there. And they were kicking the seats to pieces and shouting and fighting in the aisle and the rest of it. My friend said for God's sake, sit down and let's watch the film. And they all got up as one and came to us. So we just had to leg it out the cinema. And we ran out the street, we were chased up Wimbledon Broadway by this big mob to try and get us. And there was - thank God there was a bus there and we ran forward, we leapt on the bus to get away from them. You didn't muck with them.

[23:59] JZ: Did you ever know any personally? Were you ever-

BA: No. Not my - they were much more - they were working class. Solid guys that worked in garages and factories and stuff like that.

[24:13] JZ: All very interesting.

BA: They were before - they used the motorbikes. Before it was the motorbike scene. The motorbike

scene moved into that from the film - what was the Marlon Brando film? The bike gang. Which they banned. They banned because of its influence on youngsters in - going round in 30, 40 Harley Davidsons. We saw them in America actually quite a lot. Big motorcycle gangs on Harleys. Hogs as they call them.

[24:50] JZ: Actually just picking up on - you mention the Marlon Brando film. How important was cinema and television at this time?

BA: Very much. Very much. Because of course - what's his name, Rebel Without A Cause.

[25:09] JZ: James Dean, yeah.

BA: James Dean was very much an icon. They were sorts of - they were very influential. And of course Marlon Brando - the - what was the one about - he was the boxer that could have been good but he kept on falling. I could have been a contender.

[25:35] JZ: And this would - would film and television influence your fashion choices?

BA: Cut television. It really wasn't an influence at that time. It was slow to get out. But I mean we used to - I used to go to the cinema twice a week, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Sometimes I took a different girl each time. But no, you used to queue up - there were so many cinemas in Kingston wasn't there? Blimey. I can think of about eight. A lot of cinemas. And of course we got the Odeon, Shannon Corner which was a great cinema. Did you ever see it? Art deco masterpiece.

[26:15] JZ: What, the building itself?

BA: Yeah.

JZ: No I didn't actually, I think I've seen photos of it. But actually speaking of Shannon Corner, I believe that's where the Decca Records plant was. Do you - did that play any role in your life? Do you remember it much?

BA: No we were impressed. There's Decca Records there. Oh yeah, they're doing a lot of good stuff.

[26:38] JZ: But you didn't have any interaction with anyone who worked there or anything like that? No. I guess it would have been the case that some of the records that you could purchase in Kingston would have been made just round the corner.

BA: Yes. Yeah they were that good.

[26:54] JZ: Just going back to sort of the evolution of how the music went along. Do you remember sort of when - in the phases you had the sort of trad jazz phase, you had the rock n roll - do you remember when the Beatles and all of this sort of all the British rock n roll started becoming a big influence?

BA: Very much remember the Beatles. 19- about 60 wasn't it? That they hit with She Loves You. And I remember seeing that - that was on television. By that time television was starting to have a bigger influence. I remember the whole audience - you must have seen the film of it - all the girls screaming and crying. They were delirious. And I'm thinking this is really stupid this is. But of course it went back to Johnnie Ray, 15 years before - well not as much as that - '61 to - ten years before. To the early '50s. Johnnie Ray with the bobby soxers, all the little girls, little teenage girls so we got back again to early teenage girls screaming and shouting and crying at the Beatles.

[28:13] JZ: Were you with your wife at this point? When the Beatles [inaudible]

BA: Well we married in '61.

JZ: Your wife wouldn't have been one of the screaming girls then?

BA: No, no, no, no. We were trying to sort out some sort of a home or something. Things got a bit more serious. But we were kids together at the art school. We used to go to all the - the point that I'd started with her I didn't do so many rounds of the clubs of course because I didn't to go to pick up a girl, I'd got a girl. We were at the art school for about two or three years before we thought of getting married. We had our youth.

[28:56] JZ: And swiftly following the Beatles was this sort of rhythm and blues explosion with the Rolling Stones and that sort of thing.

BA: Yeah the Rolling Stones came in. They were clearly much more edgy than the Beatles. I Don't Get No Satisfaction, those sorts of records were [one thing]. I mean an earlier one of course - Tommy Steele was well known here because you know he's got his house. I think he's still got the house at Ham. On that corner. Lovely Georgian house behind a huge wall frontage. Lovely house. Tommy Steele's - I don't know whether he still owns it or not but a lovely house. So he was there. And then we had - was it - oh, Gosh. Vince somebody or other. And there was Larry Parnes, got it. Larry Parnes had a rock n roll stable of stars. With people like - was it Billy Fury. All these sort of made up names. Different sorts of rock n roll stars.

[29:59] JZ: And just going back to the Stones, would you have been aware of them sort of playing Eel Pie Island and that sort of thing because they had a residency there in the early 60s. Would you have been aware that they were kind of local as it were in some ways?

BA: Not really. The only one that was particularly aware of and I have to say - I'm going to be condemned for saying it - was I never liked - what's his name now? It may come back in a second, I get these little shutters drop.

[30:37] JZ: Yeah it's a slightly later time period but you've got the Rolling Stones-

BA: Cliff Richard. He's about four years younger than me. But he was - he copied Elvis Presley. And sung in this awful exaggerated American accent. And I couldn't stand him.

JZ: Until we started this project I wasn't even aware that Cliff Richard used to be rock n roll. I always just knew him as this housewives' favourite kind of crooner.

BA: You've got it. We didn't like him.

[31:14] JZ: So I'd just like to return the US army being based at Bushy Park. So were they there while you growing up right from the start?

BA: Yes. Well actually no, we'd been away during the war. Going round with father who's in the Royal Air Force. And it wasn't the Americans, it was the Canadians because we were further south than here. Leatherhead area, Leatherhead, Bookingham, Effingham, that area. And there was huge contingents of Canadians there. Building up to D Day. Remember D Day very well. Or the early hours of D Day because the noise of the engines was incredible.

[31:55] JZ: How old were you then?

BA: Well 1944, born in '36. Eight, nine. So very much aware. And of course in the run up to day we were quite close because we thought - we didn't know they were there when we moved out to Leatherhead. And of course we found they were being bombed unmercifully down there because of course they were

trying to get to the D Day trucks and tanks and stuff. So we were peppered with bombs. And then added to the fact that we had the doodlebugs, the V-1s. And I nearly lost my life in Leatherhead. V-1 came over, they used to cut out - they'd run out of fuel and they would flutter down - there was ten tonnes of high explosive in these things. And the big hole - there was one in the road - took the end of the road out. And I was waiting to come home from school - my school cap and satchel. And this thing went b-b-b-b and it cut out. And everybody dived into the gutter. To try and get a little bit of - get a head down into the gutter as this thing fluttered away. But it fluttered long enough to come the other side of a railway embankment. And the explosion was absolutely fantastic. So if it'd have fluttered down a bit further this side I wouldn't be here now. But there was a whole number of times - nearly got killed about four, five times in the war.

[33:23] JZ: And when the war was over were you still in Leatherhead way at that time?

BA: For a shortish period. Parents wanted to get back closer to London, Wimbledon what have you. We moved from there back to Wimbledon. And I was in sort of south Wimbledon and moved back.

[33:41] JZ: And by the time you came to Kingston for art school, the soldiers were still at Bushy Park at this point?

BA: They still were.

JZ: In peacetime.

BA: Not for a long time. I would say I didn't have anything to do with them, they didn't want spotty youths coming to their dances. They wanted the girls to themselves. We didn't like them so. They wasn't a lot of love lost between them.

[34:03] JZ: And was there a sense of them bringing records with them? LPs or anything.

BA: We knew they had records. But it was nice after they left to find they left a lot of them behind because they were going to buy new ones anyway.

[34:18] JZ: Did they just leave them at the base? Did they sell them to the stores?

BA: They sold them to the stores. This place I told you in Eden Walk in the - the shops were in Eden Walk. They must have taken them down and sold them to them. Sold them.

[34:35] JZ: And the girls who ended up going to the base - did you hear stories from people who visited the - any of the girls and-

[Laughter]

BA: Oh yeah they only had them here for one purpose. [Inaudible] my wife's sister, who's older, wanted to go, mother said no way.

[35:01] JZ: So the parents weren't that keen on the -

BA: Oh no. I mean everybody's aware.

[35:08] JZ: I've heard people say in the past that - if a girl sort of had a new pair of stockings or something you'd knew - she'd got them from the army. Was that right by your memory?

BA: I would think that's absolutely correct. [Laughter]

[35:22] JZ: You've told me of - outside the recording, that you know GI brides in your family. So

what's the - what was the story there?

BA: Well - one of them - an aunt, because we are talking about previous generation. An aunt went to a party on the camp while her husband was away. So came back pregnant. The other one, she had - this is the one that my wife just said about, fell over on Richmond ice rink. Do you remember the Richmond [inaudible? There's a very big ice rink at Richmond. And it was a very good venue to go to for Saturday afternoon, do some skating or what have you. And there - she was there with a friend - slipped down in the ice and this tall handsome American officer picked her up. And that was the start of it. And they went around for a time. And she fell pregnant. But then the rest of the story I told you earlier, is a good story. Because he stick by. They were in love. They lived their whole lives - we met them both. When Christie and I went over to America, we met them - lovely couple. Blueberry muffins for breakfast you know.

[36:48] JZ: Whereabouts in the States was he from?

BA: It was Vermont. Lovely part of the world.

JZ: Yeah I've never been, I'd love to go actually.

BA: As I say, definitely further out the Canadians came in and I'm not even - they were also in Claygate. There was a big army camp in Claygate. I think that was Canadian but I wouldn't like to commit to it. But the Canadians were out - further on - Polesden Lacey around there, Bookham. Enormous quantities. And there's a street down there called Young Street after a Colonel Young who was the commander-in-chief of them. And they cut this gash through the hill into the chalk. And kept all the tanks and landing vehicles at low level and then hung camouflage netting so it'd look like - from a distance the hill continued one. The hill went on and then there wasn't hill, it was just camouflage.

[37:52] JZ: I think I've probably a lot of what we need. Is there anything else that comes to your mind from the sort of topics we've been discussing? That you feel worth sharing. Or any individual stories or memories.

BA: No, not really. As I say, Bull at Barnes was always good, good, good venue. Good venue. I went - we went there to see Humphrey Lyttelton. That was nice. And another venue was at Wimbledon. Which was a big - was it, the Compton Hall or something. Near the library. And we went over there to see Johnny Dankworth. Cleo Laine. There was a rumour that he was having an affair with this singer, this coloured singer. They really hit the scenes.

[38:42] JZ: Actually that's a good point - did you do a lot of exploring of sort of neighbouring towns? Wimbledons and-

BA: Well that was a good one. The other good one of course was the Queen Victoria, Cheam, north Cheam. That had some good gigs on there. And otherwise we went up to London.

JZ: I was just going to say, what about central London.

BA: The art schools were good. St Martin's. Of course they were renowned for fashion, dress making, what have you. So there was a high proportion of girls there. So we used to - their dances were always very popular. Royal College. In fact we went up to - what was it - the new year's eve do up at - what was it - the Albert Hall. That was a new year's eve big do there that went on all night. We stayed up there all night dancing. Then my wife had to go into work in the morning which was - she found a bit tough.

[39:49] JZ: I can imagine. We've all been there. Actually in terms of your specific - what was your art school called actually, sorry?

BA: Kingston Arts School. In those days nothing fancy.

JZ: In your arts school or college days do you remember many dances or events being hosted at the actual place itself?

BA: Oh yes. We used to have quite a lot. And in fact the architects - as they were more organised because they were more organisational people. We put on a big play - a musical play. Brought everybody in and then we got the fine art in. Or we just covered the walls with paper. And then they got them to paint a scene of - I remember it was rooftops of Paris. Around the coffee place, eating area. Like a roof - Parisian rooftop. You'd [pull] all this talent and they make things with - to go with the party and the dance. It was a great do.

[40:52] JZ: An advantage of being the architects I guess. Would you have sort of got local musicians to play these things or bigger names?

BA: Bigger names, you would book a band. You booked a band for the evening. Oh I tell you what we haven't talked about. And that's the riverboat shuffles. There was quite a number of those that used to go out. And you'd get a boat at Kingston. And there'd be a band there. And they play all night. Got back in the morning. 7 o'clock or something.

[41:29] JZ: Sort of going down the river?

BA: Going up and down the river. Quite a way up. And quite a way back again.

JZ: Who used to put those on do you know?

BA: I think it was mostly all by Turks. Turks Boat Yard which was really where, you see Turks there, but it was just a name. It was a big boat yard in the early days. Near - nextdoor to where - opposite Bentalls there was a big - Waring & Gillows and then the Horse Fair. And that was just - Turks Boat Yard was just behind the Horse Fare. And they had a lot of big boats and stuff there in those days. Because they used to hire out and a band on them - they were good. Bit of food and what have you. It was a good night out.

[42:26] JZ: And again the artists playing on night, again sort of big names?

BA: No. No - it was not a venue for a big name.

JZ: Yeah. It was just somewhere to catch a bit of music. I hadn't actually heard of that one before. Every person I interview I come across a new venue that I wasn't otherwise familiar with. That's great. I think we've captured a lot there. I'm happy with that, so thank you very much Bryan.