

Joyful, Joyful!

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First Edition

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Introduction

Hey there everybody
Please don't romp or roam
We're a little nervous
'Cause we're so far from home
So this is what we do
Sit back and let us groove
And let us work on you
We've all spent years preparing
Before this band was born
With heaven's help it blended
And we do thank the Lord.
Now we put you through the changes
And turned around the mood
We hope it's struck you different
And hope you feel moved
So forget about your troubles
As we search for something new
And we play for you

Around the end of the 1960s, I was living in Buffalo and I put an album I had just purchased onto my turntable. It was *Chicago Transit Authority* by the musicians of the same name – the first and last record by the group with that moniker. As you can guess, the group was from Chicago and it wasn't long before the band changed their name to simply, Chicago. This was due to possible legal action from the actual Chicago Transit Authority of that city.

The first cut on the album was the title at the top of this page and really rocked – this was quite a while before the advent of compact discs (CDs). From what I heard, I had a feeling this group was going to the top and that's what they did. It wasn't many years before they released the album, *Chicago XXXIII*, which most Romans know was their thirty-third offering. They didn't stop there.

I loved this album, which I no longer own – I do have it on CD. It was a breakthrough because it blended rock music and jazz, with blues, highlighted by the sound of the horns. One song on the

record – actually it was a two-record release – was a song, *Free Form Guitar*, which I usually skip since it's nothing more than guitar feedback. Was it music? People will debate that and this book will talk a little about it as well.

I had an idea for a book about music some time ago with *joy* in the title. The work was to have two parts, each about brave people facing tough medical challenges. Half of the book would be about people I knew or heard about, while the other part would concern itself with musicians. That book never happened, but in late 2012, I still wanted to write a book about music, so late in the year I started on it.

Since every book has a beginning, mine would tell how I came about to have such a great love of music, including a few circumstances that were important as well as two influential people who weren't making a living in that field. I start with my childhood – that's where it all began – but continue with the years that followed in other chapters. I mentioned my first move away from Buffalo and the fact that I left with my stereo, but no television – another very significant detail.

I also had to talk briefly about the giants of the music industry: those who performed as well as those without which the music scene wouldn't be what it is today, even if they were disc jockeys, also known as DJs. The term *disc jockey* appeared in print in *Variety Magazine* in 1941. The list of people who could be discussed was so extensive that I couldn't include them all so I settled on a handful. Since music is such a vast subject, I narrowed the book down to music thirty or forty years on either side of the year 1950. I'm not a fan of all types of song, so those were left out. I only estimated when music began, but had a few words to say about just what music is.

Being a famous musician had its down sides. If the person or her parents experienced the Great Depression, it certainly had a great effect on both generations. Getting from one gig to the next was hazardous – including the boredom of being on the road. Many performers died in airplane or automobile crashes. The characters that an artist met were unhealthy as alcohol, drugs and deprivation were always close by. Racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination closed in on many musicians as they tried to make the big time. Once reaching those heights, riches and power led to

the downfall of many. Nervous breakdowns arose. Throw in the paparazzi, crazy fans, stalkers and the stew is almost unfit for human consumption.

In the time period considered for the book, I noticed three things in music: revolution, evolution and fusion. These are not limited to the twentieth century, either, since the first days of music way back, it encompassed at least one of these three. Evolution occurred when honky tonk turned into jazz or blues became rock and roll, although each of these probably should be also considered fusion. The songs of Phil Ochs, Joe Hill and countless others gave us revolution, but fusion, too. When different types of music blend together, creating different sounds, the result is fusion. Jazz-fusion was only one type. What musicians have created for a long time exhibits evolution, fusion and revolution. It is obvious that this has continued even today.

From reading the book, you'll have a good idea of my favorite artists and my favorite kind of music. Throughout the narrative, I mention people I've seen perform and there's even a list of the others who I was fortunate to see and hear. As far as a favorite song, I could never limit it to just one. In fact giving my top fifty tunes wouldn't be any easier. With regards to the songs I hated the most, I have a few but on hearing different artists perform them, I realized it wasn't the song, but the musicians doing it.

The appendix has a few related movies that might strike your fancy, even if you don't listen to a great deal of music. For further information on some of the musicians I talked about, there's a list of books that might interest you. In researching this book, not only did I obtain facts and anecdotes, but also learned a great deal in this project, which was thoroughly a joy for me.

As far as the cover of the book goes, despite my troubles with using the word *joy* in the title of the second edition of my cookbook, I decided on having it as part of the title here. You can read more about these adventures at my web site, bobcooks.com by clicking on information under my cookbook. Covering happiness and the power of music can also be found in *Joyful, Joyful!*

The song, *Joyful, Joyful* from the soundtrack of the movie, *Sister Act II* starring Whoopi Goldberg, really rocks. The St. Francis Choir helps out and you can experience classical music,

gospel, pop, rap, rock and music from a soundtrack all at the same time. Henry van Dyke wrote the poem, *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee* in 1907, which is identified as *Ode to Joy* of the last movement of *Symphony Number Nine* by Ludwig van Beethoven.

1. Beginnings

When I kiss you, I feel a thousand different feelings.
I'm covered with chills all over my body.
And while I feel them, I quickly try to decide which one
I should try to put into words, oh no,
Try to put into words.
Mostly I'm silent.
Only the beginning of what I want to feel forever.

I have to blame my love of music on my parents – they forced me to take violin lessons and dance ballet, which I hated. No, actually I did neither, and they weren't into that scene, but there was music in the homes in which my brothers and sister were raised. My mom and dad grew up during the Depression and they didn't have it easy, especially my father. Nonetheless, we always had food on the table, even liver – yuk – and warmth in those houses, even if we weren't part of the one percent.

We had a few radios wherever where we resided, and every Sunday we were treated to a few hours of *Stan Jasinski's Polka Beehive*. That may be where I developed my taste for rock music as well as the appreciation of the sound of saxes, trumpets and other brass. There was a bit of big band music, or at least some jazz in the songs of the times, which could be heard on radio and later on TV in a show called *Your Hit Parade*. The radio version was on the radio from 1935 to 1955, while that on the boob tube aired during the decade of the 1950s. You could hear the popular songs of the day at the top of the charts on either version. The tunes on the television program were performed by Dorothy Collins, Snooky Lanson, Gisele MacKenzie and Russell Arms – I don't quite remember him.

Since *Your Hit Parade* could be heard or seen for almost a quarter century, the types of music covered included big band, rhythm and blues, doo-wop, soul, jazz, pop and even rock and roll since Elvis was already involving his pelvis. We started to hear from the Everly Brothers, Jerry Lee Lewis, Bill Haley and the Comets, Chubby Checker, James Brown, Jackie Wilson, the Platters, the Mills Brothers, Buddy Holly, Chuck Barry, Sarah

Vaughn and Dinah Washington. There were plenty of others whom we listened to and cherished.

In many instances, the featured artist didn't limit his or her performance to a single type of music, but crossed over. The song, *This is My Beloved*, may not have been on *Your Hit Parade*, but Mario Lanza made it popular in 1956. It was from the 1953 musical, *Kismet*, but the tune was more or less stolen from Borodin's *String Quartet in D*. In this case, listeners received a taste of Broadway, classical as well as pop. Billy Vaughn's version of *Sail Along Silvery Moon* in the late 1950s showcased both pop and jazz. This was something that was repeated over the years and it continues today. This was a fusion of music, even though it would be a few years before the public knew it as such. I'll have more to say on this later.

In grade school, I sang in the church choir – thank the Lord I didn't have any solos – but that was my musical involvement in that school, which was associated with Resurrection Roman Catholic Church. We didn't do a performance of *Hair* for a few reasons: we had no musical director; I doubt that Pastor Jim would have been too happy with that play; it didn't come out until more than a decade later; the students may not have had to wear uniforms, but they were too well dressed. I also joined the Boy Scouts of America: Troop 161. We did a lot of singing at meetings and campouts.

I haven't ever watched the television show, *Glee*, but in St. Mary's High School – it wasn't on any hill and we didn't do drugs so the *high* part of the name may have been a bit off – I sang in the glee club. For one Christmas production, we sang, *An Old Fashioned Christmas* as well as *The Night Before Christmas*. There were a few other selections but I can't recall what they were. Those two songs I liked but I rarely hear them on the radio today during yuletide. I guess I have to head over to Amazon.com. The high school also put on musical productions of *The King and I* and *Finian's Rainbow*, but on the recommendation of the director, I was only on the stage crew. I played a very small part in *The Merchant of Venice*, but that may have been written before music came on the scene since it didn't have any singing or dancing.

Every so often, the school had Friday night dances so we had a chance to impress the girls with our Fred Astaire and Gene

Kelly impersonations, and of course we heard plenty of music. That may have been an exaggeration but at least we got out on the dance floor and did *The Stroll*. At that time, I can't remember doing *The Charlestown* and certainly not the *Bump* or the *Chicken Dance*.

I was very fortunate to be growing up in Buffalo, New York, even though we receive over 300 inches of snow per year – more than anywhere else on the planet. Usually it isn't all melted until August. Actually the snow has usually melted by April and ski country south of the city receives the brunt of the snow, but certainly not the amount I mentioned above. The first statement about *fortune* is a fact because Western New York has and still is at the front of the music scene. It certainly was at the time of my years in school before college as music came to us by way of programs on the radio, such as the *Hi-Teen* show with Bob Wells. His program on WEBR radio was somewhat similar to the television show, *American Bandstand* with Dick Clark and was the model for it. We were also blessed with quite a few DJs such Tom Shannon, Joey Reynolds, Dick Biondi, Fred Klestine, Lucky Pierre – I don't think he was really from France since he wasn't a Conehead – Russ The Moose Syracuse, Perry Allen, Dan Neaverth and Tom Clay. These pioneers spun the hits and they introduced us to many of artists we had never heard of – some made it big, while others may only have had a single hit, if they were lucky.

Besides, WEBR, some of the other AM giants of the airways in Buffalo at the time were WBNY, WXRA, WJL, WWOL, WINE – it's not what you might imagine – and WYSL. I remember this last station playing a cross between classical and hit instrumentals of the day – music I appreciated. Between songs, some suave DJ would say something like, *as the sun sets on the inner harbor, WYSL presents candlelight and gold*. I thought a good parody might have been, *as the sun sets on a drunk downtown, WYSL presents moonshine and the blues*.

George *The Hound* Lorenz

Maybe the leader of all these stations was WKBW, with 52,000 watts of power. Known to us as *KB*, it was heard in twenty states and Canada, our close neighbor. WYSL did try to take this

powerhouse on, but never succeeded. You probably heard about *Wolfman Jack*, but not a DJ who could have been a cousin, George Lorenz. Listeners knew him as *The Hound* or *Hound Dog*. Born in Buffalo in 1919, he was six months short of a high school diploma, but sickness prevented that from happening.

Lorenz began his music days on the air at WXRA but didn't last long because of the hits he spun. He then joined WJL and played the music he wanted, developing a devoted audience. Being a big fan of Hank Williams, Sr., he simultaneously promoted a show in nearby Tonawanda. While at WJL in 1951, he became known as *Hound Dog*, a name that came from the expression, *doggin' around*. As the Saturday, February 20, 1971 issue of the Buffalo Evening News relates in George's own words,

“One of the jive expressions at the time was if you were *hangin'* around the corner, you were *doggin'* around. So I'd come on and say 'Here I am to dog around for another hour.' That's how they got to call me the hound dog.”

While at WJL, *Hound Dog* was also on the air in Cleveland, Ohio from 1953 to 1955. In 1955, Lorenz became a part of WKBW and soon his show was syndicated. He eventually went to station WINE until 1960. After that he started World Wide Programming, where he continued to syndicate the *Hound Dog Show*. In December 1964, when WBLK 93.7 FM started broadcasting, *Hound Dog* had his own house in which to rock, into which he put his heart and soul for about eight years. He had planned to return to school to finish and get that diploma, but that never happened as he passed away in his sleep on May 29, 1972. He died much too young.

I've already mentioned the influence of Stan Jasinski, and his polka music, but *Ramblin'* Lou Schriver made his mark as one of the North's best-known country-western stars. If I'm not mistaken, his wife attended the same grade school in Cheektowaga that I did. Station WUFO was a leader of the nation in black-oriented music, hosted by Eddie O'Jay, *Sunny* Jim Kelsey and Frankie Crocker. For a history of traditional rhythm and blues and early rock and roll in Buffalo, check out the book, *Don't Bother Knockin' – This Town's A Rockin'* by Patti Meyer Lee and Gary Lee.

As you can see, by this time, I had been introduced to many different types of music. We didn't have MP3 players – not even MP1 types – nor the ability to download music from the Internet, but there was a small personal device called the transistor radio, which we could carry in our pockets, coming in handy if you wanted to listen to a World Series baseball game. At one time those games were played while the sun was still shining. The transistor radio foreshadowed many ways of listening to music in years to come. At the time, the only boom box we may have been familiar with was the one found in the 1955 movie, *Kiss Me Deadly*, which starred Ralph Meeker and introduced us to Cloris Leachman and Maxine Cooper.

As you may have noticed, I played no piano or guitar, nor any other musical instrument. Mine was my voice, even if I didn't do any soloing. I've always felt comfortable within the shelter of a group. That way there you could always blame someone else for your wrong notes. It wasn't that hard to do. I enjoyed singing as well as listening to various types of music. The hits of the day were on single records that played at 45 revolutions per minutes (rpm) – each disk had one song per side with a hit side and another selection on the flip side, which may have also sold quite a few copies, sometimes bigger than the featured song. The long-playing microgroove 78 rpm record was introduced by Columbia Records in 1948, mostly featuring classical music. This led the way for 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm vinyl records, which were in monaural at first and then in stereo – quite an improvement.

Before the small disks and the long-playing record, you could listen to music on cylinders, provided you had the hardware to do that. If so, the sound wasn't very good. It wouldn't have mattered to people who were hard of hearing or if you didn't mind the scratching feature. What was to follow became the standard over time. Besides stereo records, you could also buy records in quadrasonic sound. I had a record that was either of that type or something similar, but since I didn't have the special technology to play it, it didn't sound any different to me.

By the time I got to college, I didn't own any long-playing (LP) 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ records although I may have had a few single 45s, but I'm not sure on what I played them. Around this time my parents bought a stereophonic console, so I had an excuse to buy some

LPs. This was either at the time I was in college or later at the university. I only bought two or three to start and added little by little to the collection. One of the albums was by the 101 Strings titled, *Exodus And Other Great Movie Themes*. Besides the main theme from the movie *Exodus*, also featured were *Karen* from that same movie as well as the themes from *The Sundowners*, *The Apartment* and *Dangerous Moonlight*, which many might recognize as the *Warsaw Concerto*. Another one of my first record purchases was on Time Records, which also featured songs from flicks. I believe that Doc Severinsen played on that one. My initial records featured some classical, music from the movies, a taste of jazz and pop. Blues and rock would follow.

I vividly remember putting on a record late at night at my parents' house – low volume of course – and truly enjoying hearing all three channels of stereo, left, right and the middle. That third channel was a bonus created from the other two. You can imagine how many channels you could hear listening to a record in quadraphonic.

At Canisius College, I joined the glee club, which rehearsed every Tuesday night. On the initial day of practice, the first song we rehearsed – for some of us it was learned – was *Let There Be Music*, an absolutely beautiful and harmonic work. This song was not the same one that Orleans recorded – they came up with theirs way after we sang it. Quite a few years after that rehearsal, I sang this glee club song with our singing group in a joint concert of men's choruses. Even without practice, I recalled the harmonies as well as all the words. Some things you just don't forget.

My college glee club was one of the few breaks I had at that time. I went to school full-time and worked part-time in a supermarket. Since my grades weren't that outstanding – I did get my degree, though – maybe I should have skipped joining that musical group. But as they say, "All work and no play certainly isn't the way," so I'm glad I didn't quit the glee club. Our group sang at old folks homes, high schools and colleges – for women, of course – and for the underprivileged in different homes. Each spring we put on a concert. During my first three years it was at the renowned Kleinhans' Music Hall in the city. During my senior

year we performed it in the student union, which had just been completed.

Through the glee club I saw New York City for the first time in the spring of my freshman year. As a sophomore the group traveled to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania followed by two more jaunts to Sin City. During the first three trips, we were in competition with other glee clubs and I remember that we sang at a temple in Pennsylvania. The last college trip to New York enabled us to sing at the World's Fair in Flushing, New York. We sang outdoors – it was really wide open – and it was cold and I wonder how anyone heard us because of how we were standing in such an open space. We could barely hear ourselves. Nonetheless, those years were a great time of camaraderie and harmony. The songs we sang included religious selections, such as *Wade in De Water* and *Soon Ah Will Be Done*. Certain members of our group sang popular songs with their own words. We couldn't very well perform these in church, or even in concert. A few years after graduation I attended a Peter Nero concert at Kleinhans Music Hall. The great musician mentioned that he'd like to do a semi-religious tune. He then played *Mrs. Robinson*, the song from the movie, *The Graduate*, made famous by Simon and Garfunkel.

During those undergraduate years, three other guys and I sang in a barbershop group, The Uncalled Fo(u)r. I recall two of the selections the quartet sang were *East Side*, *West Side* and *Aura Lee*. The latter was a Civil War tune and a huge hit by Elvis Presley – at least the melody was the same – which he released as *Love Me Tender*, shortly before he performed it on the *Ed Sullivan Show* on September 9, 1956. Not long after, a movie of the same name hit the silver screen. Our quartet sang a few times with the glee club because at least once, our director introduced us as The Unnamed Four – not quite the name we choose, but close.

This was the beginning of my experience with the world of music. The title of the chapter is also the third song on the double-record set of the Chicago Transit Authority, with some of the words from that song at the top. Specifically, it's the last cut on side one of the first of two disks. There's only one CD since one of those devices can handle almost eighty minutes of music. The song ends with an extended percussion solo.

2. Transfusion

[Zoom]
Tooling down the highway doing 79
I'm a twin pipe papa and I'm feelin' fine
Hey man dig that was that a red stop sign
[Screech, bang, tinkle]
Transfusion, transfusion
I'm just a solid mess of contusions
Never, never, never gonna speed again
Slip the blood to me, Bud
I jump in my rod about a quarter to nine
I gotta make a date with that chick of mine
I cross the center line man you gotta make time
[Screech, bang, tinkle]
Transfusion, transfusion

In 1956, Nervous Norvus released a song whose lyrics you see above – with special verbal effects in brackets. After reading these lyrics, you can see that it's a very happy tune. The last six letters of the title of the chapter and this really disgusting song describes a type of music, specifically, fusion, which can be described as a blending of two or more styles of music. The rock group Chicago was one set of musicians that combined rock and jazz, but you'll also see some more of the same as musical groups combine classical and folk as well. Chicago was only one of the many musical artists that featured the horn section. Others include Blood, Sweat and Tears, The Flock, Chase, Dreams, featuring the Brecker Brothers – Mike on Sax and Randy on trumpet – The Ides of March and Tower of Power.

I saw Blood, Sweat and Tears (BS&T) perform on Long Island with lead singer Jerry Fisher in the 1970s as well as at the Syracuse State Fair a decade later. David Clayton-Thomas sang lead at the fair. The number of musicians who at one time played in BS&T seems never ending, including Al Kooper, Randy Brecker, Joe Henderson, Patti Austin, Eric Gale, Hugh McCracken, Jaco Pastorius, Steve Khan and Don Alias. Today, the group is still going strong with different personnel, including

David Aldo on vocals. In my music collection I have a half-dozen CDs of the group.

As the 1960s were fading into 1970, I saw a few favorable words about a Chicago band in Stereo Review. I decided to buy the album, *The Flock*, which also happened to be the name of the group. They really rocked and featured Fred Glickstein on lead vocals with two saxophones and a trumpet. Three others also harmonized with him, including Jerry Goodman, who played some guitar but mostly stood out on violin. He had a fine musical career afterwards. The group released their second record, *Dinosaur Swamps*, which I also bought. The first LP had a great version of The Kinks' 1965 hit, *Tired of Waiting For You*. I have neither record as I replaced them with their CD, *Flock Rock – The Best of The Flock* which has many of the selections from both LPs. Unfortunately, a fifteen-minute blues tune, *Truth*, is not included on the CD.

Tower of Power might be classified as soul, funk, R&B, jazz and jazz-funk. They seem to have been around forever – still performing after forty-four years. Their 1972 song, *So Very Hard to Go* made it to number eleven on the R&B chart and on the pop chart, it did very well, too. It's probably the song you know them by and has nothing to do with constipation. I have four of their CDs. The group Chase was formed in 1970 by Bill Chase, Alan Ware, Jerry Van Blair and Ted Piercefield, all veteran masters of the trumpet. Their debut album – which I have on CD – was *Chase*, which featured four trumpets and included their most popular song, *Get It On*. Popular with high school and college bands, it's heard at numerous football games. Sadly, Bill Chase died at the age of 39, with three other members of the band, in a plane crash on the way to a concert in Minnesota.

Jim Peterik, who wrote the song, *Boys and Girls Together* found on that CD, was also a member of the funk, rock, jazz-fusion group, The Ides of March. He wrote a few songs including the title song from the album, *Vehicle*, which soon became the fastest selling song in Warner's history. Peterik also co-wrote *Eye of the Tiger*, which was featured in the movie, *Rocky III*. In addition, he has also written songs for the Beach Boys, 38-Special and Lynyrd Skynyrd. I think this group without a vowel in its name has to be classified as a fusion group.

Living in Buffalo has another advantage being so close to Canada. It wasn't a long drive to Toronto so we managed to see a few good musical performers there. You could also hear music on the radio from our neighbor to the north. When I first heard a song by Lighthouse, I was really impressed – what a sound! The reason for the beautiful notes and harmonies was because this Canadian group had thirteen participants – a brass quartet, a string quartet and a rock quintet. That tells you that at least classical, jazz and rock music made up their repertoire. It didn't stop there, either. I saw the band at the Strawberry Fields Festival in Bowmanville, Ontario in 1970. Soon after that they appeared at the Isle of Wight Festival, where they were the only act – other than Jimi Hendrix – asked to perform a second night. Lighthouse made its debut a year earlier at the Rock Pile in Toronto and were introduced by Duke Ellington, who said, "I'm beginning to see the Light. . .house." I owned a few of their records but they were replaced with CDs of Lighthouse over the years.

Decades ago, I called one of the Buffalo radio stations and answered some music question correctly. I must have had a good knowledge of music then – today, that's no longer true. For being correct, they sent an album by the group, Chosen Few. Years later, I still have one of their songs on cassette. They were another jazz-rock group and I don't think they were very successful. There were other similar groups that utilized the horns, such as Little John, Seven, Puzzle, Uncle Chapin, Gas Mask, featuring Enrico Rava, the Crusaders, Archie Whitewater, Lucifer's Friend, Electric Flag and Sons of Champlin. For each of these I have at least a song or two on CD or cassette – perhaps a complete CD. Pacific Gas and Electric was another fusion group but I have no music of that group in my collection. The same is true of the group, Ambergris, which is reputed to be a great horn group that just didn't make it. I wonder if the rooster on the cover of their album had something to do with that.

I thought about classifying, in some degree, a few of the other fusion efforts, but that may not be wise or easy to do. I'll try anyway. Maynard Ferguson played an awesome trumpet – today a few approach the way he hit those high notes, but they don't quite match him. The people who come to mind are Wayne Bergeron, Doc Severinsen and Cuban born Arturo Sandoval. Ferguson played

in the big bands, but then successfully merged pop, rock, disco, and music from soundtracks such as *Star Wars*, *Rocky* and the TV series *Battlestar Galactica* and *Star Trek* with his jazz. The Woody Herman Band in the 1930s and 1940s did a lot of blues and followed that with jazz and later was heavily influenced by rock and roll, as the name The Thundering Herd pointed out. At one time, Bill Chase played with the Herd.

Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers was a fusion group that along with jazz, featured bebop, bluesy and funky hard bop. Some of the graduates from Art's bands include on piano, Keith Jarrett, Mulgrew Miller and Horace Silver; on reeds, Kenny Garrett, Lou Donaldson, Branford Marsalis, Hank Mobley, Donald Harrison and Wayne Shorter; on trumpet, Terrence Blanchard, Clifford Brown, Donald Byrd, Freddie Hubbard, Wynton Marsalis, Brian Lynch and Chuck Mangione. Blakey was really quite influential.

Born and raised in Rochester, New York, Chuck Mangione played a great deal of jazz before his joint effort with the Rochester Philharmonic in May of 1970. The venture was called *The Friends in Love Concert*. He followed that up a year later with a repeat of that, a performance known as *Together*. It was around this time that his music became better known. Those two concerts were an amalgamation of jazz, pop, classical and folk. His later releases included such hits as *Chase the Clouds Away*, *Bellavia*, *Hill where the Lord Hides*, *Children of Sanchez*, *The Land of Make Believe*, *Give it All you Got* – which he wrote for the Olympics – and *Feels so Good*. Appropriately enough, he created feel-good music.

Another musician from the Art Blakey school was Wayne Shorter, who led the group, Weather Report. His band brought sunny skies and progressive jazz, very similar to the direction in which the great trumpet player Miles Davis was headed. If there was a person at that time who was cool, it was Miles. Keyboardist Horace Silver was another alumni of Blakey's class, who assembled some fine musicians in a similar fusion mode. Other ensembles in the Weather Report vein were The Mahavishnu Orchestra, pianist Herbie Hancock and Return to Forever. The Mahavishnu Orchestra was led by John McLaughlin and there were two versions of the group. Some of the musicians participating over the years were Jerry Goodman, Jan Hammer, Billy Cobham, Jean-Luc Ponty, Narada Michael Walden and

Danny Gottlieb. Return to Forever, led by Chick Corea, had some outstanding artists as well, such as Stanley Clarke – one of the greatest bass players ever – drummer Lenny White, guitarist extraordinaire, Al Di Meola and violinist Jean-Luc Ponty.

In 1967, The Bob Crewe Generation released the smash it, *Music to Watch Girls By. Standing on the Corner* from the Broadway musical, *The Most Happy Fella* by The Four Lads in 1956 (number three on various charts at the time) and *I'm a Girl Watcher* by The O'Kaysions in 1968, which reached number five on the pop charts and number six on the R&B charts, dealt with the same male hobby. Besides being a dancer, singer, record producer, and manager, Crewe is a renowned songwriter. He wrote numerous top ten singles for The Four Seasons, and for others as well including *Silhouettes*, *Lucky Ladybug*, *Jean*, *Lady Marmalade*, *A Lover's Concerto*, *Devil with a Blue Dress On* and *Good Morning, Starshine*. As of this date, he has written thirteen top ten songs.

I own the CD by The Bob Crewe Generation and from the album cover it appears that there are more horns in the group than a herd of Arles Merino sheep. Actually there are not even two-dozen musicians on the cover and not quite a dozen brass performers – but what a sound! The kinds of music on that CD include pop, jazz, the song, *Brother Dan*, which most of you know as *Danny Boy*, and music from the movies – including from that easily forgettable 1968 flick *Barbarella*, though I liked the title song. Music there is also credited to the Glitterhouse, a group whose LP I owned at one time.

Formed in 1990 by Brian Setzer, formerly of Stray Cats, The Brian Setzer Orchestra is known as a swing and jump blues band, but I should add that they do boogie-woogie music – whatever that is – rock, pop and of course, jazz. They even played at the White House on June 29, 2006. On the 1998 CD that I have, *The Dirty Boogie*, you can find such oldies classics as the Santo and Johnny Farina song, *Sleepwalk*, as well as *Since I Don't Have You*, the Skyliners hit and *This Old House* – if you remember that one, you're really old. When I bought the CD, the sales clerk commented that I had good taste. Who would have thought?

The Saturday Night Live Band has changed personnel over the years but they don't limit their repertoire to rock or jazz only. Another current jazz group that really rocks is Spyra Gyra with Jay

Beckenstein, formed in Buffalo in the mid 1970s. If you want to see a smoking band – not what you think – that adds R&B, funk and pop music in fine fashion, don't miss them when they're in town. A similar band is guitarist Russ Freeman's The Rippingtons, who rip up the stage with their notes. Pieces of a Dream is an R&B jazz ensemble that can rock but also be mellow, too. The late Eva Cassidy sang *Have a Little Faith* and the title track of their 1994 release, *Goodbye Manhattan*. Another of my favorite groups is the Yellowjackets. Don't worry about the sting. Originally formed in 1977 as the Robben Ford Group, they took on their current name soon after. Ford wasn't around very long. Sax men playing for the group have included Richard Elliot, Marc Russo, a former member of Tower of Power and current member Bob Mintzer, along with Russell Ferrante, Will Kennedy and Felix Pastorius.

A few more horn jazz-rock groups I should mention are Royal Crown Revue and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. The latter group is from California and I'm not sure if they do voodoo music, but they come out with cool, swing music. They performed at Super Bowl XXXIII (that's the thirty-third one for those not versed in Romance numerals, who haven't read the Introduction of this book.) In some ways they imitate what the Brian Setzer Orchestra has been doing.

If I'm not mistaken, I was introduced to the group Trinity by way of one of the record clubs I joined over the years. Consisting of Brian *Auge* Auger, Julie *Jools* Driscoll, Clive *Toli* Thacker and David *Lobs* Ambrose, Trinity released the double album *Streetnoise* in 1968. It covers jazz, blues, progressive rock and folk. Auger, who toured or played with Jimi Hendrix, Sonny Boy Williamson, Eric Burdon and Led Zeppelin, formed the group, Brian Auger's Oblivion Express in 1970. Some of that band's members eventually wound up in Average White Band.

Over the years I have become familiar with quite a few more groups or artists that merged different streams of music. These include: Seatrain – American roots fusion; Steely Dan – R&B, jazz, pop, funk and rock; Kool and the Gang – funk, soul, jazz and R&B; Santana – Latin, jazz, rock and spiritual; Dakila – heavy Latin rock; El Chicano – Chicano rock, soul, funk, jazz, pop and salsa; Pat Metheny – jazz, jazz fusion and world fusion; Passport – jazz fusion; Clark / Duke Project – pop, jazz and funk;

Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes – jazz, rock; Earth Wind and Fire – rock, soul, R&B, disco, pop and jazz; King Crimson – jazz, folk, classical, experimental, New Wave, psychedelic, hard rock and heavy metal; Acoustic Alchemy – jazz and pop, Caravan – psychedelic, rock, jazz; Larsen-Feiten Band – pop, jazz, rock and blues; Buddy Miles – funk, jazz and rock; Rossington Collins Band – southern rock; Sanford / Townsend Band – rock and roll and soul; New York Rock and Soul Review – soul, blues, rock and jazz; Wilmer and the Dukes – jazz, rock and R&B; Los Lonely Boys – Chicano rock, Tex-Mex, Latin rock, roots rock and blues rock; War – rock, funk, Latin, jazz, R&B and reggae; Sea Level – jazz-rock, southern rock, progressive rock and blues.

You may not think of Ray Charles in this same category, but he sang blues, jazz, pop and country. As described in Ashley Kahn's 2006 book, *The House That Trane Built: The Story Of Impulse Records*, in 1960, Ray Charles released an album called, *Genius + Soul = Jazz*. From the title it's clear that this was fusion music and he was told that he could be messing up his career. He could lose a great number of fans, to which he answered, "I may lose a lot of fans, but I think I'll gain more fans than I lose." I'm with Ray on that one and I should add that we share the same birthday, except for the year.

We shouldn't forget Zydeco, which is certainly folk music, but it blends in Creole, Irish Celtic, German, Latin, Appalachian, Cajun, blues and R&B. Another blend is Reggae, which can be a meeting of Calypso, jazz, ska and rhythm and blues. In a tribute to the musician Burt F. Bacharach at the White House on May 9, 2012, Stevie Wonder and Arturo Sandoval collaborated in a reggae version of Bacharach's *Make It Easy on Yourself*. They certainly did it justice.

Stevie Wonder

He was born to Calvin Judkins and Lula Mae Hardaway in Detroit, Michigan in May 1950 as Stevland Hardaway Judkins. This musical giant, whose adopted name is quite fitting, is also known as Stevland Hardaway Morris, Little Stevie Wonder and Eivets Rednow – that's his name spelled backwards. Stevie is an activist, record producer, singer, songwriter who plays keyboards

of all sorts, bass guitar, drums, harpejji and harmonica. He mastered the latter instrument on the Burt Bacharach and Hal David song, *Alfie*, which you can find on the instrumental 1968 album, *Eivets Rednow*. Besides the already mentioned reggae, Wonder plays jazz, R&B, funk, soul and pop.

Being born six weeks premature resulted in his blindness. Despite his handicap, Wonder has great vision, is gifted, brilliant, creative, possessive of a photographic memory, precocious, conniving and mysterious. As a baby, he was annoying people on the drums – actually he was just banging on surfaces around him – and his music career was slowly being formed. It wasn't long before he played piano, drums, bass and harmonica. He sang in the choir at church, really stood out and many there felt he was the best thing at those services. In school he challenged the teachers with his arrogance. Wonder said, "People at school told me I would end up making potholders instead of [being a performer]."

At the age of eleven, he signed with Motown Records, although he didn't have a number one record for a few months. That came when he was 13 in May 1963 with the release of *Fingertips Part II*, which hit the top spot on both the Billboard Hot 100 and R&B charts. *Fingertips Part I* was on the flip side of the 45. A year later, he made his film debut in *Muscle Beach Party*. Within half a dozen years, he had smash hits with *Uptight (Everything's Alright)*, *I Was Made to Love Her*, *For Once in My Life* and *Signed, Sealed Delivered, I Am Yours*.

Motown originated through the work of the innovative Barry Gordy, who was responsible for bringing all the great music to the public over the years. He is to be commended but he didn't always deliver the hits for Wonder, so the youngster took matters into his own hands by doing some of the writing himself – mostly music since he wasn't that great on the lyrics, at first. You can read about Wonder and Gordy in an insightful 2010 biography by Mark Ribowsky, *Signed, Sealed, and Delivered: The Soulful Journey Of Stevie Wonder*. If you read the book, remember those two words above that I used to describe Stevie: creative and mysterious.

Wonder avoided drugs, but had another addiction: messing around with the women, even at a very early age. He would grab them in places that women didn't approve of – all right, some didn't mind – and then plead that he didn't see that she was there.

I'm sure that convinced many observers. As he matured, a few women claimed that they had his child. One insisted she was pregnant by him and called Lula Mae, who replied, "Honey, if it comes out black, blind and playing the harmonica, then I'll believe you." Stevie got his sense of humor from his mom.

Wonder reached the top in many ways but participated in Peace Sunday, an anti-nuclear rally in 1982 at the Rose Bowl. He was on hand for Band Aid in America and on stage for the We Are the World project. The latter event had forty-five artists on stage, including Ray Charles, but because of the number involved, it didn't always go smoothly. Once when matters seemed out of hand, Wonder tried to restore order and kidded the group that if they didn't get things together, he or Ray would drive everybody home.

Guitarist, songwriter and producer Michael Sembello – known as the writer of the song *Maniac* from the 1983 movie, *Flashdance* – worked with Wonder on a few projects. On a trip to Louisiana in search of a studio location, while the group was crossing the Pontchartrain Bridge, Sembello noticed a sign with three K's on some building. It was then that Michael realized they were in the heart of Klan country. Sembello continues, "I'm seein' headlines in my head saying 'Stevie Wonder and Band – the white Guy, too – lynched in Louisiana.'"

So far, Stevie has a record twenty-two Grammys, thirty-top ten hits, twenty-five number one hits and twelve top ten albums, including three that reached the top. Songs of his you'll recognize include *I Wish*, *I Just Called to Say I Love You* – for which he won an Academy Award in 1984 for the movie, *The Woman in Red* – *Superstition* and *Sir Duke*. Albums of note include *Talking Book*, *Songs in the Key of Life* and *Innervisions*. He earned the title of United Nations Messenger of Peace in 2009 and a year earlier, he was number five on Billboard Magazine's Hot 100 all-time Top Artists. In 2004, Rolling Stone Magazine ranked him fifteenth on the 100 Greatest Rock and Roll Artists of All Time. He's a member of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Michigan Walk of Fame, and has received the Polar Music Prize, the Gershwin Award, Kennedy Center Honors, the George and Ira Gershwin Lifetime Achievement Award, the Sammy Cahn Lifetime Achievement Award, the

Billboard Century Award, the Memphis National Civil Rights Museum Lifetime Achievement Award and the Montreal Jazz Festival Spirit Award. At the end of 2012, he was inducted into the Soul Music Hall of Fame.

3. Classical Gas

Oscar Hammerstein

In the twentieth century, there were at least three Oscar Hammersteins. One was Oscar Andrew Hammerstein (III) who wrote the 2010 book, *The Hammersteins: A Musical Theater Family*, which I recommend highly. His grandfather's grandfather was the first, coming to New York City in 1864. He started out working in a cigar factory but then took over the business – why work at a job when you can be boss? He was a prolific inventor, having over seventy-five patents, even working on an invention for an improved plumbing system.

As a child, he studied piano, flute and violin. The cigar business was doing well, but his real interest was opera. In fact, he moonlighted as a theater manager in the downtown theaters. The money from the cigar business provided funds for his real love. He probably smoked a stogie, too. Is it possible that he thought about selling cigars in the lobby of the theatres he would build? With no extra cost, this approach could also lend an aroma to the inside of the building.

The Harlem Opera House on 125th Street was the first theater he constructed and he didn't stop there. He was responsible for the Olympia Theatre on Longacre Square and Manhattan Opera House, where variety shows and comic operas were presented. Not only did he build the theatres, he wrote the operas. Longacre Square eventually became Times Square, and theatre thrived, thanks to Hammerstein. Oscar built more theatres and his sons, Willie and Arthur, were involved as well. This was a musical family, and that's only the beginning.

Though Broadway had operas and musicals, without the cigar man, we may not have had the Broadway musical, as we know it. We may not have been introduced to his grandson, also named Oscar. Because of all these three Oscar Hammersteins, I will refer to this big Broadway musical guy as Oscar. He's the one in the middle and the one we know the most about.

Willie wasn't a workaholic but was involved with his dad's work, managing the Victoria Theatre, which featured vaudeville. In 1895 he and his wife Alice became the parents of a son, Oscar

Greeley Clendenning Hammerstein II. Sadly, Alice died at the age of 32 and not much later, Willie died. Their son was only 18, and barely old enough to smoke a cigar. Just before Willie died, his son promised he would never do the theatre thing. His uncle Arthur knew of the promise and took the lad under his wing. Despite the theatre vow and after much consideration by Arthur, Oscar became involved with the theatre and millions of people were glad of his decision.

Oscar was a producer and director of theatre. Penning the lyrics, he co-wrote 850 songs. His efforts covered almost forty years, working with composers Sigmund Romberg, Jerome Kern and others, but his most successful collaboration was with Richard Rodgers. Like his grandfather – the cigar / opera guy – he also had many failures. Neither gave up and instead just tried again. For the grandson, *Allegro* was one of the flops. It's easy to forget it and the other duds when *Showboat*, *Carousel*, *Oklahoma!*, *The King and I*, *South Pacific* and *The Sound of Music* come to mind. Oscar was a genius.

The grandson was the recipient of two Academy Awards: the song *The Last Time I Saw Paris* in 1941 in the film, *Lady Be Good*, and in 1945, *It Might as Well Be Spring* in *State Fair*. This award is also known as an Oscar – what else would it be called? Oscar also won eight Tony Awards, six for lyrics or book and two for producing. He probably would have captured more except that the Tony wasn't awarded until 1947. In 1944 Rodgers and Hammerstein received a Pulitzer Prize for *Oklahoma!* and a half dozen years later the Gold Medal Award – nothing to do with baking – for their work in the city of New York.

Many revivals on Broadway and in road shows across the country are plays that Oscar had a hand in. Even the ones that aren't have to give credit to the work of the Hammersteins. In 1981, the family contributed a million dollars for Theatre Studies to establish The Oscar Hammerstein II Center.

George Gershwin

Jacob Gershwin was born in September 1898 in Brooklyn of parents Morris Gershowitz and Rosa Bruskin, both Jewish immigrants from the Ukraine. Jacob changed both names to

become George Gershwin when he became a professional musician. He was the second of four children, Ira, Arthur and Frances. As a child, he was a thief and skipped school, but was good at roller-skating. His parents figured he'd probably wind up in jail, but once he escaped, he could get away from the police on those skates.

George had great musical talent, even at the age of ten, and had rhythm early on. His first job was as a song plugger for Jerome Remick of Tin Pan Alley. A plugger of this type was a piano player hired by music stores to help increase sales of sheet music. This was after he left school at 15. His first song was published in 1916 and a year later he had commercial success with *Rialto Ripples*, a novelty rag. In 1919 he had a national hit with *Swanee*. George had talent and humility wasn't one of his normal qualities. He never married but had a few duets with the ladies even though the piano needed tuning.

In 1928, he wrote his orchestral composition, *An American in Paris*. Gershwin created jazz, opera, pop music and classical. His work is amazing, including music for the movies and the stage and countless hit songs. His collaboration with his brother Ira is comparable to the work done by Hammerstein and Rodgers.

Kay Swift, one of Gershwin's lovers, mentioned that his audience not only listened to his music, but also felt they were writing it with him. At the time when Babe Ruth mentioned that his salary was more than that of President Hoover because he had a better year, Gershwin was earning more than the two combined.

A few years ago I bought a CD featuring pianist Richard Glazier. He was the sole artist on the album, which was entitled, *Gershwin: Rememberance and Discovery*. There were fifteen selections, including the *Rhapsody in Blue*. I omitted to mention that this was Volume 2, so there were many other songs that George wrote, some with his brother Ira. *Summertime*, *I Got Rhythm*, *I Got Plenty of Nuttin'*, *It Ain't Necessarily So*, *The Man I Love*, *How Long Has This Been Going On*, *Love Is Here to Stay* and *Someone to Watch Over Me* were some of the familiar numbers that many artists performed and are still doing today. Gershwin also was responsible for the *Concerto in F* and the folk opera, *Porgy and Bess*, based on the novel *Porgy* by DuBose Heyward, who helped with getting that opera on stage. After Todd

Duncan auditioned for the part of Porgy, performing a piece he brought with him, Gershwin asked him to sing it again, but not at the piano, where he had been. George said he would play the music, after only hearing it once. Duncan was impressed, saying, “This is when I knew I was dealing with a real musician.”

George and Ira were not only brothers; they were the best of friends, working on numerous projects together. Some of these weren't highly successful – many critics panned *Porgy and Bess* when it opened and its run was a short one. Years later it was recognized as a masterpiece. Music awards in his time weren't around for music as we have today, but in 2006, he was inducted into the Long Island Music Hall of Fame. George Gershwin Junior High School 166 in Brooklyn is named after him as well as the Gershwin Theatre on Broadway. In 1985, The brothers were honored with the Congressional Gold Medal. UCLA established The George and Ira Gershwin Lifetime Achievement Award in 1988. George Gershwin died in 1937 at the age of 38. After that, conductor of the Boston Symphony, Serge Koussevitzky, described him as “this extraordinary being too great to be real.”

In March 2013, I watched the 1951 motion picture, *An American in Paris* for the second time. It was the recipient of six Academy Awards, including best picture. I had seen it shortly after it originally played in movie theatres. I'm not always in agreement with the Academy on their choices, but in this case, I give the movie a thumbs up. It's a great story set in romantic Paris – even though it was filmed on various sets – with not too shabby dancing by Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron as well as music by George and Ira Gershwin. Who could ask for anything more?

Hammerstein and Gershwin mixed classical, jazz and pop – as well as Broadway music – into their songs. Oscar's grandfather began building opera houses, which is classical music. George wrote the *Concerto in F*, which was largely classical as well. His *Rhapsody in Blue* embraced jazz as well as pop and classical. Despite the fusion, they weren't the originators of it. It was happening years before them. Many feel that fusion began in the 1960s with such musical groups as Return to Forever, Soft Machine, Blood, Sweat and Tears and Chicago. That's only true if you're talking about jazz fusion.

You'll notice that there aren't any lyrics at the beginning of the chapter. That's because it's an instrumental. *Classical Gas* doesn't refer to a bean casserole that Mozart started brewing in his crockpot and never turned off – it should be ready to eat soon. Remind me to move to another state when the dish is delivered. No, the title is that of a 1968 top ten hit by Mason Williams. In August of that year it hit the number two spot on the charts. The song covers classical music, pop and rock. There are many more examples of fusion music, leaning to the classical aspect. This blending has the advantage of having people listening and appreciating a type of music that they thought they could never enjoy, or of which they may not have been that fond. Stevie Wonder offered, "I feel there is so much through music that can be said, and there's so many people you can reach by [having them listen] to another kind of music besides what is considered your only kind of music. I say as long as it's change to widen your horizons, it's cool."

In earlier chapters, I mentioned the song, *This is My Beloved*, which was borrowed from Borodin, then used in a Broadway musical and eventually hit the pop charts and the use of the string quartet in the Canadian group, Lighthouse. In my listening experience, I've run across a few more mixing of types. I'm not sure where I first heard the group Ekseption – that's not a misspelling but the name the group chose. The closest this Dutch group comes to vocalizing is in one song where they use synthesizers to almost sound like human voices – but not really singing, if you know what I mean. I bought two of their LPs (the 1969 and 1972 releases) and transferred many of the songs there to a single CD. I also have their CD of hits from various recordings and I would classify their music as a mixture of classical, jazz and rock. If you listen to their hard-rocking sound of *The 5th* and compare it to that of the main theme of the Beethoven symphony, you may feel that there's hardly a difference. At least I didn't.

Kayak is another set of musicians from the Netherlands that could be considered a fusion group. The difference between them and Ekseption is that the latter is more horn influenced and they covered classical themes whereas Kayak uses vocals in a more progressive rock mode. At one time I had in my collection two of their albums, *Royal Bed Bouncer* (1975) and *Phantom of the Night*

(1979), with some of the selections from both now on a single CD that I made. In addition, I have the 1981 CD, *Eyewitness. Phantom of the Night* was their best-selling album.

Renaissance

I probably got the 1969 self-titled album, *Renaissance*, from either a record grab bag or from my former boss, who I'll talk about later. Listening to it, I could hear the mix of jazz, classical, pop and rock. I went to their concert in the mid 1970s at the Academy of Music in New York, renamed the Palladium in 1976. I saw the underground group, Caravan play before Renaissance came on stage – a truly enjoyable concert by both acts. The latter changed personnel numerous times, but in each case – listening to the first Renaissance album or the concert – I enjoyed their music. I no longer own that LP, but it's replacement on CD with a few extra selections, as well as the 1990 CD, *Tales of 1001 Nights, Vol. 1*. There's also a *Tales of 1001 Nights, Vol. 2* and each of these two volumes consists of studio and concert performances of the group.

Musicians on that first eponymous album were Jim McCarty, Keith Relf, his sister Jane, Louis Cannamo and John Hawken, the first two coming from the Yardbirds. The performers on *Tales of 1001 Nights, Vol 1*. were Michael Dunford, Annie Haslam, Terry Sullivan, Jon Camp and John Tout. These last five were probably the musicians I saw in concert. You'll notice that there's no one in common to these two groups and I may have been taking a chance by going to the concert. Fortunately, Michael Dunford played on the second Renaissance album, *Illusion* (1971), and he is the link that kept the group going and actually was instrumental in making it more progressive and successful.

In May 1967, Procol Harum released the single, *A Whiter Shade of Pale*. Reminiscent of J. S. Bach's *Orchestral Suite Number 3 in D Major*, it was a big hit in the United States, reaching number five on the pop charts. It did even better on the United Kingdom singles chart, reaching number one. It also did the same in Canada and Australia. Besides classical music, the music of Procol Harum covers progressive rock, symphonic rock, R&B,

soul, blues, and baroque. Their 1973 release, *Grand Hotel*, is among my collection of CDs.

While staying for a month in January 2010 at my cousin Jim's Sun City Center town home, I visited my high school classmate Tom in nearby Riverhead, Florida. There I saw the DVD of the musical group, Barrage, a group created in Calgary, Canada in 1996 that incorporates choreography into their performance. I was so impressed that I bought their 2003 CD, *Vagabond Tales: Every Traveler has a Story*. As many types of music as Procol Harum mixes into their recordings, Barrage may surpass them. You can be the judge, and here are a few of the familiar song titles on *Vagabond Tales: Birdland, Tico Tico, Sweet Georgia Brown, Sally G, Bridge Over Troubled Water, Eleanor Rigby* and *Front Porch Jam*. Barrage consists of at least a half dozen violins, percussion, drums, a guitar or two, bass guitar and acoustic bass. The majority of the group – male and female – also sing on the CD. Barrage is a musical group, but also a performance, and in 2001, a second group based in London, England emerged. The cast of Barrage has over forty performers, including musicians from Canada, Germany, England, New Zealand, the United States, Wales and Scotland.

You may not have heard of the group, Chimo! – until a few years ago, I hadn't either. They were a rock band of the late 1960s and early 1970s but they didn't last very long. They did perform at various festivals in Detroit and Toronto in the summer of 1970 with big name stars such as Chicago, The Band, Janis Joplin, Alice Cooper and The Electric Circus. I had their 1970 self-titled record, but I'm not sure where it is today. The entire recording is on a cassette that I made quite a few years ago. I probably should produce a CD of it before it deteriorates and I can't listen to it anymore.

The British group, The Moody Blues, has been around for quite a while. They started out in 1964 and had a short hiatus in the mid 1970s. After their beginning in pop music, they evolved. Their 1965 single, *Go Now* was a number 1 hit in England and did well in the United States. Their most notable fusion record – I have it on CD – is *Days of Future Past*, which embraces classical themes along with rock music. I have some music on cassette by a former

member of the group, Michael Pinder, in addition to a CD of The Moody Blues music from different releases. It includes *Go Now*.

Somewhere I read about a musical group named Absolute Ensemble, including a favorable mention of their CD, *Absolution*. I thought of buying it but couldn't find it. However, a few months ago, I checked out another of their CDs from the local library, but I didn't care for it. Formed by conductor Kristjan Jarvi in 1993, the group became well known as one of New York's contemporary classical groups. Jarvi wanted more so he soon added jazz, rock, hip-hop, world music and Arab styles. The CD *Absolute Zawinul* came out in 2010 followed a year later by *Arabian Nights*. They released a few other CDs that I might like, but then again, maybe not. Some of these they did with other performers, including Paquito D'Rivera.

I mentioned the Brecker Brothers earlier, but they're not the only musical family. Don't forget about the Jacksons, Osmonds, the Lennon Sisters, the Everly Brothers and the Bangor Sisters and – that's only the beginning. Maybe that last duo didn't sing. With a combination of rock, pop and jazz, Richard and Karen Carpenter created absolutely beautiful music – so rich with harmony that I wondered how they could pull it off. How could a duo produce four or more part harmony? They did it with mirrors. Actually they accomplished the sound by recording over and over what they had first done, overdubbing. I saw them perform in Buffalo in the early 1970s and before the concert I tried to figure out how they would manage since very few singers can cover alto and soprano simultaneously. In practice and in concert, no human can so far. As you can guess, they had a few people on stage to manage this. What a joyful sound it was, especially with Karen's lovely voice. Sadly, she died at the age of 32 in 1983.

The English progressive band, The Nice, featuring Keith Emerson along with Lee Jackson and Brian Davison, also covered jazz and classical music. I first heard of them by way of their *Five Bridges Suite*. Eventually I bought the CD, *Keith Emerson with The Nice*, which has the suite on it along with works by Sibelius and Tchaikovsky. Three other songs there are Dylan's *My Back Pages*, Tim Hardin's *Hang on to a Dream* and Bernstein's *America*, from *West Side Story*. Released in 1970, the LP, *Five Bridges* reached the number two spot on the British album charts.

Around this same time Emerson formed the group, Emerson, Lake and Palmer.

I can't think of a more musical family, jazz-wise, than the Marsalis family from Louisiana. Ellis, Jr., father of the clan and professor of music, is on piano, Brandon on saxophone, Wynton on trumpet, Delfeayo on trombone and Jason on drums. Do you think this band needs a bass and guitar? Jason is in his mid thirties, the youngest of the bunch. He played with his father at twelve and lately has also played the vibraphone. He has played with funk fusion bands, a Celtic group and with Casa Samba, a Brazilian percussion ensemble. Besides his work on trumpet – his CD, *Baroque Music For Trumpets* was one of his classical ventures – Wynton is also a music educator, composer and Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has won nine Grammys and one of his recordings won a Pulitzer Prize for Music – the first of its kind. Branford was leader of the band in the early 1990s on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. He has done classical music and played with Sting, Blakey's Jazz Messengers, Herbie Hancock, Clark Terry, Lionel Hampton, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie and Kenny Kirkland. He has reached out to help victims of Katrina and has had Broadway projects in the last decade. Delfeayo founded the Uptown Music Theatre, which trains youth and has performed eight musicals. He is a graduate of Berklee College of Music and has a master's degree in jazz performance from the University of Louisville.

I should mention that classical rock – the joining together of rock with classical music – and classic rock aren't the same. The latter, which may also be referred to as rock classics, refers to rock music that has endured over the years and can be heard on corresponding FM stations. There's probably no reason why these couldn't also be considered as oldies, since they are songs from the past.

Not long ago in Buffalo, I was at a concert that featured the East Village Opera Company, musicians that combined opera and rock. I'm not a big opera fan – I'll have more on this later – but I thought the fusion was great. Not everyone in the audience agreed with me. My friend thought he saw the music reviewer leave early, missing some of the performance. The review in the *Buffalo News* the next day was not very kind – those opera snobs! Anyway, I

bought their self-titled CD, which featured the compositions of Georges Bizet – the *s* at the end of his first name must be a mistake since there's only one of him – Mozart, Puccini, Purcell and Verdi. Somehow, I wasn't that impressed with the CD as I was with the live encounter. Here again, this group could be classified as opera rock which is a bit different from rock opera. The former invokes thoughts of Giuseppe Verdi, Giacomo Puccini, Luciano Pavarotti, Beverly Sills and Kathleen Battle, while rock opera brings to mind *Hair* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. There's quite a difference there. Diva that she is, Battle also sang a duet of *My Favorite Things* from *The Sound of Music* with Al Jarreau. This was on the concert CD, *Tenderness*.

When it comes to live versus studio creations, there are situations where the CD pales in comparison to being there to hear the artist. In other cases, it could be just the opposite. From what I've heard, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young weren't at their best at Woodstock in 1969 – maybe they should have *warmed up* in the parking lot longer. I've been at concerts that I was glad I was there but cherished the album or CD of the artist as well. I'm sure there are musicians who aren't that great either live or on record, cassette or CD. Maybe they'll sound better on those mechanical photograph cylinders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Returning to our consideration of fusion, the Blues Magoos at first were a pop and psychedelic group in the 1960s and 1970s. I can't say I was a fan of their music – perhaps because I wasn't crazy about Mr. Magoo. They released two albums, *Never Goin' back to Georgia* (1969) and *Gulf Coast Bound* (1970), which came into my possession. I think I know from where they came, but after listening to them, I liked them. They were jazz, featuring some vibes action, and nothing like the earlier stuff. Neither album did very well and within a couple years the group disbanded. Emil Peppy Thielhelm aka *Peppy* Castro, who played guitar and sang vocals with the group, had a brief stint in the rock musical *Hair*. Peppy formed Barnabye Bye with fellow cast members and twin brothers, Bobby and Billy Alessi, releasing two albums, *Room to Grow* (1972) and *Touch* (1973). Beside their albums with Barnabye Bye, over time the Alessi Brothers – some of their music can also be found under Alessi – had seven other releases and

they're not done yet. In 1981, Castro joined the group, Balance and in July 2008, he reunited with original Blues Magoos members Geoff Daking and Ralph Scala for two concerts, as well as a performance at the Purple Weekend Festival in Spain. There was rumor of a 2012 release, *Psychedelic Resurrection* as well as a nationwide tour.

Nathaniel Anthony Ayers

Nathaniel Ayers was raised in Cleveland, and though his father abandoned his wife and three children before Nathaniel became a teenager, his mother felt much differently, nurturing him. Ayers had great talents as a musician, starting out on the double bass while in middle school. He was so gifted that he landed at the Julliard School in New York. Harry Barnoff, who played double bass for forty-six years in the Cleveland Orchestra, said, "I still remember what a wonderful musician he was." He also noted that Nathaniel could omit practice for weeks, then start playing and sound great. Homer Mensch, his teacher at Julliard, offered, "He had the talent, that was for sure." While playing one day, a fellow student, Joseph Russo, heard beautiful notes emanating from a room that he mistakenly thought it was his mentor and master musician, Mensch. To his surprise, he soon discovered it was Nathaniel.

Los Angeles Times columnist, Steve Lopez, who also worked at The Philadelphia Inquirer, Oakland Tribune and San Jose Mercury News, heard classical music in 2005 coming from the area around Pershing Square in Los Angeles. As beautiful as the notes were, he noticed the performer's appearance didn't quite match – more like Skid Row casual. When Lopez first approached, the violinist was apprehensive, but soon Steve was told that he had spent time at a prestigious music school on the other coast. On phoning the institution, Lopez was told that they never heard of him. The next day, he was told that there had been an oversight and that the musician had graduated from the school. Steve learned that his name was Nathaniel Anthony Ayers.

Nathaniel attended the Julliard School in New York, being one of the few black students there at the time. He didn't know Yo-

Yo Ma, but heard him playing so he was aware of his greatness, even then. There was so much pressure there to be the best that some of those who came up a bit short committed suicide. Drugs were also a way to cope, beginning with marijuana and progressing to the harder stuff, which Ayers didn't avoid. He didn't graduate from Julliard as reported to Lopez, because as a junior he was institutionalized with a mental breakdown, reportedly diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenia. A few events contributed to this: racism, the Vietnam War, the Attica uprising as well as the need to work long hours practicing. His father's abandonment probably didn't help either.

After Julliard, Ayers moved to Cleveland and lived with his mother, Floria Boone, and went through electro convulsive therapy with no improvement. Some of the drugs given him were Thorazine, Stelazine, Prolixin and Haldol. They probably weren't helping, even making matters worse. His mother died in 2000 and Nathaniel moved to Los Angeles, preferring the warmer climate compared to New York and Cleveland. He could be seen and heard playing music on the streets, where Steve spotted him. All the musician's possessions were in a shopping cart, including blankets to hide them as well as objects to ward off the rats.

Knowing his background, before long the journalist started writing newspaper columns about him. On one occasion Lopez noticed two broken strings on his violin, so he bought a pair for Ayers. From his columns, people emailed Steve and even offered to donate violins. One generous soul even hand crafted a cello. With the gift of the violin strings and the musical instruments, which Steve delivered, Nathaniel became more trusting of Lopez and the latter was moved to finding a way to help the musician. This created the problem of protecting the instruments from predators on the street as well as keeping the musician safe from getting mugged. Lopez hoped that Ayers would move over to Lamp Community, where he'd have a bed, but the musician wanted no part of that.

Steve relished their relationship but at times was very frustrated. Being a journalist with endless deadlines and married with a young daughter, he cherished the time with his family. Unfortunately he couldn't be around them as much as he would have liked to be, but his wife was very understanding. Lopez

wanted to help but when it comes to mental health, time and patience are requirements. Talking to two different people in the mental health profession resulted in opposite ways of handling the patient. What worked for one individual may have turned out to be a complete disaster for another. The answers didn't come easily.

Now playing the cello, Nathaniel missed a few notes or was off a bit, but otherwise was brilliant – he had a very high IQ – loved music and was very ambitious. On a visit to Disney Hall to hear the symphony orchestra practice, he was so excited and knowledgeable about Beethoven and the other greats that Steve just let him be on his own. He was doing fine that way. On that occasion he had a chance to play the cello. Hearing him play, Adam Crane, publicist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, said, “He’s got it.”

Nathaniel had bad days when he rambled on and on, was racist and mean to people. He also appeared to have gone to the school of Felix Unger with his obsession for cleaning. He despised those who smoked and told the offenders; he hated anyone who discarded cigarette butts or littered in his town. He was stubborn and hated people telling him what to do. Lopez’s efforts were to be commended, but because of what he witnessed, he felt he might have done more harm than good.

Jamie Foxx received a Best Actor Academy Award for his portrayal of Ray Charles in the 2004 movie, *Ray*. He was brilliant in the role of Nathaniel and Robert Downey, Jr. gave a great performance as Steve in the 2009 movie, *The Soloist*. On March 22, 2009, CBS had a *60 Minutes* program on the Ayers and Lopez relationship. Steve wrote about this in his 2008 book, *The Soloist: A Lost Dream, An Unlikely Friendship, And The Redemptive Power Of Music*. The book is about friendship, caring, mental health, music, joy, frustration and redemption. I recommend it for the great story of what these two individuals experienced, including how each changed the other, as well as for the lives of caregivers who do their best under challenging conditions and those who barely survive from day to day on the streets.

4. Come Sail Away

I'm sailing away
Set an open course for the Virgin Sea
'Cause I've got to be free
Free to face the life that's ahead of me

On board, I'm the captain
So climb aboard
We'll search for tomorrow on every shore
And I'll try, oh Lord, I'll try to carry on

After teaching in Buffalo for a couple years, I didn't take a cruise – as the title of the chapter suggests. Instead, I moved east to take a teaching job in Mahwah, New Jersey. I drove my Chevy II with what I needed – a few books, record albums, clothes, toiletries, pots, pans, stereo, dishes and utensils. I had a compact car but didn't need a moving van and did it easily in one day. It was some time ago, so details are fuzzy. I think I had to find a place the day of my drive and somehow managed. Notice, I had no television in the car. I did have my music and hardware to play it on.

The stereo had two speakers, a tuner and a turntable. Rather quickly, I set it up and everything else in my new home in Wyckoff in the state mentioned above – there wasn't that much that had to be done – and I soon was moved in. Being close to the city of New York had a few advantages. I was close to Broadway, fine restaurants and Yankee Stadium. I had been a great fan of Mickey Mantle and his team for sometime. Being a teacher then wasn't a high paying job, so I didn't see any plays, attend any concerts or eat at those fancy restaurants. I did see a game or two at the Stadium. Bleacher seats are available for teachers.

There was one great thing about living where I was: I was close to the music scene. All I needed was a radio – my stereo provided that – so I was tuned in. Music radio 77 WABC was one of the leaders – if I'm not mistaken, I could pick up the station when I lived in Western New York – and the DJs included Harry Harrison, Ron Lundy, Chuck Leonard, Charlie Greer, Bruce Morrow (cousin Brucie) and Dan Ingram. These guys played the

hits. WABC wasn't alone as it was in competition with WPIX, WNEW, WCBS, and WOR. In the 1960s, FM radio was starting to come on the scene as well. There were numerous ways for me to keep up with the world of records and music.

I would have liked to travel to The Village to see the performers and hear their music at the time, but I had a strict budget so I was rather restricted. I did a great deal of cooking – actually I was learning – and kept up with the music on the radio, but had a rather boring year, otherwise. After a while I bought an eleven inch black and white television, but music came first.

The second half of the school year in Mahwah was the same year as the Woodstock Music and Art Fair, four days of music and love. By that time I was already gone from the area. I would have liked to have been there just for the music. With performers like Quill, the Keef Hartley Band and Bert Sommer, who wouldn't want to go? You never heard of these artists? Well I didn't either, but some of the artists were Arlo Guthrie, Blood, Sweat and Tears, Santana, Crosby, Still, Nash and Young, Jimi Hendrix, Johnny Winter, Joe Cocker and The Grateful Dead, who would have enticed anyone. It was successful at doing that as half a million fans attended. The bad part was the traffic mess, the shortage of food, the mud, rain and the garbage left over afterwards.

I taught high school mathematics for eight years in all. During the last two years, my assignment was in the Hudson Valley, east of the river of that same name. This was in the Wappingers Falls School District at John Jay High School in Hopewell Junction, New York. A small town south of Poughkeepsie, it's about fifty miles north of New York City. There I joined a group of teachers who started a singing thing. We rehearsed, but that didn't last very long: one or two get-togethers at most.

I had left New Jersey but returned to the neighborhood in four years. Now, I was listening to WNEW-FM in New York City. I had their calendar – I think from the year 1975 – but tossed it since it was showing signs of serious wear. Some of the DJs on the station at the time were Dennis Elsas, Scott Muni, Pete Fornatale, Richard Neer, Dave Herman and Alison Steele. They were musical

pioneers and played rock hits, including songs that were longer than three minutes, and songs from the LPs.

After my last year teaching in Hopewell Junction, I joined the business world as a programmer / analyst with Nestlé Foods. It was there that I met Hugo (nothing to do with the Scorsese movie), a gentleman who was to have a large influence on my musical world. At the same time, my younger brother Ken was living not far away in Western Massachusetts. He also had a great deal to do with my love of music.

Hugo was my boss and he was generous enough to give me records that he didn't really care for. His brother or brother-in-law worked in New York for some record company or radio station and passed along music to Hugo, some of which I became the beneficiary. I listened to all of it, at least once, and I liked much of it. Earlier I mentioned two records by The Blues Magoos. It's very possible that Hugo gave them to me. There were many other LPs. At the same time – maybe a bit before as well – I was a member of a record club or two. Some of the artists offered in the catalog I wasn't familiar with, but I still bought some of those records and listened to them. Every so often the club would have a grab bag where they would send you a few albums without specifying the artists or titles. I gave it a try and some of the stuff I may have not liked, but some I did.

My brother was always into the music scene. He even worked at a record store for a time and had a few albums. While visiting him in Western Massachusetts, he played some of those discs for me. I heard many great new artists, enjoying their music. I recall a decade later that I house sat for him and his wife in Woburn, Massachusetts and played as much music from his vast collection as I could. Between Hugo, Ken and the record clubs, I was introduced to quite a few artists, with whom I had not been familiar. At the time Ken's record collection was immense. He bought many LPs at flea markets and bargain basement stores so he didn't pay a lot. There were times when he returned home and discovered that he already had the record. Today, his collection is even bigger, including CDs as well.

When I worked a software contract at Blue Cross in Buffalo in 1994 or 1995, my boss had a party at her home and I had a chance to look at another large collection of records that her

husband or boyfriend possessed. It was huge but I think not quite as immense as the collection of my brother. My collection paled in comparison to either of these.

As you can see, I didn't shy away from albums and artists that weren't familiar to me. Another way in which I had a chance to listen to new music – to me, anyway – was through the public library. Whenever I moved to a new area, one of the first things I did was join the local library, giving me access to books, music and movies. Before CDs arrived on the scene, I picked up an LP, looked at the back cover and decided to either check it out or look at another disc. In this way I found some gems, some of which I eventually purchased as records or CDs. This increased my musical knowledge.

In the early 70s, I bought my first cassette deck and started recording music on that medium. This was even before I moved to the Hudson Valley. You could buy pre-made cassettes, but they seemed to break down too easily, whereas the ones you recorded yourself lasted so much longer. Today, I have some cassettes that I made that are still holding out after over twenty-five years. I don't know what happened to it, but I owned one reel-to-reel tape by the Mitchell Trio, *That's the Way It's Gonna Be*, even though I didn't have a reel-to-reel system. It's hard to play that medium on a turntable or cassette deck.

As I write this, there are no turntables in my home, three cassette players, and five devices to play CDs – this includes the one in my car. I own no karaoke players. For the longest time, I moved around a great deal – way too much, but sometimes you have to do that to avoid the landlord – and the record collection I had was turning into a hernia horror when shuffling from one home to another. In the mid 1980s, I started moving music I really liked from LPs to cassettes. When this was done, I donated the records and got rid of the turntable. Doing this was a great relief and achieved a bit of downsizing. One problem I have always encountered was hearing a song on the radio, finding the record or CD that it was on and then purchasing either. Soon I discovered that the other selections on the medium I just bought were songs I didn't need to have in my collection. That problem is easily solved with selective recording, whether through a cassette device or CD recorder. I bought the latter in the year 2000. This device is in my

living room as part of my stereo system and I also can make music CDs using my PC. That's called burning a CD and I've made quite a few but haven't had any fires in my home, for which I'm deeply thankful.

I mentioned classical music in an earlier chapter and have a few classical CDs, my favorites being Handel and Mozart. Each of those CDs are uplifting and moving. What I don't like about many classical works are the quiet passages followed by a blast that makes you jump out of your skin and blows out a woofer. Perhaps it's intended to wake people out of their slumber, but because of the volume levels, those symphonies are difficult to copy onto another CD. Before the advent of CDs, those very same LP recordings resulted in pops and scratches even just after popping the music on the turntable for the first time. Other concerns about this music are some of the composers, who seem to be deeply troubled when they created some of their works. Wagner, Prokofiev, Ravel and even some pieces of Beethoven's come to mind, as the music is difficult to tune into.

While I'm on the subject, I sang in a chorus or two that performed just this type of music. After undergraduate school and the glee club there, it was over a half-dozen years before I was involved with another chorale. The first was in the early 1970s with the Binghamton Symphony and Chorus. I was only with them for a year and can't recall much of what we sang, but one piece we did was *Te Deum* by the nineteenth century composer Hector Berlioz – a fellow teacher in the chorus referred to him as Barley Oats. Why I remembered that piece was because of a fellow in the group named Ken who was dynamic when he sang any score, especially that one. I felt that by being next to him and hearing his outstanding voice was sufficient to learn the music and words. If I'm not mistaken, I also sang *Te Deum* a few later with another chorale.

Following that in the same area, I joined the Clef Club, a men's group that rehearsed every week and sang at different functions, including a stint at some church in Rochester, New York. That was an enjoyable trip. I joined the bass section and we had about six men there, but while rehearsing the bass section alone, I heard about eight different notes. It didn't sound very harmonic, so I left them and joined the tenor section.

When I started work at Nestlé Foods over ten years later, a few of us did some singing at Christmas time – very informal and I don't remember doing it for more than one season. When I got to Tampa for a short time, I became a member of some church choir – it may have been St. Charles Church. Since I departed the area rather quickly, I didn't sing there very long. I do remember that the group was planning a trip to Europe to sing at some of the cathedrals. They wouldn't get paid, but in lieu were welcome to hit on a few bottles of church wine. To pay for the journey, someone suggested cashing in empties for the very minuscule deposit that went along with each bottle or can. The feeling was that everyone partook of soda or even beer, so why not take advantage of the containers' value. There was not much concern that the purchase of these beverages would involve great sums of money. Expenses for the European venture could probably be gathered just as easily with a part-time job. I wondered why this temporary employment wasn't employed and the bottle deposit adventure bypassed altogether. I'm not sure how this all played out.

I continued the church vocal venue by joining the choir of St. Mary's Church in Richfield, Connecticut. I didn't have to audition – when did anyone have to sing for the director of a church beforehand? – since I knew the leader from where I worked. Since I had moved around so much – probably you noticed – I was only there for a few months and not long after that I joined the Contemporary Music Ensemble of St. Joseph University Church in Buffalo close to the University at Buffalo South Campus. That was probably my longest stay in any church choir. In fact, I'm still a parishioner but did depart the choir for various reasons. The group combined traditional church music – one of the directors is a composer and fine pianist – with gospel overtones. It's hard to get away from this fusion thing. While in the group, we put on a few concert-like performances, which were enjoyable and uplifting as well.

My friend Mark convinced me to join the choir and before that said I should join the men's group he also sang in, the Amherst Male Glee Club (AMGC). I was a member for a few months and we traveled to various places for joint concerts, such as Brantford, Ontario and Mansfield, Pennsylvania. The group also performed for charity, including Senior Citizen places – probably a good

thing since many of the audience were hard of hearing. Every spring the AMGVC put on its annual Red Blazer Varieties, a blend of song, dance and comic entertainment. I've been to quite a few of these, but never stepped on stage for any since I have a hard enough time learning the words and music without having to master any dance steps. *American Idol* will have to find someone else.

My active music moments were singing, but never solo. The closest I came to that was in the barbershop quartet, The Uncalled For. When you sing with others and a wrong note is emitted, you can always stare at others with a dirty look on your face, something that Pig-Pen from the Peanuts comic strip always has. I never played guitar but dabbled on the piano and owned one of those keyboards as well as that sax like gadget. Nevertheless, I enjoyed my singing ventures.

Come Sail Away is the name of the 1977 hit by the progressive rock group, Styx. It reached number eight on the charts and you can find it on the record, *The Grand Illusion*. Remove the first word from the title of the chapter and you have *Sail Away*, the name of a 1972 single by Randy Newman. That was also the name of the album of the same year.

I close the chapter with some wisdom about a music and math connection, which may extend past the mathematics major / performing musician idea. It offers the thought that if you're good at math, then you're probably into music, in some way. Perhaps the reason why I love music so much has to do with my background. In college, I majored in mathematics, even receiving a degree in computer science. This is the math / music connection, but maybe there is also a scientist / artist collaboration.

I'll talk about Tom Lehrer later, but you might know that he's both a mathematician and a musician. Earlier I mentioned joining the Contemporary Music Ensemble and the Amherst Male Glee Club – both recommended by my friend Mark, who still sings in both groups. He majored in math and taught that subject in high school until he retired not long ago. He had to – he couldn't find the time for his singing. Well, that's not entirely true, but he also represents the math / music alliance. I'll talk about a great trumpeter later, but mention here that he was tough to beat in chess

and loved mathematics, even enrolling at Delaware State in it. There's another connection between chess and math.

While at the University of New York at Binghamton for my computer science studies, one of my professors was also conductor of the university symphony orchestra there. These two cases might just confirm that hypothesis. Yet, there are people who love music who teach history and some math professors who own neither CDs nor records and avoid concerts of any kind. In my case, I have pointed out four situations in this chapter that had much to do with my musical involvement. Even so, the math / music marriage shouldn't be ignored. In the 1967 self-titled LP, the Sandpipers had a song called *Inch Worm*, which was originally sung by Danny Kaye in the 1952 movie, *Hans Christian Anderson*. It's a popular children's song and as you can see by its words that follow, one with a math connection.

Two and two are four
Four and four are eight
Eight and eight are sixteen
Sixteen and sixteen are thirty-two

Inchworm, inchworm
Measuring the marigolds
You and your arithmetic
You'll probably go far

5. So good – A night on the town

There's no greater crime
Than wastin' your life
On a boat goin' nowhere
When you came along
You made it safe
For love to survive
I trusted and dreamed
And you came like I knew you would
I've been 'round before
But this feels so good

Van and Willie went out one night
Once they get out on the road
Well then everything is alright
Had to get away from the kids and the wives
Well they ran into some city boys that didn't walk just right
And the line was drawn for another showdown
Like they'd always seen it done
And when the lights came up on the little woods town

Over the years I have been in attendance at quite a few musical performances. Outside of those I had already mentioned or will mention later, here is an alphabetical list of many of these artists I've seen: Gregg Allman; Karrin Allyson; Johnny Almond; Brian Auger; Average White Band; Pearl Bailey; Beach Boys; Binghamton Symphony Orchestra; Binghamton University Symphony; Blues Image; Boston Pops – maybe with Arthur Fiedler; Doug Cameron; Lana Cantrell; Cars – I think; Chicago; Stanley Clarke; Shamekia Copeland; Chick Corea; Robert Cray; Sammy Davis, Jr.; Al Di Meola; Maynard Ferguson; Flo and Eddie; Dana Fuchs; Frank Gambale; Guy and Pipp Gillette; Arlo Guthrie; Grass Roots – some people don't know when to retire; Guess Who; Hudson Brothers; Kelley Hunt; Gladys Knight and the Pips; Gene Krupa; Dick Leibert; Ronnie Leigh, Gap Magione; Shelly Mann; Eric Mariental; Jon Mark; John Mayall; Bat McGrath; Meat Loaf (some of you know him as Marvin Lee Aday); Pat Metheny; Lisa Minnelli; Keb' Mo'; Mark Murphy;

Olivia Newton-John; Jean-Luc Ponty; Don Potter; Raleigh (NC) Symphony Orchestra; Rascals – I’m not sure, but maybe it was Young Rascals; Leon Redbone – I’m not proud of this; Return to Forever; Don Rice; Rippingtons; Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra; Tom Rush; Santana; Esther Satterfield; Gretchen Schulz and The Morvels; Seven; Wayne Shorter; Spyra Gyra; Teegarden and Van Winkle; Jerry Vale; Weather Report; Lenny White; Tony Joe White; Roger Williams; Dweezil Zappa.

I’ve also attended performances of the rock operas, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Starlight Express*, *Chicago*, *A Chorus Line* and *Rockabye Hamlet* – all on Broadway. I especially loved the music of *Rockabye Hamlet*, which opened in New York City at the Minskoff Theatre in February 1976. I may have been one of few who cared for the musical as it didn’t last the month, closing after seven performances, even though Meat Loaf was in it – perhaps there were too many vegetarian reviewers. Aday’s 2000 book, *Meat Loaf: To Hell and Back* has more on his life.

In addition I saw *Hairspray* in Buffalo; *The Fantasticks* and Umberto Giordano’s opera *Andrea Chenier*, both in Binghamton. Some people might insist that last one was the only *real* opera I attended. When it comes to the ballet, I’ve attended at least one, and it wasn’t *The Nutcracker*. It was big time, though, with Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev.

I probably left a few musicians out. I may have mentioned someone I really didn’t see on stage or misidentified one or two. Maybe it was in my dreams. You know how people tend to confuse artists, such as Roger Williams and Floyd Cramer or Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich or Connie Francis and Wayne Newton. In the case of the latter pairing, listen to a song by Wayne and then one by Connie and tell me they don’t sound alike. Also, did you ever see Francis and Newton on stage at the same time? In my case I saw neither in concert, but am quite sure I witnessed Williams and Krupa perform.

You may ask where I found the money to attend all these concerts. As you might guess, the majority of these concerts were a while ago so I didn’t have to spend \$200 for a seat. Attending a Broadway musical thirty years ago and getting tickets at TKTS – the half-price booth in New York City – made them affordable. I was fortunate in that regard. Some concerts were free as well.

You may be wondering why I've included two verses at the beginning of the chapter – they appear to be from different songs. They indeed are. The first is from *So Good*, a selection from Al Jarreau's 1988 release, *Heart's Horizon*. *A Night on the Town* is the title tune from a 1990 CD of the same name by Bruce Hornsby and the Range and the second verse at the top of the chapter is the first verse of that song. I think the combination describes the concert scene for patrons precisely.

I've never seen Al Jarreau on stage and have four of his CDs. In addition, I have other songs of his on a couple cassettes and four other CDs. His music is basically jazz but on his *Tenderness* CD, he does a rendition of *Summertime* from *Porgy and Bess* as well as the duet with Kathleen Battle of *My Favorite Things*, which I mentioned before. His *Yo Jeans* on the *Heart's Horizon* CD embraces the world of rap. He also sang a rendition of the Lenny Welch hit, *Since I Fell For You* on the Bob James and David Sanborn collaboration, *Double Vision*. The 1963 version of the song by Lenny Welch hit number four on the Hot 100 chart.

Bruce Hornsby

A few years ago, I attended a concert by Bruce Hornsby at Buffalo State College. This with without The Range. The only music at that performance was Bruce's voice and the piano he played. He may have had a few other instruments on stage since he also plays synthesizers, the dulcimer and accordion. Many people cringe when that last instrument is mentioned – myself included. That attitude of mine changed not long ago when I went to a peace organization dinner, where the musical entertainment was an accordion quartet. Talk about multiplying the dread! Actually, the artists were truly entertaining and everyone raved. They performed Russian songs, European music – I'm not sure about Polkas – and various other rousing, unforgettable songs. I was impressed. I'm not sure where my original feelings about the accordion originated, since I never was forced to take lessons on that instrument, and I like both Polish music and Zydeco. Apparently, as we get older, our musical tastes change.

You might say the same happened to Hornsby, who was born in Williamsburg, Virginia. He first performed with his brother

Bobby's band, Bobby Hi-Test and the Octane Kids, covering music by The Band, the Grateful Dead and the Allman Brothers. Simultaneously, Bruce studied music at Berklee College of Music and the Universities of Miami and Richmond. After graduating from Miami, he played in Williamsburg in hotel bars and clubs before moving to Los Angeles. There he was a session musician and played with the band of Sheena Easton. In 1984, he formed the group, Bruce Hornsby and the Range, and they signed with RCA Records a year later. Their first big hit, *The Way It Is*, was a smash hit soon after. It opens with these words:

Standing in line marking time
Waiting for the welfare dime
'Cause they can't buy a job
The man in the silk suit hurries by
As he catches the poor old ladies' eyes
Just for fun he says, "Get a job."

A song about institutional racism and the civil rights movement, Bruce's acoustic piano along with what his musicians were saying topped the music charts in 1986. I have that CD – the same title as the hit single – in my vast collection of music along with his CDs, *Camp Meeting*, *Harbor Lights* and the cassette, *Night on the Town*. *Camp Meeting* is mostly jazz, with bassist Christian McBride and Jack DeJohnette on drums, while *Harbor Lights* could be classified as jazz-influenced pop, with Pat Metheny, Phil Collins, Jerry Garcia, Bonnie Raitt and Branford Marsalis. Hornsby won a Grammy in 1993 for his song, *Barcelona Mona*, which he and Branford Marsalis composed for the Barcelona Olympics. He collaborated with Ricky Skaggs on the 2007 bluegrass CD, *Ricky Skaggs and Bruce Hornsby* and played with the Grateful Dead from the fall of 1990 to March of 1992. He also played the song, *Shadowlands* from the 2000 Spike Lee motion picture, *Bamboozled*, as well as the soundtrack from the 2012 Spike Lee joint, *Red Hook Summer*.

Returning to that concert of a few years ago, Hornsby was impressive. His versatility – improvisational music, jam band and heartland rock, besides what has already been pointed out – made this an evening to remember. Not long after that, I saw and heard

Bruce, this time with The Range, at the Inner Harbor in downtown Buffalo – very appropriate since he did have that release, *Harbor Lights*. This performance matched that of his solo gig, and may have even surpassed it. Bruce is an artist, not shackled by commercialism. He does his thing, singing to entertain and inform, caring about the people. His work is political while still being a fusion of so many types of music. At the Inner Harbor, he played a few familiar songs, but they were done beautifully and differently than on CD or in previous concerts. All I can say is Bravo! If he were called on to do classical and opera, I'm sure he'd meet the challenge.

David Sanborn

Both concerts were so good, which reminds me to get back to the first set of lyrics at the top of this chapter. Accompanying Al Jarreau on that song, *So Good*, from the CD, *Heart's Horizon* is David Sanborn on alto saxophone. If you haven't heard Sanborn play, you must be a hermit. He also played on the aforementioned Jarreau number, *Since I Fell For You* from the *Double Vision* release – but you knew that since you were paying attention. That 1986 release won a Grammy for Best Jazz Fusion Performance. In addition, you can hear Sanborn's soaring sax on Stevie Wonder's *Tuesday Heartbreak* (pop), David Bowie's *Young America* (rock), James Taylor's *How Sweet It Is* (folk, pop and rock) and Linda Ronstadt's *Oh Baby Baby* (pop). Ronstadt is another truly versatile musician, covering operetta, pop rock, folk, Latin American, rock and roll, Cajun, big band and folk rock, for starters.

David has also contributed his talents to music with Ricky Peterson, Brenda Russell, Bonnie Raitt, Oleta Adams, Pure Prairie League, Michael Franks, Pat Williams with his big band on his 1998 CD, *SinatraLand* and the group Full Moon with Neil Larsen and Howard Buzz Feiten. I'm sure there are many more. With Larry Carlton, Al Jarreau, Randy Crawford, Mike Manieri, the Yellowjackets, Feiten and Larsen, he was also a musician on the 1982 CD, *Casino Lights*, recorded live at Montreux, Switzerland.

I could go on with, so I will. Starting in the middle 1980s, he sat in occasionally with Letterman's band on the latter's late night program. In late 1980s, he hosted the show, *Night Music*,

which featured really diverse types of music, exemplified by this guest list: Santana, Todd Rundgren, Robert Cray, Eric Clapton, Dizzy Gillespie, *Screamin' Jay Hawkins*, Lou Reed, Pere Ubu, Curtis Mayfield and Miles Davis. Sanborn introduced the talent and eventually joined in on sax. I tried to obtain tickets for the show – since I lived about fifty miles away – but was told to check back in a few months when the show would come back on the air. It never returned and so I never saw it on stage.

On his 2008 release, *Here and Gone*, Sanborn played with some blues people, Eric Clapton, Joss Stone, Sam Moore and Derek Trucks. Even before that, he played with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, appearing with them at Woodstock almost a half-century ago. Michael Kamen wrote a classical work, *Concerto For Sanborn and Orchestra*, which can be found on the 1990 CD, *Michael Kamen Concerto for Saxophone*. David may not be a movie star – what do you expect of the guy – but you can see him playing the *Star Spangled Banana* at the end of the 1995 flick, *Forget Paris*. You'll have to watch the flick to see if I'm hallucinating about Sanborn being in the movie, but he also played *Come Rain or Come Shine* on the soundtrack. He also performed *The Seduction*, the love theme from the 1980 movie *American Gigolo*. I'll bet he played on other soundtracks as well.

I'm not sure when I first heard Sanborn's soothing sax, but since he played on so many songs with so many different artists and since I heard so much music, I really couldn't not hear his notes. After I identified a tune or two, thereafter it was easy to recognize when he was part of a song. His sound was unmistakable – at least to me. There were other sax people whose sound was very similar to his, such as Warren Hill, Candy Dulfer, Andy Snitzer and Nelson Rangell. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

The first concert of his I attended was at Artpark in Lewiston, a few miles north of Buffalo. My friend and I sat on the lawn – we sat on the grass and didn't smoke it. The band was inside, but the performance arena had its back doors wide open so we could hear the band. When they opened up, I noticed that the acoustics weren't simply good, but phenomenal. Sanborn opened with either *Savanna* from the 1994 CD, *Hearsay* or *Chicago Song* from the 1987 release, *Change of Heart*. He may have played one

or both of these selections, but I know he played *Snakes* from 1992 release, *Upfront* because he commented on it referring to lawyers – those people we all like so much.

A few months after that I saw him at a musical arena that I mentioned earlier, Kleinhans Music Hall. Some of artists I saw at that hallowed place in Buffalo were the New Christy Minstrels, the Kingston Trio, Peter Nero and the Smothers Brothers. Sanborn played with the Buffalo Philharmonic – why not since he had played Kamen's Concerto a few years before. I didn't care for the concert as much as the one in Artpark. That may be because David was only on half the program but also because his music selection seemed somewhat restrained. He wasn't holding back the next two times I was in the audience when he performed at Buffalo State College. He opened each night with such an upbeat, rocking number that I wondered how he would top that. Somehow he managed. I had another chance to see him at Thursday in the Square in downtown Buffalo just outside the main Buffalo library. This was a free event, but I didn't make the scene because the weather was lousy – high in the 60s with wind and rain. My body and pneumonia just don't get along. The next day, the reviewer said David rocked and didn't disappoint anyone in the crowd, despite the elements.

On *The Best Of David Sanborn* CD, you can find the song he did, *Rain on Christmas*. Sanborn has one platinum album, eight gold and six Grammys, having released two-dozen recordings – by the time you read this that number will be low. Over the years, Sanborn has hosted *After New Year's Eve*, a television special on ABC and the syndicated radio feature, *The Jazz Show with David Sanborn*. As you can see, David has done many great things and continues performing. What impressed me was his gratitude to the fans, which he acknowledged while performing – never forgetting that without his supporters, he wouldn't be what he is today. This may never have been except for his contracting polio at the age of three. That was how he came to play the saxophone, as a way to overcome that illness. I don't think he was one of those despondent children who wanted nothing to do with music lessons, but you never know. No one wishes any disease on anyone else, but all of us are certainly grateful that he took up the sax and mastered it.

You can read more about David on the Internet and at his web site,
<http://www.davidsanborn.com/bio.html>.

6. Where have all the flowers gone?

Where have all the flowers gone?
Long time passing
Where have all the flowers gone?
Long time ago
Where have all the flowers gone?
Girls have picked them every one
When will they ever learn?
When will they ever learn?

Initially, my first love of music was on the symphony of notes side rather than from the lyrics. Over time, this changed. That may have had something to do with so much instrumental music that I heard as well as some of the rock and roll, of which it may have been difficult to understand the words.

The title of this chapter is the name of a song that was written by Pete Seeger in 1955. He has performed it many times and also has been sung by Peter, Paul and Mary, The Kingston Trio and dozens of others. Released in Polish, Chinese, Hebrew and at least twenty other languages, it's primarily a folk song, but also a pop tune as well as a song of social commentary, an offering of a type of music that arrived on the scene even before 1955. Some referred to it as political music.

Woodrow Wilson *Woody* Guthrie was born in 1912 and had firsthand experience of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl. He wrote and sang traditional and children's songs, as well as folk and blues tunes about the hard times. His most noted song was *This Land Is Your Land*, which numerous singers covered in various kinds of music. Woody was a huge influence on those musical artists who followed him, including his son, Arlo. Sadly, Woody died at the age of 55 of Huntington's disease in 1967.

Arlo Guthrie

Arlo Davy Guthrie is most famous for his song, *Alice's Restaurant Massacre*, from his 1967 LP, *Alice's Restaurant*. Even though it is a monologue, you can hear a guitar in the background so it has to be classified as music – of the absurd. That hilarious

song, and two others, *The Motorcycle Song*, which you may know as *I Don't Want A Pickle*, and *The Pause of Mr. Claus* are all in the same vein of rebellion against the establishment, maybe because it's a bit out-of-whack. Like his dad, he's a storyteller. He deals with current affairs and his efforts are for the children and the oppressed. His sense of humor is amazing. For more on this great man, read Laura Lee's 2000 book, *Arlo, Alice And The Anglicans*. There's also a movie from 1969, *Alice's Restaurant*.

I first heard *The Pause of Mr. Claus* on a sampler, *The 1969 Warner Brothers Songbook*. The double album set featured folk, pop, rock and even some weirdness, as exemplified by the Mothers of Invention and The Fugs. There you can find music by Jethro Tull, Van Morrison, Everly Brothers, Beau Brummels, Kinks, Randy Newman, Joni Mitchell, The Jimi Hendrix Experience and Miriam Makeba. It was truly a mix of music types.

Phil Ochs was born in 1940 in El Paso, Texas and was described as a protest singer. He performed at student events, anti-war and civil rights rallies. Ochs was known for his brilliant political insight and his unforgettable voice, performing in New York at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall. He described himself as a social democrat and was greatly affected by the police riot at the 1968 Democratic Convention. This event and his deep involvement in the movement led to alcoholism and bipolar disorder. He died of suicide in 1976 at the young age of 35.

Born as Thomas Andrew Lehrer is mathematician, satirist, pianist and singer-songwriter who we know as Tom Lehrer. His parodies and humor came out in the songs he recorded in the 1950s and 1960s, such as; *The Old Dope Peddler* – free samples for the kids; *Be Prepared* – the Boy Scout new handbook; *Labachevsky* – the secret of success in mathematics is to plagiarize; *When You Are Old And Gray* – a treatise on getting old; *I Hold Your Hand In Mine* – a song of amputation. He also released a song called, *Poisoning Pigeons In The Park*, which needs no explanation. The New York Times praised him with these words, “Mr. Lehrer’s muse is not fettered by such inhibiting factors as taste,” and the New York Herald Tribune added, “More desperate than amusing.”

Buffalo born, Mark Russell – born as Mark Ruslander – reminds me a great deal of Lehrer, maybe because of his satire at

the piano. Doing PBS specials from the University of Buffalo for years, he retired in 2010, but that hasn't stopped him from composing political humor. When asked if he had any writers, he replied, "Oh, yes. I have 535 writers: 100 in the Senate and 435 in the House of Representatives." He lives in Washington, DC, maybe because he wants to get closer to the action.

Bob Dylan

Born Robert Allen Zimmerman, Bob Dylan is more than a folk singer and political activist. This songwriter, singer, author and poet has performed blues, country, jazz, gospel, rock and roll, rockabilly and folk music from the United States but also from England, Scotland and Ireland. This he has done for over five decades and has recorded over five-dozen albums, besides his numerous concert appearances. His early compositions, *The Times They Are A-changing* and *Blowin' in the Wind* described the social unrest of the day and were influential in the anti-war and civil rights movements. His 1965 song, *Like a Rolling Stone* may have led other artists to realize that a song wasn't limited to being only two or three minutes.

Dylan is best known for song writing, but he has also published three books of drawings and paintings, which have been exhibited in major art galleries. His awards have included a Grammy, Academy Award and Golden Globe. He has been inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Songwriters Hall of Fame, the Nashville Hall of Fame and the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame. President Barack Obama presented him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2012. Two Dylan movies are the 2007 flick, *I'm Not There* and *Don't Look Back*, from 1967.

Joe Hill

Born in 1879 in Gävle, Sweden as Joel Emmanuel Hägglund, coming to America he changed his name, finally becoming Joe Hill. He was another songwriter, activist and a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW); they were also called the Wobblies. He worked in towns across the country from New York to San Francisco in the early 1900s as an

immigrant worker and sang about the union, the brutal working conditions and the need to organize in order to make things better for the men and women who labored for the factory owners. He was executed after being convicted for murder, of which he wasn't the perpetrator.

John G. Morrison owned a grocery store in Salt Lake City. One night he and his seventeen-year old son Arling were closing up when two robbers came into the store and killed them both. Before dieing, one of the two victims shot and wounded one of the thieves – probably Magnus Olson. Most likely the other was Thomas Waite. That same evening, Hill was involved in a tousele with his friend Otto Appelquist over a woman, Hilda Erickson. Joe was shot and wounded by Appelquist and became a suspect in the double murder the same night. Olson was a career thief and murderer who used numerous aliases to confuse the apprehending authorities. He was also a liar of the highest degree. That's no surprise. Olson also drove the getaway car in the St. Valentine Day's Massacre in Lincoln Park, Chicago in 1929.

After numerous delays for attempts at new trials, Joe Hill was executed by a firing squad on November 19, 1915. He was 36 and didn't have a chance. A conspiracy of the judge, jurors and prosecuting attorney saw to that. They lied in court; witnesses for the prosecution provided contradictory testimony; no proof was found to convince anyone that he had committed the crime. Hill had an alibi, but he refused to reveal the names of Appelquist and Erickson on similar grounds that journalists refuse to betray their sources of information. He was right in not doing so since the court had to prove his guilt, which was never done. Hill kept silent and so did Hilda, who was around Hill every day. People question why the two never brought forth the truth, but any statement by Hill would probably have been denied and proclaimed as a lie anyway. Erickson may have kept silent because the court threatened her and her family. The attorneys for the defense did an outstanding job, but so much of their testimony was tossed out of court.

While awaiting the day of doom, Hill had one request of his followers. He asked them to have his body interred in Wyoming, a hundred miles from the jail. He hated Utah so much. Can you blame him? He stated, "Don't want to found dead in Utah."

Because Joe was a member of the IWW, the judge and the prosecutor set out for Hill and they got him. There is much more detail on all this in numerous writings, but what I've mentioned above can be found in the 2011 book, *The Man Who Never Died: The Life, Times, And Legacy Of Joe Hill, American Labor Icon* by William M. Adler. I warn you that it's an amazing story – CSI, step aside – written by a great investigative journalist, but no one will like the ending. It may upset you. Anyone reading it will think that a century later judicial matters haven't gotten any better. Unions are attacked today just as they were then. There's still hypocrisy in the authority of the church and its members. Truth isn't a concern for people and what one believes becomes fact. What is found in the Bible and Constitution is interpreted to fit the reader, even though the authors never intended it that way. Despite this, I recommend the Adler book, especially for the humor. After Hill's execution, the Wobblies were brought to trial and the judge sentenced one hundred defendants to twenty-year prison terms. One of those sentenced said, "Judge Landis is using poor English today. His sentences are too long."

Joe Hill was certainly an underrated musician, who wrote for the IWW paper as well as countless songs. He didn't write the music, but only the lyrics. Using popular songs of the times, he added his own biting words, speaking out against social injustice. People sang the songs with great gusto – having to learn only the lyrics since they already knew the notes. After being arrested, members of the union filled the jails with music, much to the annoyance of the jailers. Hill was aware that nothing could compare with song, injecting music into the blood of the singers. He was called the most influential writer of protest music in the twentieth century by musicologist Wayne Hampton. After his death, he was memorialized in several folk songs. The Adler book provides quite a few lyrics that Hill composed.

Tom Paxton

Poetry, books and songs have been written about the life of Joe Hill, but he's not the only one who stood up for the worker. Another individual who did the same is Tom Paxton, my kind of activist, folk singer. He has been performing for over fifty years.

You can decide if he can be classified as political from these song titles: *Bobbitt*, *Without DeLay*, *I'm Changing My Name To Chrysler*, *The Ballad of Spiro Agnew*, *I'm Changing My Name To Fannie Mae*, *Little Bitty Gun* – lampooning Nancy Reagan – and *Lyndon Johnson Told The Nation* which later became *George W. Told The Nation* in 2007. Two years later, Paxton was the recipient of a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Some of the more familiar songs of his are *The Last Thing On My Mind*, *The Marvelous Toy* and *Ramblin' Boy*. Besides the United States, he has performed in Canada, Holland, Australia, Belgium, Italy, Japan, New Zealand and France, with his songs being translated into numerous languages. He has penned songs about labor rights, civil rights, racial injustice, the Holocaust, Bosnian Moslems and the firefighters in New York City on September 11, 2001.

The Smothers Brothers

The Smothers Brothers have been performing since the late 1950s as musicians, folk heroes and comedians. Their music is enchanting – even if interrupted by Tom's planned banter – and filled with political commentary, especially against Nixon and the Vietnam War. In the 1960s, they appeared on a few television variety shows, before they landed their very own weekly program, *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* on CBS in 1967. This show allowed their music and social commentary to reach a larger audience and enabled them to introduce talent to America such as Glen Campbell, Mason Williams and Pat Paulsen. Though I don't recall Pat singing or dancing, his commentaries were music to listeners' ears. I was fortunate to see Paulsen at a comedy club in downstate New York a few years ago.

Sadly, because of the Smothers Brothers strong views – especially Tommy – the network canned the show in 1969, but it still won a best writing Emmy that year. Though on the air for only a short time, what they accomplished had a great effect on television in the years that followed – not always for the good. The 2002 documentary, *Smothered*, captures the scene at CBS with the Smothers Brothers in 1969. You can also read about the adventures

in David Bianculli's 2009 book, *Dangerously Funny: The Uncensored Story Of The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*.

Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young

It didn't take long after the massacre of four students and the wounding of nine others at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio on May 4, 1970 before Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young commented about it in the song, *Ohio*. What triggered the murder may have been the protests against the American invasion of Cambodia. The action only infuriated the nation and more people subsequently opposed the Vietnam War.

Even before that tragic event, Crosby, Still, Nash and Young, whose music could be described as folk rock, expressed their political feelings. They went along with the counterculture and wrote *Chicago* about the Chicago 7: Abbie Hoffman, Jerry Rubin, David Dellinger, Tom Hayden, Rennie Davis, John Froines and Lee Weiner. Along with Bobby Seale, they were charged with conspiracy and inciting to riot along with other charges resulting from the 1968 Democratic Convention. The quartet stood against the war in Vietnam and police brutality and today Neil Young continues as the most outspoken member against social injustice and war.

Besides the already mentioned political folk artists, Harry Belafonte and Joan Baez should be added, but the list goes on. Folk music has been defined as that transmitted by mouth – of the lower classes, too – and even that of unknown composers. This means that country and western fits right into that category, despite the addition of soap opera. Folk music and world music are closely related and each comes from the people, no matter what nation and language they communicate in. This is the people speaking. It may be in celebration, a cry for help or a plea for social justice and against corporations or governments.

Political commentary need not be bracketed by folk music or folk rock. The music of Blood, Sweat and Tears may have been jazz-rock fusion, but they didn't stay away from controversial topics. From their 1975 release, *New City*, you can find the song, *I Was a Witness to a War*, with the following words:

I saw a woman dressed in black
Her husband isn't coming back, she didn't want him to go
They said he had to do his chores before
Their future could grow
And I, I began to cry
Someone asked why
Someone asked what for
'Cause something inside of me, something inside of me
Something inside of me said I was a witness to a war
I was a witness to the heartbreak
That some soldier's woman bore
I was a witness to a war, to a war

A bit before this release, from the LP, *Chicago Transit Authority*, on the song, *Prologue, August 29, 1968*, you could hear the people at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago chanting, *The whole world is watching*. They weren't referring to a viewing of *American Idol*. On Chicago's second album, here are words from *It Better End Soon*:

Hey, everybody. Won't you just look around. Can't anybody see?
Just what's going down. Can't you take the time? Just to feel. Just
to feel what is real. If you do, then you'll see that we got a raw
deal. They're killing everybody. I wish it weren't true. They say
we got to make war. Or the economy will fall. But if we don't stop,
we won't be around no more. They're ruining this world. For you
and me. The big heads of state won't let us be free. They made the
rules once. But it didn't work out. Now we must try again. Before
they kill us off. No more dying! No more killing. No more dying.
No more fighting. We don't want to die.

This was in reference to the Vietnam War, but could just as well applied to Iraq and Afghanistan in the twenty-first century or any other war that preceded it – and there were a few.

Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2008, singer-songwriter, sometimes actor and painter, John Mellencamp has been nominated for thirteen Grammy Awards – winning one – and has twenty-two top 40 hits. Selling over forty million albums, he has embraced folk music and various types of rock, including

roots rock, hard rock and heartland rock. Influenced by Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones and James Brown, John sings of and for the people. He is also one of the founding members of Farm Aid, which raises funds to help the small farmer.

Born in Dublin on May 10, 1960, Paul David Hewson – better known as Bono, lead singer of the rock group U2 – is a singer, venture capitalist and humanitarian. He writes the lyrics that deal with social, religious and political issues. He has organized and performed in numerous concerts to help the less fortunate, having co-founded: Product Red, a concept to convince the private sector to contribute funds and awareness for AIDS elimination in Africa; EDUN, started in 2005 to grow business in Africa; the One Campaign, a worldwide non-profit to extract government funding for international trade programs; Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa. In 2005, he was Time Magazine's Person of the Year. Bono was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and given an honorary knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II, among other awards.

Gil Scott-Heron, besides being a musician of jazz, soul, blues and rap, was also a poet and author. His memoir, *The Last Holiday*, wasn't published until a year after his death. He considered himself a scientist who dug into the birth of the blues – a bluesologist. His work of music in the 1970s was a forerunner of neo soul and hip hop. He was known as the Godfather of rap. Never earning an undergraduate degree, he managed a master's degree from John Hopkins in creative writing in 1972. Some of his influences were Otis Redding, John Coltrane, Nina Simone, Huey Newton, Malcolm X, Richie Havens, Billie Holiday, Jose Feliciano and Langston Hughes. He stood against apartheid, nukes, wars and injustice. His most remembered composition was *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*.

Kay Kay and The Rays

I first heard Kay Kay and The Rays on a concert program on PBS, a few months ago. This may have been *Austin City Limits*. The band from Texas covers R&B, soul, jazz, funk and political music, including the cuts, *Lone Star Justice* and *Texas Justice – Billy's Story*, both found on the CD I have, *Texas Justice*. In each song, the word *justice* should probably be replaced by *injustice*. As

each points out, being guilty with a great deal of money will reward you with a get out of jail card, even if you're guilty. On the other hand, without funds, you'll be stuck behind bars – or worse – even if you had nothing to do with the crime. The opening song, *Lone Star Justice* makes it known that the great state of Texas has more people in prison than anywhere else in the world, Russia is second. Texas executed 172 people in a six-year period during the 1990s and spends more money building prisons than schools.

Texas Justice is the group's second CD, having been released in March 2002. It's on many blues radio playlists in Canada and the United States and has received rave reviews. One song not on that CD but that I have on another of my CDs is *Stop The Killing*. It's not much different from the plea above by Chicago from their song, *It Better End Soon*. Lead singer Kay Kay Greenwade has a Gospel background which comes when she sings in that song, *My God is God of justice*.

Keb' Mo – his real name is Kevin Moore – has been a blues man for a few years, but only recently has he become known to more listeners. He was a part of the Vote for Change Tour in 2004 and is a member of the No Nukes Group, which is against both nuclear weapons and nuclear power. He sings about social justice and about action rather than words. In his rocking song, *Stand Up (And Be Strong)* from his 2000 CD, *The Door*, he encourages us: *We don't weep, we don't moan, we got a mind of our own. Oh that's right, we can't go wrong if we stand up and be strong*. A verse or two before he asks us to get off our . . . you know the rest.

7. The Load-out

Now the seats are all empty
Let the roadies take the stage
Pack it up and tear it down
They're the first to come and last to leave
Working for that minimum wage
They'll set it up in another town
Tonight the people were so fine
They waited there in line
And when they got up on their feet they made the show
And that was sweet
But I can hear the sound
Of slamming doors and folding chairs
And that's a sound they'll never know
Now roll them cases out and lift them amps
Haul them trusses down and get 'em up them ramps
'Cause when it comes to moving me
You guys are the champs
But when that last guitar's been packed away
You know that I still want to play
So just make sure you got it all set to go
Before you come for my piano
But the band's on the bus
And they're waiting to go
We've got to drive all night and do a show in Chicago

As I pointed out, I may have sung in various choruses, but I never did it solo, played an instrument or was on the road; I thus avoided the grueling concert scene and boredom of endless motels. However, I did spend time as a computer software consultant for over twenty years, which involved driving many thousands of miles and numerous overnight stays in places other than my home. My first computer software contract was at Bankers' Trust, located at the southern tip of Manhattan – about fifty miles from my house in Somers, New York. To accomplish this journey, I drove, took the train and subway and walked a bit – a two-hour trip each way. Another contract at Sea World in Orlando was ninety miles from where I lived, but I could get there in an hour and a half. In that

Florida gig, we were there for ten hours each day or a total of thirteen hours for work and commuting – a really long day. Fortunately, the contract was only for two months. A few contracts in the Boston area meant an hour drive going to work and the same amount returning home. My last ten years of consulting quite frequently took me from East Aurora, a town south of Buffalo, to Rochester, New York. This included all my assignments there the last five years before I retired. For those contracts, it was from a seventy to eighty mile drive, depending on what part of Rochester the work was in – about an hour and a half each way.

On many occasions I stayed overnight in motels or at different friends' homes, but those undesirable trips were nothing in comparison to what artists experienced: writers on their book tours; musicians touring; actors and actresses promoting their movies. That topic being the *brunt* of this chapter – it's funny, but switching just two letters in that word and adding *out* to it gives *burnt-out* – I originally thought of the title of the 1970 song by Brewer and Shipley, *One Toke Over The Line*. The significance should be clear; if not, it will be shortly. There'll be more about that song later. Changing my mind, I felt that Bob Seger's *Turn The Page* from the early 1970s would fit as it described doing a concert in Chicago, breaking down the stage, loading the vans with equipment and driving to the gig in Detroit for the next performance. It may have even gotten worse with the arrival at the new destination only a few hours before the concert. Instead I settled on Jackson Browne's music.

The life of a musician – or any artist for that matter – is a grueling one with the travel, concerts and lodging. Even if the group stays at a swank hotel, one motel is the same as any other. It's nothing more than a place to sleep. The cost of damage to the place by a rowdy band is not included in the cost of the room. Taking a ship to reach the destination of the performance probably isn't very practical. Traveling by car, bus or train is no picnic, but musicians in the past didn't experience the jet lag that comes with flying. Doing concerts overseas can't be accomplished without the airlines until they build the bridge to Europe.

As bad as that was, it became worse due to discrimination. If you had a gig in the city but were forced to travel to the outskirts for food and lodging, you'd appear at rehearsal and then wonder if

there was enough time to find a restaurant that would serve you. It wasn't easy. The Duke Ellington Orchestra traveled to Europe and was well received there with only one case of racism. In the American South, they were treated like dirt. Duke solved that problem by hiring two private Pullman cars for the band, providing dining and sleeping accommodations – a restaurant / hotel on wheels.

Sadly, many musical greats have lost their lives during travel. I've already mentioned the plane crash that took the lives of Bill Chase and part of his band. On the day in September 1973 that Jim Croce's song, *I Got A Name* was released, Croce died in a plane crash with four others flying from Natchitoches, Louisiana to Sherman, Texas. He had just done a performance at Northwestern State University and was headed to Austin College for another. Croce was another singer-songwriter who covered folk, rock and pop and had hits like *Time in a Bottle*, *Operator (That's not the Way it Feels)*, *You Don't Mess around with Jim* and *Bad, Bad Leroy Brown*. Jim played guitar and at the age of five played *Lady of Spain* on the accordion. He didn't become famous until after his death.

Years before that, in February 1959, Ritchie Valens, along with The Big Bopper, Buddy Holly and pilot Roger Peterson perished in a plane crash in Iowa – *The Day that Music Died*. Don McLean's 1971 offering, *American Pie*, recounts that tragic event, reaching number one on the charts for a few weeks. That was the American folk and rock singer's signature song. The Big Bopper, Jiles Perry Richardson, Jr., was known for the 1958 song, *Chantilly Lace*, which reached number six on the charts. He played on the Beaumont (Texas) High School football team as a defensive lineman, was a singer-songwriter, disc jockey at KTRM in Beaumont and studied pre-law at Lamar College. He was 28 at the time of the crash.

Ritchie Valens was a Mexican-American guitarist and singer-songwriter, born as Richard Steven Valenzuela. His forte was rock and roll, pop and Chicano rock, most well-known for his songs, *Donna* and *La Bamba*. The latter was a Mexican folk song which Valens turned into a top forty hit and eventually a motion picture of the same name in 1987 starring Lou Diamond Philips as

Ritchie. Brian Setzer played Eddie Cochran. At the time of Valens death, he was 17.

Buddy Holley, born Charles Hardin Holley in Lubbock, Texas, was a singer-songwriter and a pioneer of rock and roll. He died at the age of 22. Greatly influenced by his music include such musicians as the Beatles, Steve Winwood, Bob Dylan, the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton and Elvis Costello. A few of the hits we remember Holley by include *That'll be the Day*, *Peggy Sue*, *Everyday*, *True Love Ways*, *It Doesn't Matter anymore*, *Maybe Baby*, *Oh Boy!* and *Rave on*. Holley was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986 – one of the first so enshrined – and ranked by Rolling Stone Magazine number thirteen among the one hundred greatest artists of all time.

During the 1970s, the musical group Lynyrd Skynyrd combined country and hard rock in their repertoire. On October 17, 1977 they released their LP, *Street Survivors*. Three days later, a plane carrying them from Greenville, South Carolina to Louisiana State University for a concert in Baton Rouge ran out of fuel and crashed, killing three band members and three others. Serious injuries were inflicted on others on the flight. Eventually the group was reformed as the Rossington-Collins Band. Known for their hits, *Free Bird* and *Sweet Home Alabama*, Lynyrd Skynyrd was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in March 2006. Today, a version of the band still records and tours.

I was fortunate to see Gerry Niewood perform in Rochester with Chuck Mangione, and also at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery with his own band. Niewood played at Simon and Garfunkel's Concert in Central Park in 1981. I own his 1985 *Share My Dream* CD and especially loved hearing him play the soprano sax. Tragically, on February 12, 2009, he perished in a plane crash about ten miles from where I live. He was traveling with jazz guitarist Coleman Mellett on his way to a performance with Chuck Mangione and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra the next night.

They say it's safer to fly than ride in your car, but if you're driving the automobile, you're in control. In April 1960, during his British tour, Eddie Cochran, born Ray Edward Cochran, was only 21 when he died from a road accident in Chippenham, Wiltshire, while in a taxi. He played bass, drums and piano besides the guitar, which he taught himself, and received iconic status with his death.

His music was rockabilly and rock and roll – he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1987. Those who performed his songs include the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Blue Cheer, Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, The Who, the Beach Boys, UFO, Stray Cats and the Sex Pistols. You may know him from his releases, *C'mon Everybody* and *Summertime Blues*.

Billy Stewart may be best known for his version of the George Gershwin song, *Summertime*, which was a top ten hit on both the pop and R&B charts. Having heard his rendition of it, you'll never forget it even though you may not know who the singer was. Now you know. He began singing at twelve with his younger brothers, who later went on to have their own radio show on WUST in the nation's capital. Stewart sang pop, scat, secular music, soul and rock and roll. Two of his beautiful ballads that hit the top forty were *I Do Love You* and *Sitting in the Park*. Stewart suffered minor injuries in a motorcycle accident in 1969 and perished in an automobile accident the next year. He was 32.

In Macon, Georgia on October 29, 1972, Duane Allman of the Allman Brothers was also killed as a result of a motorcycle accident. This was just months after his appearance at Fillmore East and the release of *At Fillmore East*. He was 24. Two weeks later, vocalist and bass player from the same band, Barry Oakley, not far from the scene of Duane Allman's accident, was involved in a motorcycle crash. He declined going to the hospital, claiming to be all right. He was rushed to the hospital a few hours later, where he died from a fractured skull. Like Duane, he was 24.

On April 30, 1966, two days after the publication of his novel, Richard Farina left his wife Mimi's twenty-first birthday party and hitched a ride on a guest's motorcycle. On a sharp turn, the driver lost control but somehow survived. The twenty-nine year old Farina was killed instantly. Police surmised that the motorcycle had been going ninety miles an hour.

Airline tragedies have taken the lives of many people in the music world. Both Bill Graham and Stevie Ray Vaughn died in helicopter accidents. Born Wolodia Grajonco in Berlin, Germany, Graham promoted many musical groups, including Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother and the Holding Company, Country Joe and The Fish, the Fugs and the Grateful Dead. He operated Winterland and the Fillmore West – both in San Francisco – and the Fillmore

East. Becoming the top promoter in rock music, he also owned a record label and signed Elvin Bishop and Rod Stewart. He died on October 25, 1991 near Vallejo, California. Vaughn was a guitarist, singer-songwriter and record producer. A founding member and leader of Double Trouble, he started playing guitar at age seven. He performed in 1982 at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, where he came to the attention of John H. Hammond, the Rolling Stones, Jackson Browne and David Bowie. After a concert with Eric Clapton, Robert Cray, Buddy Guy and Jimmie Vaughn in East Troy, Wisconsin, Stevie Ray Vaughn perished in a helicopter crash on August 27, 1990, after just taking off. He was 35.

Musician, arranger, composer and swing era bandleader Glenn Miller departed England for Paris on December 15, 1944. He was to perform for the troops there. That was the last time Miller was seen and no trace of the plane, passengers or crew were ever found. Seven members of Reba McEntire's band perished on a flight in March 1991 and Rick Nelson and five members of his Stone Canyon Band died in a crash on December 31, 1985 just northeast of Dallas. There were others who suffered the same fate, including country singers Patsy Cline in March 1963 at 30, Jim Reeves in July 1964 at 40 and John Denver in October 1997 at 53. Singer, songwriter, arranger, talent scout and record producer Otis Ray Redding was even younger than these three at 26 when he died in a crash on his way to the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Pilot Richard Fraser and five other members of the Bar-Kays also perished: drummer Matthew Kelly; lead guitarist Jimmy King, tenor saxophonist Phalon Jones, organist Ronnie Caldwell and drummer Carl Cunningham.

Country, folk and rockabilly artist Johnny Horton, and country singer and songwriter Dottie West perished in car accidents: he in Milano, Texas in November 1960 at 35 and she while being operated on after crash in August 1991. At the time she was her way to the Grand Ole Opry. She died on September 4 at the age of 58. Bassist for the Marshall Tucker Band, Tommy Caldwell, suffered injuries and died from the crash of a Jeep in April 1980. He was just 30. The 1980 album, *Full Moon*, of the Charlie Daniels Band is dedicated to him.

Jazz saxophonist Bob Berg recorded over a dozen albums and played with Miles Davis, Horace Silver, Dizzy Gillespie and Chick Corea on other releases. I have Gary Burton's 1991 CD, *Cool Nights*, and he performs on it. He died in December 2002 at the age of 51 while driving to the grocery store. Composer, acoustic guitarist and singer-songwriter Michael Hedges also died in an automobile accident. His death occurred in Medocino County, California in December 1997 at the age of 43. After his death, he won the 1998 Grammy for Best New Age Album with his record, *Oracle*. Popular in the 1950s and 1960s, vocalist, pianist and organist Earl Grant released over two-dozen albums. He was another victim of a car crash in June 1970 in Lordsburg, New Mexico at the age of 39.

Clifford Brown

There are quite a few musical families, such as The Jacksons and the Cowsills. The Brown family of Wilmington, Delaware, was one clan that may have surpassed both. Joseph, the father, played trumpet, violin and piano – those weren't the only instruments around the house. I'm not sure about the talents of his wife, Estella, but she had a sister who was a concert singer. Uncle Arthur led a jazz band in New York. Of the three daughters, I don't know much about Rella, but Marie was a church soloist and Geneva was an outstanding singer, who received a B. A. in music at Howard University and had an opera career. All three were outstanding students. The oldest son, Harold, had left home and Joe was trying to form a vocal quartet of Leon, Eugene, Clifford and Ellsworth. The latter sang off-key on purpose and Eugene and Leon may have performed duets because Clifford's voice was so bad that the birds abandoned the neighborhood when he commenced singing.

Earlier I mentioned four soaring trumpeters, but they aren't the only ones. Jon Faddis, Freddie Hubbard, Chet Baker, Terence Blanchard, Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Herb Alpert, Al Hirt, Fats Navarro, Roy Hargrove and Randy Brecker also come to mind. There are many others and we should probably also consider Clifford Brown, who took up the trumpet, but could also play vibraphone, piano, string bass and drums. He and his

brothers did well in school but the daughters surpassed their scholastic efforts. Clifford started reading even before he entered school.

The Brown children attended and graduated from Howard High in Wilmington. Clifford, also known as *Little Comache* and *Brownie*, thrived there and was a member of various bands. Upon graduation, he enrolled at Delaware State College, and majored in mathematics. He loved math and excelled in it and mastered chess. Playing trumpet in local groups as well as at college, he decided to switch to Maryland State University and major in music. On June 6, 1950, while traveling with three others, the driver hit a deer and along with his girlfriend was killed. Brownie and the other passenger were critically injured. Clifford suffered greatly, and was in a body cast for a year. His determination to get back to his trumpet playing kept him alive, but when he tried playing, he was in a great deal of pain. He switched to the piano and that was better, but still not pain-free. For the rest of his life, his arms continued to be dislocated. Still, he persevered and with time, becoming an outstanding trumpeter.

The Brown family set a fine example for living and Clifford followed. He practiced and then practiced some more – dedicated to be a success. He was humble, a great musician, friendly to everyone. Clifford was all kindness, warmth and simplicity. His wife LaRue thought he was the most beautiful person she had ever met. Sax player Vance Wilson truly admired Brown, stating, “You could always count on what he said because he was an honest guy. He had no bad habits. I never heard him curse. He was the perfect human being.”

Despite this great praise, Brown wasn't a saint and cared not to be treated as one. After all, he shot pool and ventured to the track when time allowed. Brownie lit up a cigarette and had a drink once in a while. He also had to have donuts around, stopping to buy dozens and dozens of them. He didn't eat them and they got stale, but he wanted donuts all the time.

The bands he performed in traveled across the country and had an extensive tour in Europe, where the group was a smashing success. Brown played with all the greats: Max Roach, Lionel Hampton and Art Blakey. Charlie Parker heard him play and said to him afterwards, “I don't believe it. I hear what you're saying,

but I don't believe it." Miles Davis heard him rehearsing and said to Brown, jokingly, "Clifford, I hope you break your chops." Brownie was the real deal. Witnessing the bad habits of Charlie Parker, Brown avoided heroin and alcohol. He set a fine example for others. When the Roach-Brown combo needed a sax guy, they brought on board Sonny Rollins, who had been having some drug problems. Being in the company of Brownie, Rollins cleaned up his act.

On December 28, 1955, LaRue and Brownie became the proud parents of Clifford Brown, Jr. Brown traveled a great deal but spent as much time as he could with his wife and son. In June 1956, LaRue and the baby traveled to the West Coast to see LaRue's mother while Brownie remained on the other coast. He visited his family in Wilmington, fished a bit and caught some supper, which his sister Geneva produced: fried fish, black-eyed peas and cornbread. He didn't stay long there, as he had another gig in Chicago. He offered, "Boy, I sure wish I didn't have to go. I'm not in the mood to go." Tuesday, June 26, 1956, was jam session night at Music City. He headed over there and afterwards left from Philadelphia with pianist Richie Powell and Richie's wife Nancy. So that the other two could sleep, Nancy drove. On the Pennsylvania Turnpike in the rain, she lost control of the car in Bedford and all three perished. That day was LaRue's twenty-second birthday and their second wedding anniversary. Brown was 25.

Clifford was a student of jazz, bebop and hard bop. Being so young, he made a few recordings and now they've been released on CD. He was a big influence on Freddie Hubbard, Woody Shaw, Wynton Marsalis, Lee Morgan and Donald Byrd. His two compositions, *Daahoud* and *Joy Spring* have become standards. In 1954 he was *New Star of the Year* in the Down Beat poll and was inducted into their Jazz Hall of Fame in 1972. There's more on his life in the 2000 book, *Clifford Brown: The Life And Art Of The Legendary Jazz Trumpeter* by Nick Catalano.

Bessie Smith

Some referred to actress, jazz and blues singer Bessie Smith as the Empress of the Blues, probably because her first

record sold three quarter of a million copies. As a passenger in a car going from Memphis, Tennessee to Clarksdale, Mississippi, she was rushed to the hospital, but they turned her away because of the color of her skin. Then driven to a G. T. Thomas Afro-American Hospital, she lost an arm to amputation and died later that morning at the age of 43, never regaining consciousness.

Regarded as one of the greatest singers of her time, her influence on those who followed was colossal. In her time, they were more women blues singers than men. She lived in Philadelphia in the early 1920s and headed her own shows, sometimes with a cast of as many as forty performers. For touring, she had her own railroad car and in her day, no black entertainer earned more than she did.

With Columbia records, she made 160 recordings with Coleman Hawkins, Fletcher Henderson and Louis Armstrong. With that same record company, she had two blues Grammys, *Downhearted Blues* and *Empty Bed Blues* as well as a jazz Grammy for *St. Louis Blues*. The Great Depression, which devastated the record industry, affected her success, but she didn't stop performing and touring. She was in one film in 1929, *St. Louis Blues*, and managed one Broadway musical, *Pansy*, which was a big failure. Critics said she was the only part of it worth seeing.

She was inducted into four Halls of Fame: the Nesuhi Ertegun Jazz in 2008; Rock and Roll in 1989; Big Band and Jazz in 1981; Blues in 1980. The same year she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame she was given a Lifetime Grammy.

Some musicians died of old age. Others perished for other reasons besides accidents by plane or motor vehicle. I'll get into these deaths in a later chapter.

Jackson Browne

The words at the top of the chapter are thanks to Jackson Browne. His medley of *The Load-out / Stay*, from the late 1970 album, *Running On Empty* are fitting here. The verse is from the first of those songs and it's a thank you to the fans for support as well as a description put forth in Seger's *Turn The Page*.

Jackson Browne is a singer-songwriter activist who was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2004. He has sold over seventeen million albums in the United States and became well known in the 1970s with songs such as *Running On Empty*, *These Days*, *Doctor My Eyes* and *Somebody's Baby*. In early 1966, he joined the Nitty Ditty Dirt Band and over time that band recorded a few of Browne's songs, including *These Days*, *Shadow Dream Song* and *Holding*. So did a few other artists. Besides his work in music, he is also an activist, being anti-nuclear, performing concerts at the Barnwell, South Carolina nuclear processing plant in 1978 and at the Seabrook Station nuclear power plant in New Hampshire that same year. He joined with other musicians to form the anti-nuclear group Musicians United for Safe Energy. He also performed at benefit concerts for various causes such as Farm-Aid and Amnesty International. He is a co-founding member of the Plastic Pollution Coalition.

I close the chapter with a passage from the book, *John Coltrane: Jazz Revolutionary* by Rachel Stiffler Barron. At the time Coltrane was having headaches and taking handfuls of aspirin.

He told one of his friends, Babatunde Olatunji, or *Tunji* for short, that he was growing weary of constant touring. "I'm used to the critics complaining about me, and sooner or later they should understand my music," John told Tunji. "If they don't, there's nothing I can do about it. But what's really bothering me is the way I have to move around, New York today, Detroit tomorrow, San Francisco the day after that. It seems to me that I've been using up so much energy traveling from place to place that I can hardly find the time for writing any new music or even thinking about what I'm going to do next."

8. One token over the line

One token over the line sweet Jesus
One token over the line
Sittin' downtown in a railway station
One token over the line

Awaitin' for the train that goes home, sweet Mary
Hopin' that the train is on time
Sittin' downtown in a railway station
One token over the line

Brewer and Shipley

Folk rock music duo and songwriters Tom Shipley and Michael Brewer didn't appear on the *Lawrence Welk Show*, but their song *One Token over the Line* made the scene in 1971, sung by Gail Farrell and Dick Dale. As defined in dictionary.com, a token is *a tip or gratuity given by a gambler to a dealer or other employee at a casino*. I don't think that's exactly what Brewer and Shipley had in mind – more like *Ah-one token, and Ah-two*. When they were done, Welk said, "There you've heard a modern spiritual by Gail and Dale." This caused Michael Brewer to comment, "Vice President Spiro Agnew, named us personally as subversive to American youth, while Lawrence Welk introduced it as a gospel song. That shows how absurd it really is. Of course, we got more publicity than we could have paid for." The song was from their 1970 album, *Tarkio Road* and it became a top ten hit in 1971, thanks to *Toking* with Lawrence Welk.

Brewer and Shipley were artists who got involved politically, singing about social justice, the Vietnam War and political freedom. Besides the song above, they also had hits on the LPs *Tarkio Road* and *Shake off the Demon*. I'll spend more time on speaking out in the next chapter.

Miles Davis

Miles Dewey Davis III was born on May 26, 1926 in Alton, Illinois. A year after that, a terrible tornado hit St. Louis, Missouri, which might explain why Miles developed the way he did. His mother was a fine blues pianist and wanted her son to play the piano, which he did, but his father, who was a dentist, gave him a trumpet when he was thirteen. Davis thought that this was done to irritate his mother. She should be thankful she didn't hear him play when he got older. At sixteen, Miles played professionally when not at school, graduating from East St. Louis Lincoln High School in 1944.

Davis played piano, trumpet and flugelhorn and was a composer and bandleader. His music encompassed jazz, fusion, jazz rap, bebop, hard bop, third stream, jazz-funk, cool jazz and rock. His influence was compared to that of John Coltrane, whom I'll discuss later. The musicians in his bands must have numbered in the hundreds. He took something away from their presence, but those artists became who they were by being introduced to Miles. Though a bit technical at times, I recommend *We Want Miles: Mile Davis*, the 2010 book of Vincent Bessières.

Davis was temperamental, spiritual and like no other artist. In August 1959, his album, *Kind of Blue* was released, featuring Paul Chambers, Julian Cannonball Adderly, Jimmy Cobb, Coltrane and pianist Bill Evans – not to be confused with William D. Bill Evans who played the saxophone but not at age one. Though precise figures have been disputed, *Kind of Blue* has been described not only as his best-selling album, but also as the best-selling jazz record of all time, being certified quadruple platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America. Probably Miles' masterpiece, in 2003, it was ranked twelfth on Rolling Stone magazine's list of the five hundred greatest albums of all time.

Counting studio, live and compilations, Miles recorded over a hundred albums. He also released fifty-seven singles, seventeen box sets and three soundtracks. He was inducted into the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the St. Louis Walk of Fame and Hollywood's Rockwalk. Among his numerous awards, he was the recipient of nine Grammys and was

Down Beat's Best Trumpet Player in 1961, 1957 and 1955. He appeared in the television series *Miami Vice* as well as six movies. He died in September 1991 at age 65 in Santa Monica, California.

Sammy Davis, Jr.

In an earlier chapter, I discussed the hazards of traveling from one gig to the next. There were other equally important concerns: racism, anti-Semitism, fame, unhealthy living and drugs. *Sammy: An Autobiography* covers all of those five mentioned pitfalls. Written by the great musician Sammy Davis, Jr. with the help of friends, Jane and Burt Boyar, it covers his rise to the top and all the demons and prejudice that entered his life.

Davis could act, sing, dance, do great impressions and entertain. He began dancing at the age of three as part of the Will Mastin Trio with his father, Sammy Davis and his Uncle Will Mastin. He was in his first film in 1933, *Rufus Jones for President*, a musical comedy with satire, which also starred Ethel Waters. That same year he was also in *Seasoned Greetings* – use your imagination or get the video. He acted in over three-dozen flicks, including *Ocean's 11*, *Porgy and Bess*, *The Three Penny Opera*, *Sweet Charity*, *Diamonds Are Forever*, *Tap*, *Broadway Danny Rose* and two *Cannonball Run* movies. He starred on Broadway in 1956 in *Mr. Wonderful*, in *Golden Boy* in 1964 and had his own TV show in the mid 1960s.

Davis was a member of the *Rat Pack* and could be seen on over a dozen television shows from the early 1960s to the late 1980s. He recorded forty-nine albums on six different record labels, with a top ten hit, *The Candy Man* in 1972. Sammy had ten top forty singles and thirteen songs made the top forty adult contemporary chart. He did well in the United Kingdom with one top ten hit.

Davis had a great career in Las Vegas, which resulted in him being called *Mister Show Business*. He was a winner of a Special Citation Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in 1974. He won the NAACP Spingarn Medal in 1968 and was a winner of the NAACP Image Award in 1989. He had Emmy and Golden Globe nominations for television, winning in each case. He had numerous honors including a Lifetime

Grammy Achievement Award in 2001. He was inducted into the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame in 2008 and the Las Vegas Walk of Stars in 2006. In 1987 he was the recipient of the Kennedy Center Honors. He died in May 1990 at the age of 64.

Musicians don't have it easy. Discrimination might limit your opportunities because of your sex or the color of your skin. If you were an African-American woman, things would get even more challenging. Racism meant you'd have trouble finding a place to eat and stay for the night. Travel was bad enough without making it more of a challenge. Boredom on the road meant you needed something to do, so many artists turned to alcohol and drugs – coke, heroin, LSD, prescription and over the counter stuff, too. Opening your wallet for this high meant you had to keep working longer and retirement was even further away.

If you were struggling to make it, it was tough, but becoming successful wasn't without problems either. If you had the bucks, you could spend it on drugs and sex. This is what fame and fortune can do to you, leading to all the pitfalls of materialism and immoral habits, maybe even divorce and health problems – spiritual, mental and physical.

Chet Baker

Chesney Henry *Chet* Baker played trumpet, flugelhorn and also sang and composed. His voice was laid back mellow, comparable to Lou Rawls. His early career has been described by jazz historian David Gelly as a combination of Frank Sinatra, Bix Beiderbecke and James Dean. Baker started out singing in a church choir, tried the trombone and then settled on the trumpet. He played in an Army band in San Francisco and in jazz clubs there. He performed with Charlie Parker for a few West Coast gigs and with Stan Getz, joining the quartet of Gerry Mulligan in 1952. The latter's version of *My Funny Valentine*, featuring a fine solo by Baker and with which Chet became associated, was a major hit.

After Mulligan's arrest for using drugs, Baker performed with other quartets and formed his own combos. In 1954 Chet won the Down Beat Jazz Poll. He acted in the 1955 movie, *Hell's Horizon* – perhaps a harbinger of his future – and continued being

a road musician, turning down studio work. His music represented cool jazz of the West Coast.

In the 1950s, Baker fell under the spell of heroin, an addiction that he couldn't break for the rest of his life. To buy more drugs, he pawned his instruments and in the early 1960s spent prison time in Italy. He was booted out of the United Kingdom and Germany for his habit. He was in jail in California for prescription fraud and was in and out of the slammer. For the last decade of his life he lived and performed mostly in Europe, returning every so often to the United States for a gig. He toured Japan in 1987.

In May 1988, Baker was found dead on the street outside his room of the Hotel Prins Hendrik in Amsterdam, Netherlands. His death at 58 was ruled an accident, but cocaine and heroin were found in his room and an autopsy revealed both drugs in his body. Near the hotel, a plaque in his memory can be found.

Baker was inducted into three Halls of Fame: Jazz and Big Band in 1987; Down Beat Jazz in 1989; Oklahoma Jazz in 1991. In 2007, Kathy Taylor, mayor of Tulsa declared December 23 as *Chet Baker Day*. He also received that same honor two years before that on July 2 from the Oklahoma House of Representatives and its Governor, Brad Henry. *Let's Get Lost*, the 1988 documentary about his life, won an Academy Award.

Elvis Presley

Elvis Aaron Presley was born in Tupelo, Mississippi just thirty-five minutes after his brother, Jesse Garon was delivered, stillborn. Elvis was of Irish, Scottish, Cherokee, German and French heritage. At times, the family needed food assistance from the government. At the age of ten, Elvis entered into a singing contest at the Mississippi-Alabama Fair and Dairy Show, placing fifth. The family moved to Memphis when the lad, described as a loner, was thirteen.

Half a dozen years later, Sam Phillips wanted to expose more listeners to African-American music, so he signed Elvis to Sun Records. *Heartbreak Hotel* was released in January 1956 and it hit the top of the charts. *Crazy Man, Crazy*, *Shake, Rattle and Roll* and *Rock around the Clock* by Bill Haley and the Comets may

have begun the rock and roll revolution, but Presley's efforts really kept it going.

Numerous books have been written about Elvis, but one came to my attention by one of his high school classmates, George Klein, who met him in eighth grade at Humes High School in Memphis and became one of his best friends. He even worked for him. Klein is a giant in the music business, even omitting his relationship to *The King*. He worked as a disc jockey for years in Memphis and greatly influenced the whole R&B and rock and roll scene, introducing songs he liked and future stars. Klein can be heard on the *George Klein Original Elvis Hour* on WKRQ FM. FM SiriusXM channel 19 Elvis Radio.

I probably could have skipped some of the above paragraph by just giving the title of Klein's book, *Elvis: My Best Man: A Memoir: Radio Days, Rock 'n' Roll Nights, And My Lifelong Friendship With Elvis Presley*. Talk about a long title! I have to email him and mention all those colons there and thank him for writing the book. Since George and Elvis were friends, there may have been an exaggeration or two and a few things left out, but George is a good storyteller.

Elvis loved his fans and treated his associates – the *Memphis Mafia* – like royalty. He went out of his way to help others less fortunate, even people he didn't know. He was kind, loving and talented and girls swooned at him. His first hit, *Heartbreak Hotel*, might really have described all those women who couldn't get close to *The King* and were disappointed.

Klein and Presley were asking some girls to join them for partying but ran into some interference. A few Marines approached them and one of the men insinuated that Elvis had been with his wife. The Prez pulled out a small gun and the servicemen backed off. In the car later, Elvis told George that it was only a prop and when they went to court, the judge dismissed the case against the two.

On another occasion Elvis had to resort to hitchhiking when the battery of his car went dead. He started down the road and after a while a young damsel pulled up to help the young man in distress. She opened the window and said to him, "Sir, my mom and dad told me never to pick up any hitchhikers. But you look like Elvis Presley. I'll give you a ride."

Presley had millions of admirers and one day a young lass came into his car and said, “Johnny Cash.” Some of the Memphis Mafia began to laugh but Elvis held them off. He let her speak. She mentioned having been at one of his shows and eventually Presley accommodated the girl by singing a Cash tune, *Hey Porter*. The girl was thrilled, even more so when Elvis signed an autograph to her saying, “Best wishes, Johnny Cash.”

Besides rock and roll, Elvis loved to sing gospel music. He was a very spiritual person who loved to read. He looked into other religions. He wore both a Jewish chai and a cross around his neck. When someone asked him why he had both, he said, “I don’t want to miss out on getting into heaven on a technicality.”

On August 16, 1977, Elvis died at the age of 42 in Memphis, Tennessee. His cause of death has been given as prescribed drugs, but other events contributed to that day. The auto accident that took the life of Judy Tyler and her husband stayed with Presley for a while. She was his costar in the 1957 movie, *Jailhouse Rock*. His meteoric rise from poverty to being a multi-millionaire probably contributed – success came too quickly. He never had a normal life, and considered going back to simpler times. His boredom contributed, too. He loved to perform and do the best he could in reaching his audience. This meant returning to do concerts when he really needed some rest. His divorce from Priscilla Beaulieu and the death of his mom at the age of 46 were both devastating, especially the latter. Colonel Parker helped make him a big star but held him back at times.

Elvis was a heartthrob, singer, actor, television entertainer and producer. His singing encompassed rock and roll, pop, blues, R&B, country, rockabilly, gospel, Christmas and movie music. He won a W. C. Handy Award from the Blues Foundation, an American Music Award and the first Golden Hat Award. Elvis was inducted into the Country Hall of Fame, the Gospel Hall of Fame, Rockabilly Hall of Fame and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He had eighteen number one hits on the United States pop charts, eleven on the country charts and twenty-one in the UK. In those same three categories, in order, he had twenty-seven, fifteen and thirty-two on the top ten lists. Ten of his albums were at the top in the UK and the U. S. pop chart, while seven led the way on the country charts. After his death, six of his singles were released, all

top ten country hits. He was in thirty-three feature films as well. I don't think there can be any doubt that he was the *King of Rock and Roll*. Rumors have spread that he is still alive in Nashville doing Elvis impersonations.

Jimi Hendrix

Born Johnny Allen Hendrix, he became James Marshall Hendrix and finally adopted the name we know him by. He and Coltrane played different instruments and what might appear to be types of music at odds with each other, but in each, one could see jazz, rock, experimentation and evolution. Numerous artists commented on what Jimi and John contributed to their successes.

Woodstock began at 5:07 pm on Friday, August 15, 1969 with Richie Havens. Hendrix was the last performer, and unfortunately very few people were left to take in his vibes. He began playing at 9 on Monday morning, August 18th and ended two hours later. You can't blame the people for heading home before his act commenced – some had to go to work. The others just left. It's hard to put up with the mud, rain, all that love and partying for three days.

Hendrix was of African-American, Irish and Cherokee heritage, for starters. Born in Seattle, Jimi began playing the ukelele – it was picked up from a rich woman's garbage and had only one string. He listened to Elvis Presley, especially *Hound Dog*; in 1958 Jimi bought an acoustic guitar for \$5 and grooved on the blues masters: Robert Johnson, B. B. King, Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters. The first tune he mastered was the *Peter Gunn Theme*. He formed his own band, the Velvetones, but realized that he needed an electric guitar, which his father, James Allen Ross Hendrix – whom people called Al – bought him. His first gig was in the basement of the synagogue, *Temple De Hirsch*, but the band fired him because of his wild playing. He then joined the Rocking Kings, who played at various clubs including Birdland.

In May 1961, he joined the army – it was that or jail. With another serviceman, Billy Cox, he became part of a semi-organized band called the Casuals. In June 1962, Jimi left the Army with an honorable discharge. In Clarksdale, Mississippi, he and Cox formed the King Kasuals and Hendrix learned to play guitar with

his teeth. He had no choice because at a place in Tennessee, if you couldn't do that, they shot you – talk about a tough audition, with broken teeth all over that stage. After the King Kasuals played a few gigs, they moved to the hot rhythm and blues scene of Nashville.

Playing the *Chitlin' Circuit*, Hendrix backed such bands as those of Jackie Wilson, Sam Cooke and Wilson Pickett. He moved to Harlem in early 1964 and soon won first prize in the Apollo Theater amateur contest. He sat in with various bands and played with the Isley Brothers, Little Richard, the band Love, Joey Dee and the Starlites and King Curtis. His primary residence in Greenwich Village was at the Café Wha?

Jimi may not have been the greatest guitar player in the history of music, but he was probably in the top five. He was also a singer, songwriter, recording studio entrepreneur and music producer. He covered hard rock, blues-rock, jazz, psychedelic rock and patriotic music. He earned that last one because of his rendition of the *Star Spangled Banner* at Woodstock, although many would say that it was more political than patriotic. I think it was both. He also performed at the Monterey International Pop festival in June 1967 and the Isle of Wight Festival in 1970.

Hendrix never graduated from high school, but Garfield High School awarded him an honorary diploma, and in the 1990s, he was honored with a bust in the library. In 1992, Jimi was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; in 2005, he became a member of the UK Music Hall of Fame. Rolling Stone ranked him the greatest guitarist as well as the sixth greatest artist; they also included his three albums, *Bold as Love*, *Electric Ladyland* and *Are You Experienced* in the one hundred greatest of all time. Hendrix is considered one of the twentieth century's most important musicians and his influence as a guitarist can be seen today. He died in London on September 18, 1970.

Janis Joplin

Janis Lyn Joplin was born in Port Arthur, Texas and was one of the greatest singers and songwriters of all time. She performed on harmonica, piano, auto-harp, guitar and percussion. Janis managed blues-rock, folk, jazz blues, acid rock, country,

soul, psychedelic rock and hard rock – I think that covers it all. She was lead singer of Big Brother and the Holding Company and later as soloist in the Kosmic Blues Band and Full Tilt Boogie Band. She appeared at the Monterey Pop and Woodstock Festivals, and was on the Festival Express train tour. She had a top hit with *Me and Bobby McGee* in 1969. With Big Brother and the Holding Company she had three U.S. Hot 100 hits on the chart, including *Piece of My Heart* at number twelve; she had four other solo efforts on that chart: *Kosmic Blues*, *Cry Baby*, *Get It While You Can* and *Down on Me*.

Joplin was a member of the local church choir and listened to blues singers Big Mama Thornton, Odetta and Eleanora Fagan, aka Billie Holiday and *Lady Day*; she noted that she was greatly influenced by Lead Belly, Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey. Janis was shunned at Thomas Jefferson High School and stated that she was a misfit, but graduated high school in 1960. She attended Lamar State College of Technology and the University of Texas at Austin, but never graduated. It wouldn't be long before she became a star.

She was known as the queen of both psychedelic soul and rock and roll. Her friends called her *Pearl*. She could wail with the best of them – rock, soul, blues or jazz. Janis was quite talented as a performer, but also as a music arranger, dancer and painter. Noted for bringing a bottle of Southern Comfort on stage, the song, *What Good Can Drinkin' Do* was the first song she recorded in 1962.

In 1995, Joplin was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. In 2004, Rolling Stone magazine ranked her number 46 on their list of the one hundred all-time greatest artists and four years later that same publication had her 28th on its list of the one hundred greatest singers of all time. Her a cappella recording of *Mercedes Benz* was made on the first of October in 1970. She died three days later from an overdose of heroin, with alcohol probably a factor. *Mercedes Benz* appears on the 1971 album, *Pearl*.

Jim Morrison

Known also as *The Lizard King* and *Mr. Mojo Rising* – an anagram of his name – James Douglas Morrison was the lead singer for The Doors, a rock band out of Los Angeles. Morrison

was a musician, actor, poet, filmmaker and songwriter who performed hard rock, acid rock, psychedelic rock, blues-rock and rock and roll. Besides singing, he also played the maracas, tambourine, harmonica and piano.

He was born in Melbourne, Florida, and at the age of four, he and his family drove by or witnessed an accident on a Native American Reservation in the desert that may have influenced him greatly. It might not have been as gruesome as he described it by spoken words in his songs. His sister, Anne Robin, wasn't sure if his view of events wasn't an exaggeration.

With his father in the Navy, Jim moved around quite a bit, living in Jacksonville, Florida; Alexandria, Virginia; Kingsville, Texas; San Diego and Alameda, California. Inspired by poets and philosophers – influenced by Allen Ginsberg, Molière, Franz Kafka and Jack Kerouac – Morrison was an avid reader, who wrote reports on books that may not have existed. That's one of the side effects of being creative. He lived with his grandparents in Clearwater, Florida while at St. Petersburg College, then transferring to Florida State University in Tallahassee. While there he was arrested for a drunken prank during a football game. In early 1964, he moved to California, attending the University of California at Los Angeles, at which he obtained a degree from the College of Fine Arts in 1965.

The Doors – Jim plus Ray Manzarek, Robby Krieger and John Densmore – were formed that summer, taking their name from Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*, almost a kind of a mescaline cookbook. Except for Jim, the three were into the meditation of Marahishi Mahesh Yogi. Morrison claimed he “did not meditate.” It may have been different if that last word were *medicate*. In 1967 the group was the opening act for Van Morrison – no relation – at the Whiskey a Go Go.

The Doors experienced fame in 1967 with the release of *Light My Fire*, which exploded to the top of the Billboard Hot 100. Selling one million copies, it was also number one on the Irish Singles Chart, the Cash Box Top 100 and number sixteen on the Australian Go-Set National Top 40. The song was recorded many times by others, including a fine version on the LP *Streetnoise* of Trinity, featuring Julie Driscoll on vocals. On September 17, 1967 The Doors performed *Light My Fire* on the *Ed Sullivan Show*, not

without controversy. I don't think it was covered on the *Lawrence Welk Show*. The doors of the Ed Sullivan Theatre were closed to Morrison and his band after that appearance, as they were forever banned.

With their huge success in 1967 propelled by *Light My Fire* – the appearance and the controversy on the *Ed Sullivan Show* probably contributed to it – Morrison got involved with alcohol and drugs. Even so, with Jim leading the way, The Doors had hits such as *Riders on the Storm*, *Love Her Madly*, *Love Me Two Times*, *The Crystal Ship*, *Touch Me*, *Roadhouse Blues*, *The End*, *Soft Parade*, *The Unknown Soldier*, *Love Street*, *People are Strange*, *L. A. Women*, *Hello I Love You*, and *Break on thru*, besides their initial smash hit.

In 1967, they performed at the Fantasy Fair and Magic Mountain Festival in Marin County at the Sidney B. Cushing Amphitheater and at the New Haven Arena in Connecticut, where Morrison was arrested. Charges were dropped because of a lack of evidence. In the years that followed, The Doors were on the road constantly and in the process Morrison reportedly had sex with groupies. There were twenty paternity suits against him, but nothing came of them. In September 1968, they played in London with Jefferson Airplane at The Roundhouse. Six months later, while at a concert in Miami, Jim was arrested for indecent exposure. More than forty years later, a pardon was issued.

A dozen documentaries of the life of Jim Morrison were produced, some of which probably had the story right. According to rock singer, David Crosby, Oliver Stone's movie, *The Doors*, was a bit off the mark. Rolling Stone Magazine rated Mr. Mojo Rising number 47 on the list of one hundred greatest singers of all time. He was number 22 on the fifty greatest singers in rock by Classic Rock Magazine. He died in Paris on July 3, 1971 and it was said it was because of heroin, but no autopsy was done, so that can't be verified.

All three musicians, Hendrix, Joplin and Morrison, made great contributions to the music scene of the day and were huge influences on other musicians. They died within a period of a year: from September 18, 1970 to July 3, 1971. They were all 27. Robert

Leroy Johnson was also a monumental musician who died at 27 in Hazlewood, Mississippi, but that was in 1938. As far as we know, no self-induced drugs were involved.

9. I dig rock and roll music

I dig rock and roll music
And I love to get the chance to play (and sing it.)
I figure it's about the happiest sound goin' down today.
The message may not move me,
Or mean a great deal to me,
But hey! it feels so groovy to say:
I dig the Mamas and the Papas at the trip,
Sunset strip in L.A..
And they got a good thing goin'
When the words don't get in the way.
And when they're really wailing,
Michelle and Cass are sailin'.
Hey! they really nail me to the wall.

Cass Elliot

Born Ellen Naomi Cohen just shortly before the Pearl Harbor disaster, she adopted the name Cass Elliot. Her mom, dad and maternal grandparents were progressive political activists. Bess and Philip Cohen were caring and generous parents who loved swing jazz and opera respectively. When Ellen was a thin, seven-year old child, she was shipped off to her grandparents to live for a short time, where her grandmother encouraged her to eat. Grandma's weight program was effective. As a teen, Ellen felt that someday she would be a big star. She was right in that assessment.

Ellen could read by the time she was two, loved music, supposedly had an IQ of 165 and was politically savvy even before she turned ten. She was a comedic genius who loved people and performing. She came close to graduating from Forest Park High School in Baltimore, Maryland. She was a member of two trios, the Triumvirate and the Big 3. The latter was composed of Tim Rose, James Hendricks and Cass. Bob Bowers, their musical director said, "They had such a great sound," comparing it to the sheets of sound of Coltrane. After that group disbanded, Elliot was the only female in a quartet called the Mugwumps, which included

Denny Doherty. Her association with him brought her to the attention of the whole world.

Doherty knew John and Michelle Phillips and was to meet with them. In Cass's words, "Our group was breaking up, so we got Denny cleaned up and sent over to John's house."

He arrived there and talked about Cass and her great voice. The night that Elliot was to meet John and Michelle, Denny brought some drugs over and they partook of them. Michelle heard the knock on the door and the drug was starting to have an effect. Upon seeing Cass with big eyelashes, her hair in a flip and wearing a pink sweater and pleated skirt, Michelle thought, "This is quite a drug."

John was the leader who wrote the songs and at first was reluctant to have Cass join the group. The four of them were in the Virgin Islands with Elliot being employed as a waitress and the other three were doing a gig at that same nightclub. Even far away from the stage, Cass knew the songs and joined in, receiving more applause than the group. This may have led Phillips to change his mind about the singing server. In time, the Mamas and Papas were making history, which you can read about in *Dream A Little Dream Of Me: The Life Of Cass Elliot*, the 2005 book by Eddi Fiegel.

On the cover of their first album, the group is photographed in a bathtub – all four. This might seem strange since the way they lived suggested that they avoided tubs and showers completely. They lived as Bohemians, which created many problems for them despite their huge success. Selling over forty million records worldwide, their six released albums produced forty hit singles, including *Monday, Monday*, which hit both the top of the Billboard Hot 100 and Cashbox charts as well as number 3 in the UK.

The success of the Mamas and Papas came about because of lead singers Doherty and Elliot, who both had beautiful voices, as well as John's leadership, his writing and his harmonies. Without Elliot, the Mamas and Papas would have had some hits, but they would have not had the smashing success that Cass delivered. One critic said they provided "the most inventive vocals since the Beatles." Disagreements within the group led to its breakup, but Cass went on to have a solo career, releasing over half a dozen albums with four top ten hits: *Dream a Little Dream of*

Me, It's Getting Better, New World Coming and *Make Your Own Kind of Magic*. Anthony Kiedis of the Red Hot Chili Peppers offered that she was “The greatest white female singer.” Cass’s music was a product of evolution and fusion, as she covered Broadway show tunes, folk, folk rock, blues and pop. She died in July 1974 at the age of 32.

Sister Rosetta Tharpe

Until the winter of 2013, I had never heard of Sister Rosetta Tharpe. That changed thanks to an American Masters special on PBS, *Sister Rosetta Tharpe: The Godmother of Rock & Roll*. After watching it, I wanted to learn more so I read *Shout, Sister, Shout!: The Untold Story Of Rock-And-Roll Trailblazer Sister Rosetta Tharpe*, the 2007 book by Gayle F. Ward, upon which much of the American Masters program relies. You learn something new every day, including her fight against racism, sexism and what she did for music.

I mentioned Elvis’s influence on rock and roll but we shouldn’t ignore what Sister Rosetta did for music. She was born Rosetta Nubin in Cotton Plant, Arkansas, a generation before Presley on the same day my dad was born – that just about tells you how old I am. She began as a gospel singer and not only led the way for *The King*, but for many of the musicians that followed, and not just gospel performers and rock and rollers. In 1945 in Macon, Georgia, she brought Little Richard onstage to sing with her and paid him for doing so. For him, this was a time when money was hard to come by. Her generosity undoubtedly helped his career. Sister Rosetta was a singer, fine guitarist, recording artist and songwriter who wasn’t adverse to combine rock and roll into her performance. Some of her fans were disappointed, but she really never abandoned gospel music.

Her parents were cotton pickers. Her father Willis Atkins was a singer, as was her mom, Katie Bell Nubin, who was an evangelist for the Church of God in Christ. It was said Rosetta began talking and walking before she reached the age of one. She didn’t waste much time as she began performing – singing and playing guitar – at the age of four, accompanied by her mom on mandolin. She went on to singing blues and jazz in the late

twenties in private and gospel in public. Rumor has it that she could perform a song after listening to it once or twice. In 1934 she married Thomas Thorpe, but it wasn't a happy union. Maybe that's why she adopted the name Tharpe, which is a misspelling.

Her first record was made in October 1938 on Decca Records, backed by Lucky Millinder's jazz orchestra. She was an all-purpose musician, popular in the 1930s and 1940s and had a big hit with *Down by the Riverside*, a plantation melody, which was also known as *Gonna Lay down my Burden* and *Ain't Gonna Study War no More*. It had a few other titles and had been published shortly after Tharpe was born. Sister Rosetta performed with Benny Goodman and Cab Calloway at such venues as the Cotton Club and Café Society. She sang with the Dixie Hummingbirds and on one occasion arranged a gig with a quartet, the Jordanares. The club owner was somewhat surprised when he saw that those four guys were Caucasian.

Tharpe was gospel's first superstar and the first to have a bus with her name on it. This wasn't done because she was a star, but for practical reasons. For her and her band to find hotels, restaurants and even rest room facilities on tour wasn't easy, so she had her own bus/motel. For food, she had her white bus driver go into the restaurant and procure dinner for the group. Sister knew what she was up against, but knew how to beat racism in the best way she could, always with humor. On one occasion she was to appear on the Perry Como TV show with the Rosettes, her singing accompanists, whose heads were to be covered in bandanas. Rosetta refused to perform under this circumstance and the producers gave in. In a way, she was like Rosa Parks.

In 1944, she recorded *Strange Things Happening Every Day*, which was the first gospel tune on Billboard's Harlem Hit Parade. It may have been the first rock and roll record. She married Russell Morrison in Griffin Stadium in Washington, DC before a crowd of 25,000 in 1951. This was her third marriage, but it wasn't always a happy one. Throughout her life, Sister Rosetta toured the country, performing at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1964, the Newport Folk Festival three years later and the American Folk Blues Festival in 1970. She was a huge hit overseas, appearing in France, Germany, Scandinavia, Spain, Denmark, the Netherlands,

and Great Britain, where she performed at a train station. She was on one side and the audience was on the other, across the tracks.

Tharpe died in Philadelphia in October 1973 at the age of 58 after a stroke. Besides performing gospel and rock and roll, she managed popular ballads, country, blues, R&B, hillbilly, political activism, jazz and soul, playing the piano as well as the guitar. She was not only the Godmother of rock and roll, but also the original soul sister. In July 1998, she was honored by the United States Postal Service with a thirty-two cent stamp. A decade after that, she was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame. People who saw her sing mentioned that Sister Rosetta sang until you cried and then kept at it until you were filled with joy.

Gospel scholar Horace Clarence Boyer said, “Sister did more than anyone else in introducing music of the Negro church to the world.” Of Tharpe, trumpeter Harry *Sweets* Edison offered, “She was one of the greatest spiritual singers you ever heard – and a good guitar player.” It was said often that she made that guitar talk. At the Apollo in New York, she beat out men in guitar competitions. Singer J. Roberts Bradley recalls, “She could make that guitar ring! I never saw a woman play guitar like that before or since.” Gospel singer Clyde Wright mentioned, “Whatever she did, she always put her heart into it. She was great whatever she did.”

Rosetta insisted that gospel was the root of modern sounds. “Blues is just the theatrical name for gospel, and true gospel should be slow, like we start off with *Amazin’ Grace*. Then you clap your hands a little and that’s *jubilee* or *revival* – and then you make it like rock ‘n’ roll.” The words that follow are the words from a song she sang, *Up above my head*.

Up above my head, I hear music in the air
Up above my head, there is music in the air
Up above my head, music in the air
And I really do believe, really do believe joy’s somewhere.

The Beatles

In alphabetical order by last name, the Beatles consisted of George Harrison, John Winston Lennon, James Paul McCartney and Richard Starkey, also known as Ritchie – George, John, Paul

and Ringo, respectively, and in alphabetical order by first name. If you switch John and Paul in this list, you also have in order the youngest to the oldest. Each member was born in the early 1940s in Liverpool, England. That town was a tough one and all four faced hardships growing up. Their parents went through the depression and except for George, each of the others experienced abandonment or the death of at least one parent.

School was a challenge for George, John, Paul and Ringo – they weren't thrilled by it and thought the education system was a failure, with a host of incompetents at the front of the room. They barely got by. Ringo had health problems, which kept him out of school for extended periods. At the age of six, he had an attack of appendicitis, which turned into peritonitis. The operations resulted in his being in a coma for ten weeks. This necessitated a long hospital stay – he was there for over a year. The visit would have been shorter except he fell out of his cot. Half a dozen years later, he caught a cold, which turned into pleurisy and was in the hospital for almost two years. Before the Beatles hit it big, all four wound up working menial jobs, anything from chimney sweep to someone who rushed the growler. Well maybe they didn't have those jobs – I just wanted to see if you were paying attention – but their work covered messenger boy to barman on a boat. There's no doubt that each of the group was deeply affected by what occurred in his childhood.

For what it's worth, John can be characterized as a troublemaker who like to challenge established institutions. He spoke his mind, and at times, insulted people. From time to time he liked to head off on shoplifting ventures. John was a clown, too. While the Beatles were performing for the Royal Family at the Prince of Wales Theatre in November 1963, Lennon admonished the crowd, "The ones in the cheap seats clap your hands; the rest of you rattle your jewelry." Paul was the best looking of the quartet and seemed to be a crowd pleaser, while George was the shy, quiet type, probably the most religious of the four. Ringo was dedicated and somewhat carefree and was funny, too. When asked why his fingers had so many rings, he replied, that he couldn't get all of them through his nose.

In forming their band, John met Paul first and then George was added. Stu Sutcliffe was a James Dean type who soon became

their bass player. He stayed a while but then left to return to school, enrolling at the Art College. He was immensely talented as an artist, but suffered a brain hemorrhage and died in April 1967. Peter Best became their drummer and played for over two years but then was replaced by Ringo. Best's dismissal brought many hard feelings because Peter had done much to bring the group to prominence. Brian Epstein fired him, but only on orders from John, Paul and George. The latter may have been the real reason for his dismissal.

At various times, Brian Epstein wanted to be a dress designer or actor, but settled on working in his father's furniture store, which also had a record department. Brian took to selling but he also came up with a remarkable method of inventory for the records that were being sold. This was before the age of computers – maybe that's why he was so successful. With his index system, Epstein's goal was to never run out of records that were in demand. His favorites were classical but he also kept up with the modern music at the time. He had to. In December 1961, Brian became the manager of the Beatles – the guy who brought them to the top.

Long before the term came into existence, Epstein did a *makeover* on the quartet. Before he came on board, the Beatles ate, smoked and drank in performance and talked to the members of the audience closest to the stage. Besides their behavior, their clothes left much to be desired. They lacked stage presence, performing whatever songs they felt like and stopped at times and took a break right before their listeners. They may have been that way because they played in dives – basement venues that were windowless, stinky and the air didn't circulate. These places had another benefit: if you were in the crowd, you didn't have to turn on the telly to see the Friday Night fights – they were happening there every day. Epstein changed all that and the quartet may have mumbled in reaction at first, but they realized that Epstein knew what he was doing. Until that time, there were countless people who helped the *fab four*, but one individual, George Martin, needs to be mentioned for what he did to make the Beatles stars. Records produced by Martin were at the top of the charts in thirty-seven weeks during the year 1963. That's quite an accomplishment.

Two events occurred that had they not, we may never have heard of the *fab four*. In October of 1961, Raymond Jones entered the NEMS record store where Epstein was working and asked for the record, *My Bonnie* by the Beatles. Brian said that he hadn't heard of the song or of the group. In his store, he always promised the customer what they requested even if it wasn't in stock. Somehow he would get it for them. This single event changed history, but another may also have contributed. Before he was asked to join the Beatles, Ringo thought about going to Houston, Texas but that journey never took place. Maybe Peter Best would have still been the drummer and the Beatles would have still done their thing, very successfully.

I've never bought any album or single of the Beatles but heard the songs they performed on their records at various times. Lennon and McCartney were one of the most prolific songwriting duo in the history of music – at least within the top five. Their songs have been recorded by hundreds of artists, as my collection of music indicates: *Ticket to Ride* – the Carpenters; *Eleanor Rigby* – Ides of March; *Here, There and Everywhere* – George Benson; *Michelle* – Dick Hyman; *Ob-la-di Ob-la-da* – Peter Nero; *Norwegian Wood* and *Fool on the Hill* – Brasil '66; *I Call Your Name* – Mamas and Papas; *Yesterday* and *Things We Said Today* – Sandpipers; *Imagine* – Randy Crawford and the Yellowjackets; Beatles medley, including the *Long and Winding Road*, *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*; *Strawberry Fields Forever* and *When I'm Sixty Four* performed by the Liverpool Community Chorus (from Liverpool, New York) – of which I was a member; songs from the motion picture *Across the Universe* – thumbs way up – by various artists including Jim Sturgess, TV Carpio, Evan Rachel Wood, Joe Cocker, Dana Fuchs and Joe Anderson. As you'll notice, these artists cover numerous types of music, just like the Beatles, who performed skiffle, pop, rock, rock and roll, R&B, progressive, soul and movie soundtracks. As I write this, I have hits of the Beatles performed by them on: an entire CD; five CDs with a song or two by them; one complete side of a ninety-minute cassette.

The Boys from Liverpool have had countless books written about them. I found one at the local library, but on opening it at home, realized it was merely about the group's business sense –

not what I needed for my research. Hunter Davies was inside the Beatles circle – obviously there’s still subjectivity – and wrote about them in 1968, with revisions in 1985 and 2002. The book, appropriately enough, is called, *The Beatles: The Illustrated And Updated Edition Of The Best-selling Authorized Biography*. I recommend it for many reasons – with thanks to Hunter for all his research. It’s packed with great information, stories and laughs.

In 1961, long before the Beatles truly made it big, DJ Bob Wooler remarked, “The Beatles were the stuff that screams were made of. Here was the excitement, both physical and aural, that symbolized the rebellion of youth. Rhythmic revolutionaries. Truly a phenomenon – and also a predicament to promoters! Such are the fantastic Beatles. I don’t think anything like that will ever happen again.” Whether you liked them or not, you have to admit that they had an enormous effect on both music and society.

You won’t find a quartet that had more of an influence in the musical world and sold more records than the Beatles. It is estimated that worldwide, they sold more than one billion units, with about 177 million units in the US. In April 1964, the top five positions in the singles charts were all songs by the Beatles. They released fifty-seven singles, over eighty-five albums and thirty-seven videos. In the United Kingdom they had four multi-platinum, four platinum and eight gold albums. In the United States they sold even more, with twenty-four, thirty-nine and forty-five respectively. They accumulated seven Grammys and fifteen Ivor Novello Awards. Their 1970 movie, *Let It Be* won the Academy Award for best original song and five years prior, Queen Elizabeth II acknowledged the Beatles as Members of the Order of the British Empire. In 1988, they entered the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

One summer day in the mid to late 1970s I was in Central Park in New York for an oldies concert. It was quite a while ago and I only remember one musical group that I heard that day: Johnny Maestro and The Brooklyn Bridge. There were a few groups performing and between sets, there was a lull for takedown and setup of the group coming next. During one of these breaks, the emcee introduced John Lennon and they talked for a bit. Then Lennon was asked if the Beatles would ever get back together and perform. John replied – typical of a politician – “You never know.”

The emcee then inquired if there was hope for this happening and Lennon answered, "There's always hope."

The lyrics at the top of the chapter are a tribute to the Beatles, Mamas and Papas and Donovan. Maybe Peter, Paul and Mary are just doing an impersonation of each in their 1967 song, which reached the number nine on the Billboard Top 100. Known as a folk trio who weren't afraid to express political comment, here they were doing pop, rock and roll, progressive rock and a bit of psychedelic. It also appeared on the easy listening survey. Peter, Paul and Mary express the words, "between the lines," which points out that messages can be found in any kind of music.

To me, this song asks the question about the evolution of music as well as the concern about classifying any piece of music. In my music collection, I have over three hundred cassettes and CDs, mostly the latter. All the cassettes are a mix of types, so my concern has to do with classifying the CDs, so I can find the one I want to play. I could do it by title of the CD, but that would be futile. I chose a method that most people use: in alphabetical order by artist. This is not without some concern since the *Streetnoise* CD has Brian Auger with the Trinity as artists. Do I classify that under *A* or *T*? Should I put the *Five Bridges* under the letter *E* for Keith Emerson or under *N* for the Nice? I solved that by placing the first under *T* and the latter under *E*. I know, that's a bit inconsistent, but if I ever forget where I put either work, it's no big deal to check the alternative. That problem is solved.

What about classifying a CD according to the type of music? The CDs I made – either on my PC or the recorder in my stereo system – are mixes, but of one type of music, like jazz or oldies or party music. The latter might include jazz, blues, rock and oldies and oldies could be any song that was a hit of fifteen years ago, going back another fifty. There are a lot of oldies. Nevertheless, those CDs I produced aren't much of a concern. The others are a challenge. Is a CD by Blood, Sweat and Tears jazz or rock? It's actually both, but what about the song, *I Dig Rock And Roll Music*? I figured from the fusion discussion throughout this book, this classification of pop or folk or rock and roll just isn't going to work.

For a day or two after buying a used car, I had satellite radio. It was sort of fun but I could never subscribe to it because there are too many choices and I don't limit my music choices. If you only like one type of music, like say, gothic rock, then it's not a problem. Consider jazz for an example. There's New Orleans jazz, which dates from the 1910s, Gypsy jazz, Afro-Cuban jazz, ethno jazz, jazz rap, punk jazz, Kansas City jazz, cool jazz, soul jazz, jazz fusion, bebop, ragtime, West Coast jazz, modal jazz, avant-garde jazz, jazz rock, free jazz, Latin jazz, jazz-funk, nu jazz, cyber jazz, Indo jazz, jazz blues, smooth jazz and acid rock. I haven't figured out what that last one is; maybe it's jazz played by strung-out performers. Isn't that what most jazz is? If you're not sure what one of those listed above is, feel free to do some research. Despite the long list, I'm sure that some types of jazz have not been included. You can see the problem of arranging CDs here. You could make a list of all the types of rock or folk and have the same dilemma.

You may have heard someone say that Joe's collection of music is eclectic, meaning a bit of everything. Perhaps that's how I should make my own CDs, without classifying the output. That isn't far from how I do it now. I mentioned fusion, but we need to consider another aspect of music over the years: evolution. Just consider folk, blues, race music and rock and roll and their connection. Folk music is music of the people, whether in the United States or in Kenya. In the Mississippi Delta, life was hard so folks sang about it. On hearing the songs, you may have felt you were listening to the blues – and you were. It doesn't really matter which came first; maybe they both arrived on the scene simultaneously. This was done by African-American people, but they weren't alone in their suffering. Others were affected too.

It wasn't long afterwards that people were performing race music – this had nothing to do with a day at the track. Marketed to African-Americans during the 1920s and 1930s, race records were 78 rpm records which contained gospel, jazz, blues and comedy and eventually whites bought them as well. Race records weren't a derogatory term, but in the middle of the twentieth century Billboard journalist Jerry Wexler suggested a new name for this music: rhythm and blues.

Some of the artists performing this music added some spice – I don't mean cayenne pepper for the jambalaya. Some of the songs got a bit risqué. These same songs were later recorded by others, who cleaned them up a bit and greatly influenced the rise of rock and roll. Even numbers that weren't offensive were released as race records and sold a few copies, but then whites recorded the same song with a few modifications and had billboard hits. In 1954, LaVern Baker recorded the R&B novelty song, *Tweedle Dee*, which soon reached number 4 on the R&B charts and number 14 on the pop chart. Georgia Gibbs covered the tune without changing much in the lyrics or rhythm and it became a Gold Record for her. The Gibbs' release prevented Baker from having a pop hit. This happened quite frequently at that time. You can see the evolution of music, which encompassed folk, blues, race music, R&B, rock and roll and pop. It was both fusion and an evolution.

We should add political and country music to this list since all of these types are music of the people, the songs of life. Ancient civilizations may not have had guitars, drums and keyboards, but they sure knew how to make music. Some time ago, I heard someone say a song without music was *a cappella*. The music that fits that description is solo or group singing without instrumental accompaniment, such as Gregorian Chant or Barbershop singing. Add the band and the singing is called cantata.

I mentioned Chicago Transit Authority's *Free Form Guitar* in the introduction. It's not something that people are rushing to listen to. Upon hearing this song, or just the beginning, someone might ask if this is music or just sound. Others may refer to it as nothing more than noise. Questioning it in this manner isn't much different than wondering if a two-hour movie of nothing but the sun setting on the ocean is art. How about a book with blank pages except for the page numbers at the bottom? Is that art?

In the book, *The Singing Neanderthals: The Origins Of Music, Language, Mind And Body* by Steven Mithen, the author mentions John Cage's 1952 composition, 4' 33". It consists of 4 minutes and 33 seconds of uninterrupted silence. In 2003, they actually broadcast it on BBC Radio 3. Could this be classified as music and art? After all, wasn't there a huge hit of the song *The Sound of Silence* by Simon and Garfunkel in 1964?

I won't take up the question of whether a movie or book in discussion is art, but focus only on the music consideration. To start, we need a definition of music. Bruno Nettle defines it as *human sound communication outside the scope of language*. We may have to expand that slightly since birds seem to have gotten a raw deal in this definition, not to mention dolphins and a few other contributors. Maybe all we have to do is leave out the first word of Nettle's definition. With that in mind, it appears that John Cage's composition isn't music, since there's no sound. On that last thought you'll get an argument from mimes, but I think you'll probably agree.

Over the years, parents always wondered what the noise was that was coming out of the radio of their son or daughter. When my older brother was studying for the priesthood, the Friars had a release of some folk songs that they put together on cassette. It was playing when my dad asked what that noise was. When we mentioned it was the singing friars, he said it very good. Parents question the music tastes of their children and then those offspring do the same with their sons and daughters. It's been happening for some time and will continue.

In his 2003 book, *Seventies Rock: The Decade Of Creative Chaos*, Frank Moriarty brings up numerous musical groups that relied on loudness for appreciation by the fans. I never heard the group Motorhead perform nor do I have their album, but in the late 1970s they embarked on a tour with the name *Beyond the Threshold of Pain*. The group figured that they had to put up with the noise on stage, so why should their fans be deprived of the same.

I couldn't find them on the CD, but if I recall correctly, the album cover from *The Five Bridges* by the Nice has the words directing to you to play it very loud. It isn't the only one. You've heard the expression, "If the music is too loud, you're too old." It should be, "If the music is too loud and you keep listening, you'll be deaf, just like the band." Loudness only implies distortion, which an audience that is deaf won't hear.

Years before the loud bands of the 1970s showed up, John Coltrane was doing the unconventional, being one of the first avant-garde artists. The term refers to experimental undertakings and usually the saxophone was the instrument used. Some of the

others include Archie Shepp, Ornette Coleman, James Carter, Kenny Garrett and Michael Brecker – all sax players. Of the six mentioned, I saw one in concert and for the others have or had some of their music. Any musician playing this far-out music probably has a few selections that you won't reject outright. A good gag is to play an Archie Shepp or Ornette Coleman record in the house growing up. Make sure that your father and mother can hear it. At this point, they may ask you to play your rock and roll albums.

Music tastes change. You may like a song one day and then not care for it in a few years. You could hear a piece and not care one way or the other about it but then five months later, like it. It might take a few plays of a number before you dig it, but every so often a tune hits you on its first play. At first you may despise classical music, but later in life, your radio station is set to the Mozart channel.

10. Let there be music

When the world was in trouble
And it looked like there was hell to pay
Fire, fire everywhere
And the news got worse each day
Well, people really wondered
Just how long they could hold out
God looked down from heaven above
And He began to shout
Let there be music
Let it shine like the sun
Let there be music
Everybody's got to have some fun, yeah

The words above are from the 1975 song by Orleans, which also happens to be the title of the chapter. You might ask where music had its origin. Did Adam start to sing, maybe not this tune, but some other top 40 hit? Eve then replied, "You should take it outside." It's not clear whether Adam thanked his mate or slapped her.

Where was the first music heard, and when? According to the Mithen book, which I mentioned earlier, musical instruments were found that dated from between 35,000 to 50,000 years ago. Of course, music doesn't need a tuba or clarinet so it probably goes back much further than that. Don't underestimate the creativity and ambition of civilizations before that time. Did language precede music or the other way around? Maybe they both occurred around the same time. My guess is that music could have been around a million years ago. Don't ask me to prove that since no one else can do it either.

What may be more important is looking at the recordings that were made. Here again we can't conclude too much by not having located any musical instruments or record in stone of singing. Many traces of a given civilization may be just now being recovered. In our time, we've had a few devices for storing music and the hardware to record and play it. Thomas Alva Edison came up with hundreds of inventions, including 1,093 patents and still was only the fourth most prolific inventor in history. That has to be

discouraging. Edison invented the phonograph in the late 1870s and in a few years he developed the wax cylinder. I doubt that it played in stereo.

The sound was in the grooves of the wax, a combination of beeswax and paraffin, which was on the outside of the hollow cylinder. This would wear out after a few hundred plays, but then the cylinder could be used for another recording. The cylinder was four inches long and around two inches in diameter and playing a cylinder gave one about two minutes of music or whatever had been recorded. The early phonograph of the late nineteenth century could record as well as play. Soon the wax was improved and a cylinder could be played many more times than its predecessor. Eventually Edison invented a process that created the equivalent of a master, not unlike what was around with long playing records. In this way, hundreds of cylinders could come out of one mould.

Even before this, the earliest known recordings of sound came in 1857 when Léon Scott patented the phonautograph. There was no playback, but only the ability to record sound waves for the purpose of visual analysis. In 2008, a phonautogram made in 1860 by Scott was played back. It was played backwards and you wouldn't believe what was heard.

At the end of the 1880s, Emil Berliner invented the gramophone, which played five-inch lateral-cut disc records. Ten-inch records came out in 1901, followed in 1903 by records of twelve-inch diameter. These records were initially made of hard rubber and then eventually of a shellac-based compound and could play for about four minutes. The speed was 78 revolutions per minute or thereabouts. The years that followed gave us the 45 rpm record and the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm record. Today's turntable, with its playing cartridge, evolved from the phonautograph, phonograph, gramophone and record player.

45s came on the scene in 1948 and teenagers of the 1950s bought them to get the hits of Elvis, the Everly Brothers, Sarah Vaughan or Dinah Washington. Rather than buy a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ LP with twelve selections, the purchase of a 45 had only two songs on it, saving the buyer some cash as well as not having ten songs that wouldn't be listened to. The LP as we know it arrived at the same time as 45s, was made of vinyl, just like the small disc and could play for twenty minutes per side. At first it was single-channel or

monophonic sound reproduction, which we called monaural or mono. A decade later, stereophonic records or stereo came out. The left speaker was different from the right and together produced a third channel in the middle. Quadraphonic sound followed, but it didn't last. However, one way to have a four-channel sound was with a reel-to-reel tape deck, which came out in the 1930s, but didn't make it in the United States until 1949. These tape decks came into play in a big way in the computer industry as systems could be backed up using those tapes. Fidelity was outstanding but the costs of the tapes and the tape decks kept it from being popular.

Cassettes and cassette decks survey today – I have three ways of playing cassettes in my home. They were developed in the 1950s and could be found as a source of music in cars. Believe it not, someone came up with an idea for a record player in a car in the late 1950s. You can buy one on eBay if you're interested. The 8-track tape and its corresponding player came out in the late 1950s and had a few problems. I never owned either. If you were playing an 8-track, you would hear a song and then a click, as the player changed tracks. I'm not a musical purist, but I'm not crazy about blips, beeps, bells, whistles and above all, clicks. The automobile industry had much to do with the 8-track cartridge and its player. You can still buy those cartridges and the hardware to play them for sale – buy why would you want either?

CDs were developed in the mid-to-late 1970s and the players for them were available in 1982. They were almost five inches in diameter and up to eighty minutes of music could fit on a disc. Besides music, you also could have data, used for personal computers or photos. It wasn't long before you could buy a CD recorder and make your own CDs, with limitations. In the world of music, CDs just about forced the end of record albums – but not quite. The sound was so much better than that of LPs, although that wasn't the feeling of record aficionados. Since you could spend thousands of dollars for a turntable and even more for a stylus to play the LP, maybe they had a case. Not long ago, records made a comeback, but not every release of music came out on record, just CDs.

Each medium may have had an advantage over another. The wax cylinder could only play two minutes of music and I'm not sure about the fidelity. Maybe it's better to call that low or no

fidelity, even though people said it sounded quite good. Maybe that had to do with what it was being compared to. The 78s may have been better on both counts, but the amount of listening time wasn't a big improvement over the cylinder. When discs were made of plastic there was a loss of fidelity compared to its predecessors. Cassettes could play for thirty minutes or forty-five per side – some even less, and that was more than the 33½ LPs, but I mentioned the breaking of the tape as well as loss in sound quality. An LP could be scratched, but so could a CD, if it wasn't handled properly.

Technically and aesthetically, we've made great progress over the years, even if we only listen to few types of music. It's such a big part of our lives and cultures throughout the world. During times of slavery, victims of oppression relied on songs to get through the day. It was a way of communicating and also speaking out for social justice. It continues in that respect today and probably always will. Folk and jazz festivals bring together people of different backgrounds and interest. In 1969, the Woodstock Music and Art Fair may have been muddy, rainy and Bohemian, but it played a part in ending the war in Vietnam. It's difficult to fight when you're singing and dancing.

The O'Jays sang the Gamble and Huff song, *I Love Music*. It hit the top spot on the soul singles chart and number five on the Billboard Hot 100. Found on their 1975 album, *Family Reunion*, it has these words: *Music is the healing force of the world*. It doesn't have to be spiritual, either. Santana's 1992 CD, *Milagro* has the song, *Free All the People (South Africa)* and the title track, which has the words, *We heal the people with music*. Bob Marley's music fits right in here. In fact he helped write the song, *Milagro*.

Tom Robinson of the Tom Robinson Band felt, "If music can ease a tiny fraction of the prejudice and intolerance in this world, then it's worth trying. I don't call that 'unnecessary overtones of violence.' I call it standing up for your rights." Duke Ellington, of whom I'll have more to say later, thought that music instilled a sense of pride in people and was more beneficial than picking up a gun and waving it around. In his book, *Elvis: My Best Man*, George Klein states, "Maybe the people who were so afraid of rock 'n' roll music were right: it did have the power to change the world."

Kay Swift said of George Gershwin's music that it "strikes a powerful blow against the evils that besiege us by giving people a magic lift and a strengthening touch." In my discussion of the family of Clifford Brown, ever-present music in their home brought peace. It was a healing force. After the year in a full body cast, Clifford Brown's return to playing his trumpet as he had done may not have happened without his picking up his trumpet and playing, despite the pain.

Once my parents bought their first stereo – even later in my life – I would play some music before going to bed and found it very relaxing. This applied to classical music, jazz or even rock and roll. Many times I remember the record or CD ending and I was near a slumber state. It was very calming and I'm sure it brought a listener's blood pressure to where it should be. Music was a tonic for good health. I'm convinced that people who listened to music after surgery recovered faster. Who needs any drugs!

Charlie Parker

Born Charles Parker, Jr. in August 1920 in Kansas City, Kansas, Parker was raised in Kansas City, Missouri. His father was a piano player who sang and danced, but often was not at home. His mother worked nights at Western Union. Charlie started playing the saxophone at eleven and joined the school band and Musicians Union as a teenager. Before long he would practice as long as fifteen hours a day, which he did for three years, mastering improvisation that led to bebop. The part about the length of the practice sessions may have been an exaggeration, but he was religious in his daily music rituals, as he tried to master the saxophone.

Parker's life was affected by his parents' absence as well as by the racism prevalent at the time. He missed out on a childhood, as witnessed by his absorption in music. He played at a Kansas City nightclub at the age of sixteen. The owner, Tutty Clarkin, thought that he looked to be 38. After that gig, Charlie joined Jay McShann's Band in the late 1930s. The group had tours to New York, Chicago and the southwest. Involved in a car accident while a teenager – perhaps on one of those trips – Parker's hospital stay

prescribed morphine for the pain, which led to an addiction to it, followed by another to heroin. Even without that setback, Charlie had plenty of temptations: cigarettes, alcohol, women and drugs.

Playing the alto and tenor saxophone – he was also a composer – his mastery of the horn was remarkable. He soon earned the nicknames of *Bird* and *Yardbird*. Just as Charlie described amazement in Clifford Brown's mastery of the trumpet, the latter probably had the same feeling about Bird, upon hearing him perform. Even while under the influence of drugs, Parker was incredible in his solos. This wasn't quite the same after a heavy indulgence in alcohol. On one occasion, he had to leave the stage, but said he'd be back. An hour later, he returned and was truly impressive. He tried to kick his bad habits, but soon returned to the same sad state.

In 1949, Birdland in New York was named in his honor. The Clint Eastwood directed movie, *Bird*, was released in 1988. In 1995, the United States Post Office honored him with a commemorative stamp and in that same year, *Live Bird*, a one-man play with Jeff Robinson, premiered in Boston at the Institute of Contemporary Art. In 1999, a memorial sculpture, with a ten-foot tall head done by Robert Graham, was dedicated to him in Kansas City, Missouri. Parker was inducted into the Big Band and Jazz Hall of Fame and the Nesuhi Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame. He was the recipient of a Grammy, four Grammy Hall of Fame Awards and a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

Parker died at the age of 34 in March 1955. On seeing the deceased, the doctor estimated that Bird was 53 at the time. He was known for his promotion of bebop as well as his jazz playing. To honor him and promote interest in his work, the twentieth anniversary of The Charlie Parker Jazz Festival was held in New York in 2012.

Billie Holiday

In April 1915, she was born Eleanora Fagan in the city of Brotherly Love to Sarah Julia Fagen and musician, Clarence Halliday, who didn't marry Sarah or live with her and the child. Because Sarah had no means of support, she shipped Eleanora off to live with her half-sister, Eva Miller, who resided in Baltimore.

Billie had a difficult life as she was raised by Eva's mother-in-law, Martha, and moved from the care of one person after another by the time she reached the age of ten. Holiday was truant and found herself in juvenile court before her tenth birthday. Billie was molested by a neighbor and wound up at The House of The Good Shepherd, a Catholic reform school.

By age eleven, she dropped out of school and found a job doing errands in a brothel. Around this time she took an interest in the music of Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong. Holiday moved to Harlem and lived with her mother, who had joined a brothel. Billie, not yet 14, became a prostitute, too. After a police raid, both were shipped off to prison. Within a few months, Sarah was released, followed three months later by her daughter, who was fourteen. It was during her time in Harlem that Holiday started singing in nightclubs. She took her name from Clarence Halliday – eventually changing it to Holiday – and the actress Billie Dove.

Her neighbor, Kenneth Hollan, played tenor saxophone and she joined him as a singer at the Alhambra Bar and Grill, Mexico's, the Grey Dawn, the Brooklyn Elks' Club, Pod's and Jerry's and the Bright Spot. She soon connected with her father, who was a member of the Fletcher Henderson Band at the end of the 1920s. John Hammond heard her sing when she replaced Monette Moore at Covan's on West 132nd Street and helped her record a pair of songs with Benny Goodman. She was eighteen. Her song, *Mother's Son-in-law* sold only three hundred copies but *Riffin' the Scotch* managed 5,000 copies. Hammond was impressed by her and compared her to Louis Armstrong, feeling that she was an improvising genius of jazz.

Billie was asked to sing the song, *Strange Fruit Grows on Southern Trees* at Café Society in New York in early 1939. A song about lynching south of the Mason-Dixon Line, it's not easy to listen to. The first time she finished performing it, there was dead silence until a lone individual began to applaud. Soon everyone joined in. On many occasions, there was a fair amount time after the end of the song, before people began communicating with each other in a normal manner. In 1946 at the conclusion of the song at Chicago's Garrick Stage Bar, trombonist J. C. Higginbotham was in tears and there was no applause. Everyone stood up and bowed their heads.

Songwriter E. Y. Yip Harburg called *Strange Fruit* an “historic document,” while jazz writer Leonard Feather described it as “the first significant protest in words and music, the first unmitigated cry against racism.” Holiday sang the song over a decade before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama.

The absence of one or both parents through her early life as well as living through the Great Depression had a huge effect on Holiday’s life. The same could be said for racism, sexual discrimination and addictions: sexual, alcoholic and drug. In the late 1930s, Holiday quit Artie Shaw’s band in part because she had to take the freight elevator in a New York City hotel. The name of it was the Lincoln Hotel. Being deprived of her Cabaret Card meant she couldn’t earn a living by staying in one location. Instead, she was forced to have gigs on the road, which brought with it all its scourges. For musicians, heroin and opium were ways to compensate for all the grime and grit of the world in which they made a livelihood. I believe that the song *Strange Fruit* truly affected her as well.

She rose above all these handicaps, surviving with her love of music and becoming a great singer. She was also a songwriter and actress. She performed jazz, torch songs, swing, pop and blues. Besides her records, she had a huge following at her performances. She loved her fans and they loved her. Unfortunately, her producers and paymasters felt that her drug arrests and time in jail would bring more money into their pockets, even if they were bogus.

Lady Day – a name given to her by Lester Young – died in New York City in July 1959 at the age of 44. She appeared on television over thirty times and released twelve records. She was in three movies, *The Emperor Jones* (1933), *New Orleans* (1947), *‘Sugar Chile’ Robinson*, *Billie Holiday*, *Count Basie and His Sextet* (1950) plus a short with Duke Ellington, *A Symphony in Black* (1935). In the mid 1990s, the United States Post Office honored her with a postage stamp. Billie was awarded four Best Historical Album Grammys, Grammys for songs, *God Bless the Child*, *Strange Fruit*, *Lover Man*, *Lady in Satin* and *Embraceable You* and one Lifetime Achievement Grammy. She received four Esquire Magazine Awards, and was inducted into the ASCAP Jazz

Wall of Fame in 1997, the Ertegun Jazz Hall of Fame in 2004 and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2000. VH1 ranked her number six in their 100 Greatest Women in Rock and Roll in 1999. You can read more about *Lady Day* in the 2005 book, *With Billie* by Julia Blackburn.

11. Velvet

Couldn't she have stayed until the first September day
To foal in the autumn shades
The family would have shared her pain
Snake bite deep in the night
Velvet lost her life twice

Indian Summer - turning colors on me

Velvet, now you're gone
Family carries on
Children love you so
They don't even know

It wasn't long ago that when a person was said to be sick, we all were aware what that involved. They had the dreaded disease. The movie star Rosalind Russell was sidelined for a time because of it. You know what I'm talking about so I won't even mention the name. Today, it's still horrible, but because of medical advances, those suffering from it have more chances to survive than twenty years ago.

Earlier I mentioned musicians who died in plane crashes, automobile accidents, motorcycle mishaps and from drugs. There were also a good number of musicians struck down with the dreaded sickness of this chapter. Some survived somehow, but many couldn't beat it. I couldn't include them all, but here are a few of those artists.

Alison Steele

Steele was born Ceil Loman in Brooklyn, New York. At nineteen she married orchestra leader, Ted Steele, who was twice as old as she. After a time, they split and Alison raised her daughter Heather as a single parent. When I lived in the NYC metropolitan area, I became familiar with her because I listened to WNEW-FM, a progressive rock radio station in the mid 1970s. Being the host of the late night show, she was *The Nightbird*, a title she garnered from her words of beckoning, "Come, fly with me,

Alison Steele, *The Nightbird*, at WNEW-FM, until dawn.” Besides being a disc jockey, she was a writer and television producer.

At first she really didn't know what progressive music was, but over the years she played rock before it was classic rock and many of her choices were selections from albums rather than the shorter top 100 versions of the songs. Her listening audience was the 18 to 34 age group – of which I qualified – and she had an audience at that time of around 78,000. She prepared and presented her own program. Besides progressive rock, she also presented space rock – whatever that is – and played music by Bloodrock, Renaissance, the Chambers Brothers, the Moody Blues, King Crimson, Yes, Hot Tuna, Curved Air, Genesis, Jefferson Airplane, Emerson, Lake and Palmer, Hawkwind, Lothar and the Hand People and Tangerine Dream. I've heard of most of these groups.

Her show became a smash hit and propelled WNEW-FM to the forefront of progressive radio. She was music director for the station and was the first woman named Billboard Magazine FM Personality of the Year. In 1979 she left the station and was a correspondent, writer and producer of the CNN program, *Limelight*. During the 1980s and 1990s, she worked at WNEW-AM as a disc jockey and was an announcer for *Search for Tomorrow*, the daytime soap. She also worked at WXRK and was involved with VH1. With her sister Joyce, she helped run *Just Cats*, a feline boutique on East Sixtieth Street in Manhattan. Sadly, she died in 1995 at the age of 58.

Steve Goodman

My brother Ken and I and two friends attended a concert at Fort Adams in Newport, Rhode Island during the summer of 1979. Gordon Lightfoot and Jonathan Edwards were on stage as was the great storyteller, songwriter and folk musician, Steve Goodman, who handled pop, country and rock as well. As he finished his last song, he broke not one, but two guitar strings. He stopped and asked, “Now what song can I perform with only four strings?” The concert ended a bit early because of the fog creeping from the ocean. Musical instruments and moisture just don't get along together.

While mostly known as the composer of *City of New Orleans*, which Arlo Guthrie turned into a top 20 hit in 1972, Goodman wrote numerous songs. If he didn't have a big hit of them, other artists did. Besides Arlo, people who performed his songs were Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash, Chet Adkins and Jimmy Buffett.

Steve was born on Chicago's North Side. He graduated from Maine East High School in Park Ridge, Illinois. Hillary Rodham Clinton was one of his classmates. At the University of Illinois, he and some friends formed the rock band, the Juicy Fruits. He left college after a year to pursue his music endeavors, staying in Greenwich Village for a month in the spring of 1967. He performed there regularly and moved back to Chicago, intending to continue school, but then dropped out once more. Soon he was performing there and going to Lake Forest College. He was singing commercial jingles for tuition payment. At the time he experienced fatigue and soon discovered the cause of his sickness, which he lived with almost half his life. Steve's intention was to live as normal as possible, but he realized his time on earth was limited – he had to live faster and in the process wrote some mundane numbers.

One of those songs was a vegetarian's lament, *Chicken Cordon Blues*, about a guy who returns from the health foods store with brown rice, beans and granola – twenty pounds of *food*. Maybe that last word is a bit off. He longs for a jelly roll, éclair or a cannoli. How about some lasagna? Goodman also wrote the songs, *Banana Republics*, *The Lincoln Park Pirates*, *Daley's Gone*, *Vegematic*, *Unemployed*, *The Twentieth Century is Almost Over* and *The Election Year Rag*. One of my favorites that he sang was *The Dutchman*, but he didn't write it. Michael Peter Smith did.

Goodman won two Grammy awards, including a posthumous one in 1985 for best country song. He mentored his good friend John Prine, with whom he co-wrote *You Never Even Call Me By My Name*. David Allan Coe had a moderate hit on the country charts with the song. Steve was the opening act for Kris Kristofferson in 1971 at the Quiet Knight in Chicago. Introduced to Paul Anka, he signed a contract with Buddha Records.

I bought Steve's album, *High and Outside*, but I'm not sure where it is today. I have the CD now. The title is appropriate since

Steve was an avid and frustrated Chicago Cubs fan, who hadn't had a post-season appearance since 1945. The Cubs won the Eastern Division title four days after Goodman died. His ashes were spread at Wrigley Field in 1988. Pat Quinn, Illinois's Lieutenant Governor, declared October 5, 2007 Steve Goodman Day and in August 2010, President Barack Obama signed a bill which renamed the Lakeview Post Office in honor of Goodman.

Gilda Radner

Gilda Radner was compared to Lucille Ball – who could argue with that? In the mind of many, she was *America's Sweetheart*. She was the first performer chosen for the cast of *NBC's Saturday Night*, even before John Belushi and Chevy Chase. Airing for the first time on October 11, 1975, it eventually became known as *Saturday Night Live*. Gilda Radner was outrageously funny on the show, just like in real life and she could sing and dance. Who could forget her moving around the floor with Steve Martin to the tune *Dancing in the Dark*. It was beautiful and humorous at the same time. What did you expect from those two? Did I mention she could tap dance?

In the late 1970s, choreographer Dennis Grimaldi asked her at the audition for the performance, *Broadway*, if she could tap dance and she asserted that she could. Actually, she couldn't, but that didn't stop her. She learned quickly and saw to it that her dancing was top notch, just like everything else she did. Besides dancing and giving us so many laughs with *Lisa Loopner*, *Emily Litella* and *Roseanne Roseannadanna*, she managed theatre on Broadway as well as writing and being in a few movies, including *The Woman in Red*, *Hanky Panky*, *Haunted Honeymoon* and *The Last Detail*.

For a few years I lived less than fifty miles from Rockefeller Center, so around the end of 1977 I tried to get tickets for *NBC's Saturday Night*. I failed but was told that I could have four tickets for the dress rehearsal. Many would have said, "No, thanks," but I asked for and was sent the tickets for January 21, 1978. The advantages of the rehearsal over the actual show are many: you don't have to worry about getting home after 2 am; you see two hours worth of laughs, including some that never make it

later; you can dine in New York City at dinnertime. That night the host was Steve Martin with musical guests Randy Newman and The Dirt Band – they were no longer nitty and gritty. During the dress rehearsal, Dan Akroyd played Jimmy Carter in his State of the Union address and while waiting to do his thing, we heard a loud voice over the PA system that said, “Please stand by.” There was some technical difficulty. Everything was silent for a minute or two and then Dan in his incredible Carter voice replied, “What the _____ is goin’ on? You can fill in the blank. The word isn’t heck, but ends in the same last two letters. We roared.

On that afternoon, besides Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale and Tip O’Neil (impersonations, only) we saw Gilda, John, Jane Curtin, Loraine Newman, Garrett Morris and Bill Murray, including Steve and Dan doing the Festrunk Brothers – I thought they were the Czech Brothers – Bill promoting mineral water from Lake Erie, that *Roseannadanna* chick on *Weekend Update*, the *Coneheads* and Steve offering advice to the audience how they can be millionaires and never pay taxes. I think way too many people and corporations picked up on that last one. I’m glad I accepted those tickets.

Radner’s humor transcended the stage, screen and television studio. While in Paris in the summer of 1966 with two friends, it’s late one night and everyone’s in bed. From her bed comes the sound, “Whump.” The other two are concerned but Gilda whispers, “Nothing to worry about: just my robe falling on the floor.”

A rely came to her, “Your robe? Making a huge noise like that?”

Gilda answers, “Yeah, well, I was inside it at the time.”

On another occasion, she was at the dentist for some replacement caps for her teeth. All of a sudden she bolted from the chair grabbing two of those absorbent cotton cylinders. She put them in her mouth, like fangs. She ran outside onto Central Park West flashing the *fangs* and then roared with laughter. You can find more about her life in David Saltman’s 1992 book, *Gilda: An Intimate Portrait*.

She really didn’t know how to cook, but was around people who could. She loved to eat – so much so that she would indulge and then excuse herself so she could keep at it. This went on for

hours at a stretch. She had problems with her relations with men, having a few failed marriages and some not so great romances with a few other guys. Finally, she met Gene Wilder and found the mate she had so long desired and deserved. They married in September 1984, but sadly, she died in the spring of 1989 of that dreaded disease at the age of 42.

Radner was a giving person. If you asked her for a loan, she refused you. Instead she handed over some money. It was a gift and a great example of her generosity. She had numerous friends – probably anyone she ever met. She wasn't crazy about traveling overseas, especially to Paris. That changed when she and Gene went there. In 1978 she received an Emmy for outstanding performance by a supporting actress in music or variety by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Michael Brecker

In the early 1970s, I had a Columbia LP entitled, *Different Strokes*. It was a sampler of jazz, rock and roll and fusion. On it were releases by Laura Nyro, Bill Puka, Soft Machine, the Flock and Dreams. That last group was formed in the late 1960s by Michael and Randy Brecker. They resembled Chicago and Blood Sweat and Tears and released their self-titled album in 1970. I have the CD. Also on that release besides the Brecker Brothers are Billy Cobham, John Abercrombie, Doug Lubahn and Jeff Kent. Michael played clarinet, alto sax and tenor sax: jazz, funk, fusion, rock and post-bop. At one time he played with Full Moon. He was also a composer.

Besides the *Dreams* release, I also bought Michael's 1988 CD, *Don't Try This At Home*, which I played at home, but not very much. It was quite different and I no longer own it. However, I probably have a dozen CDs on which he participates – maybe more. One 2002 CD is *American Dreams* with Charlie Haden. With that title, I should have known he'd be on it. He performed with just about every musician of his time, including Frank Sinatra, Pat Metheny, Chick Corea, Patty Austin, Don Cherry, Todd Rundgren, George Benson, Jaco Pastorius, Gary Burton, Art Garfunkel, Dave Grusin, Dan Fogelberg, James Taylor and Dave

Brubeck. He was a studio musician of the highest quality and was regarded as the most influential jazz musician since John Coltrane.

In 2007, Brecker was inducted into the Down Beat Jazz Hall of fame and three years before that he received an honorary doctorate from Berklee College of Music. As performer and composer, he collected fifteen Grammy Awards, including one for best instrumental album in jazz, individual or group and best jazz instrumental solo. Sadly he died in January 2007 at the age of 57.

Laura Nyro

Her father, Lou Nigro, was a piano tuner and trumpet player. He was Italian and Russian, etc. and Gilda, her mother was Russian Jewish. The proper Italian pronunciation of his last name was pronounced NEE-gro, but Lou's family preferred NIGH-gro – I think the reason is obvious.

I mentioned the Columbia LP, *Different Strokes* and one of the artists, Laura Nyro. Laura preferred the name, Nyro, which has been mispronounced countless times as Nigh-ro. Though Laura never played the fiddle, her name was meant to be pronounced just like that guy in Rome who didn't put out the fire.

Her song on the Columbia sampler, *Blackpatch* was probably the first one I heard her sing. I had heard her songs before: *Eli's Coming* by Three Dog Night, *Wedding Bell Blues* by the Fifth Dimension and *And When I Die* by Blood, Sweat and Tears, not realizing that she wrote those songs. Those three musical groups weren't the only ones who covered Laura's songs. Others include: Chet Baker, Maynard Ferguson, Petula Clark, Bobbie Gentry, Mama Cass Elliott, the Staple Singers, Melba Moore, Roy Ayers, Carmen McRae, the Supremes, Friends of Distinction and Diana Ross. This is only a partial list.

Nyro was a singer and songwriter who played acoustic as well as electric piano. She played classical, Broadway, girl group, pop, rock and roll, R&B, jazz, doo-wop and soul. Yes, she was another of those fusion musicians. She described it as "the real language of life. That's what I heard as a kid. It felt like joyful communication." She never went commercial with her craft. Her financial success was attributed to her endless touring – supported by very dedicated followers – her recording of close to two-dozen

albums and her songwriting, which other artists gained fame with. *Up on the Roof* was her greatest seller, but she didn't write it – Gerry Goffin and Carol King did.

Laura loved life and people returned that love, despite having to put up with the never-ending need to have things as perfect as could be. She was an animal and human rights activist and even became a vegetarian and later a vegan. Still, she loved her Haagen Dazs chocolate chip ice cream and on many occasions had it snuck past the diet police. She wasn't adverse to partying either.

Laura didn't mind passing around a joint from time to time, even in the studio. On one such occasion, arranger Charlie Calello stated that she got everyone stoned. There was a great deal of laughing and giggling when Laura offered, "Oh, Charlie, I feel the keys on the piano, oh, the black note, I love the way they feel."

Charlie then replied, "Laura, how could you do this – this is CBS, and Arthur Godfrey is in the next room."

Nyro may not have studied at any music school, but she had a feel for the music, like someone who can't read music but can sing and play by ear. This may be why she was so demanding in recording sessions. Laura saw music in terms of colors. She didn't ask for the bass to come in but instead asked for blue. Later on the red would show up followed by the gold.

Once ready to perform, she still wanted everything to be just so. On one occasion in Central Park, she noticed that because of the height of the stage, she couldn't see the first few rows of the audience. She asked one of the stage crew about lowering the stage – an obvious impossibility. She was told that her request was out of the realm of being done. Finally she inquired if they could raise the audience.

Nyro ranks with female singer-songwriters Joni Mitchell and Carol King. In fact I would remove that restriction and offer that she is in the same class of artists who were great singers that could write memorable songs, regardless of sex. She had a great effect on performers of either sex who followed, although women felt her vibes. If a young woman had a top ten hit in the twenty first century and mentioned that she never heard of Laura, it's very possible she was influenced by some artist who was.

Singer-songwriter Wendy Waldman expressed delight with Nyro's music, describing it as, "Happy music, music that expresses joy, the naïve celebration of another day above ground." Joni Mitchell said, "Laura Nyro you can lump me in with, because Laura exerted an influence on me." Suzanne Vega added, "Though we were plain ordinary nasty kids, when she sang she made us beautiful."

Richard Harrington of the Washington Post concluded, "Lots of people were compared to Laura Nyro. Nyro was never compared to anyone." Sony Music Entertainment president Tommy Mottola told Billboard's Jim Bessman, "Laura Nyro was a true original. She laid the groundwork for an entire generation of female singer-songwriters."

Reuter's Matthew Lewis mentioned that Nyro "was shamefully overlooked as a solo artist, especially during her creative heyday from 1966 to 1972." For her work, more accolades should have come her way. In 1990, Laura received the New York Music Hall Awards. It wasn't until 2012 that she was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of fame. She died in Danbury, Connecticut on April 8, 1997. Her son Gil continues her tradition, hoping to become a hip-hop artist. Besides his rap music, he writes short fiction and poems. Read more in *Soul Picnic: The Music And Passion Of Laura Nyro* by Michele Kort.

Lou Rawls

Lou Rawls was a voice actor, recording artist, record producer and songwriter. Quite a few years ago, I got hold of his release, *At Last*. I probably picked it up at the library. It didn't have his smash hit, *Love Is A Hurtin' Thing*, which hit number thirteen on the charts and reached the top of the R&B charts, or *You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine*, which topped both the R&B and easy listening charts and was number two on the pop charts. From the CD, there were half a dozen songs I recorded and still have on cassette, including *If I Were A Musician*, *You Can't Go Home*, *After The Lights Go Down Low*, *Oh, What A Night*, *Room With A View* and the title tune, in which he does a beautiful duet with Dianne Reeves. That's my favorite version of that classic, probably because of Rawls and Reeves, but also accompanied by

George Benson, Cornel Dupree, David Newman, Stanley Turrentine and Steve Khan.

Frank Sinatra mentioned that he had “The classiest singing and silkiest chops in the singing game,” and Rawls sure showed it on *At Last*. I recall my dad liking his smooth handling of the lyrics, as well. The general public agreed, buying over forty million of his records of the sixty albums he released. Lou appeared in the movies, *Leaving Las Vegas* and *Blues Brothers 2000* – you can be sure he added his voice to that one. You could find him on television in *The Big Valley* and *Baywatch*, appearing as a bookie. He did the voices on cartoons such as *Hey Arnold!* and *Garfield*, composing songs for those feline episodes.

In the first season of *Sesame Street*, Rawls made an appearance. During its second season, Lou was a guest star. He was also a host on the BET Jazz cable channel’s Jazz Central. He won three Grammys, all for best male R&B vocal performance. He died in January 2006 of that dreaded disease. He was 72.

The man with the fine baritone voice started the Lou Rawls Parade of Stars Marathon to benefit the United Negro College Fund in 1980. Known since 1998 as An Evening of Stars: A Celebration of Educational Excellence, it features examples of successful African-American students who have taken advantage of it. The United Negro College Fund honored Rawls in 2004. Through 2006, the event has raised over two hundred million dollars from twenty-seven shows.

The lyrics at the beginning of the chapter are from the song, *Velvet from the Blood, Sweat and Tears*’ 1972 release, *New Blood*. The lead singer, who also plays guitar and harmonica, is Steve Katz. By now, I’m sure you know why I chose this song and the lyrics.

12. Wildfire

She comes down from Yellow Mountain
On a dark, flat land she rides
On a pony she named Wildfire
With a whirlwind by her side
On a cold Nebraska night

Oh, they say she died one winter
When there came a killing frost
And the pony she named Wildfire
Busted down its stall
In a blizzard he was lost

The title of the chapter is also the name of a song that Michael Martin Murphey sang in the mid 1970s. He performed western, country and pop music. In May 1975, *Wildfire* was number three on the pop charts and number one on both the adult contemporary charts and the radio and record charts, selling over a million copies. The Recording Industry Association of America recognized it as a gold disc that same year. Contributing to the huge success of the release were the beautiful piano introduction and the smooth harmonies provided by Jimmy Ibbotson and Jeff Hanna of the Nitty Ditty Dirt Band – at this point, they were not quite just dirt. As you can tell it's a sad tale of loss and this chapter deals with more musicians who have died because of sickness that affects so many people, discussed in an earlier chapter, or for more mysterious reasons.

Frank Sinatra

Known also as *Ol' Blue Eyes*, *The Voice* and *The Chairman of the Board* – which he wasn't crazy about – Francis Albert Sinatra was born in Hoboken, New Jersey in December 1915. He was the only child of Antonino Martino Sinatra, known as Marty, and Natalie Della Garaventa, known as Dolly. Frank attended A. J. Demarest High School but was expelled shortly before graduation for his rowdy behavior. At the age of 8, he sang for tips at a

Hoboken bar, and as a teenager, he began singing professionally. Never being able to read music, his learning was by ear.

Frank became a more financially successful entertainer than Sammy Davis, Jr., despite the latter's dancing and impersonations. Girls swooned and his concerts sold out quickly. Sinatra figured the audience paid good money to see him, so he always gave them his best. He was a great entertainer who made sure tickets prices were set so that people could afford to be at his performances. He was very generous, coming to the rescue of others even if he didn't know them. He provided free tickets to fans that wrote him. He helped out with charitable causes, asking only where and when the event was. On many occasions he anonymously gave those in need money to get past their difficulties.

He was a generous tipper and once he handed over a hundred-dollar bill to a valet parker, who thanked him. Frank asked, "Is that the biggest tip you ever had?"

The recipient of the tip said, "No, sir."

Frank must have been a bit perturbed when he replied, "What the? Who the hell gave you more than that?"

"Why you did, Mr. Sinatra. Last week."

Frank had a great sense of humor. When his doctor asked him how he felt in the morning after hanging out with Jack Daniels, he said, "I don't know. I never get up till the afternoon." In the early 1970s, he came out of retirement, saying he did so because his golf handicap was still the same as when he retired. Frank joked that he was away so long that he had to spell out his name for the telephone operator.

He wasn't perfect and loved to party and be around people. When he entered a room, you could feel the electricity. He probably didn't turn down too many drinks. He was married and divorced three times before meeting Barbara Blakeley Marx, who wrote the amusing 2011 book, *Lady Blue Eyes: My Life With Frank*. A double biography, which is also a love story, it recounts Barbara and Frank's courting that eventually resulted in their marriage on July 7, 1976. She stood up to him and there may not have been any other woman who accomplished what she did. They experienced joy being together, but it wasn't always smooth sailing.

Besides Sinatra's involvement with his friend, Mr. Daniels, he was also known for his high jinx and temper. Once Barbara walked out on him and went home, but soon departed for the company of her friend. Frank and Jimmy Van Heusen soon made it to her place and began firing off some cherry bombs. Barbara wasn't there but his mother, Dolly was. She wanted no part of the disturbance so she opened the window and shouted, "If you two _____ don't stop all that noise, I'm calling the police." Hint: the missing word has thirteen letters, four syllables and shouldn't be uttered in church.

The following story may not be completely true, but it's one you've probably heard before with different characters, time and place. Frank was scheduled to perform in Brazil, and on the day of the gig, 175,000 fans assembled at Rio's Maracana Stadium. Note: that's not Macarena. Shortly before the concert, the rains dropped from the heavens, drenching the audience, especially those without umbrellas. Sinatra took the stage and noted that the rain had ceased. He began performing and when he came to his smash hit, *Strangers in the Night*, he was emotionally overwhelmed and couldn't sing. The crowd began to sing the song in English: *Strangers in the night, exchanging glances. Wondering in the night, what were the chances.* Tears streamed down Sinatra's face and he eventually joined in. The concert continued and when it was over, the rain started up again. Maybe it was *That Old Black Magic*.

Besides being a singer of swing, big band, pop and jazz, he was also a director, producer, conductor and actor, being in over twenty movies and appearing on television on numerous occasions. Despite his shortcomings, he was a voracious reader and loved doing crossword puzzles, which he dove into frequently.

Sinatra won six Lifetime Achievement Awards, The Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award, two Academy Awards, four Golden Globes, two Golden Laurel Awards, a Golden Apple Award for male star of the year and three other Golden Apples for least cooperative actor. All right, he wasn't perfect, but he has many other awards including three honorary Doctorates and one from the Kennedy Center. He was inducted into the Big Band and Jazz Hall of Fame, the National Broadcasters Hall of Fame, the New Jersey Hall of Fame, the Hit Parade Hall of fame and has three stars on

the Hollywood Walk of Fame, one each for recording, television and movies. In 2001, the BBC said that he was the Greatest Voice of the Twentieth Century. In his honor every December 12th (his birthday), blue lights light up the Empire State Building. Finally, named after him is an asteroid – not to be confused with those three hemorrhoid Golden Apples.

Jim Pepper

James G. Pepper was born in Salem, Oregon of Native American ancestry. He was a singer, composer, jazz saxophonist and a pioneer of fusion jazz. In the mid 1960s, his band, the Free Spirits, which included Larry Coryell on guitar, blended rock and jazz. Of musical groups that combined these two types of music, it was credited as being the first. Pepper played flute, tenor and soprano sax. Jim was from the Kaw and Creek heritage and he also mixed Native American music with jazz.

Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry offered suggestions that he blend jazz with music of the Native culture, which he did. On his 1988 CD, *The Path*, you can see this mix as well as the influence of Coleman. There is also a beautiful version of the song, *Hello Young Lovers* from the Broadway play, *The King and I*. One of my favorites on the release is a peyote song of the Native American Church, *Witchi Tia To*, which was a near-hit single and which Jim wrote. Numerous artists have recorded it, including Brewer and Shipley, Jane Bunnett, Ralph Towner, Harper's Bizarre, as well as an unreleased version by the Supremes.

Pepper performed at many pow-wows and in 1980 played at the Kennedy Performing Arts Center in the nation's capital in a benefit for Native American self-awareness, Night of the First Americans. For a short time, he was a member of the band, Everything is Everything, which wasn't around long. He performed in Europe and had a combination of seven releases on albums and CDs. Jim recorded with Don Cherry, John Scofield, Paul Motian and Mal Waldron. He died of that dreaded sickness in 1992 at the age of 50.

A few years after his death, *The Music of Jim Pepper* was recorded with a jazz group and symphony orchestra under the direction of Gunther Schuller. In 1999, Pepper was awarded with a

Lifetime Musical Achievement and a year later was inducted into the Music Hall of Fame of Native Americans. For his musical contributions, the Oregon Legislative Assembly honored him in 2005 and in 2007. His saxophone and hat were received by the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC.

Duke Ellington

Edward Kennedy Ellington was born in 1899 at his grandfather's house in Washington, DC. As a child, Ellington loved sports and during a baseball game a flying bat bonked him on the head. His mother was nearby and took him to the doctor and then she decided that if he played the piano, he would be spared further sports danger. Edward didn't take to the piano at first but upon hearing some ragtime, he was hooked and wanted to play.

Duke was dedicated to being a success and played piano, led an orchestra, composed and made arrangements for the group. In his early days, he also had other jobs at the same time, but his real love was music. He was a true artist, who saw the music in colors, just like Laura Nyro. When things got tough, he didn't fire band members but paid them out of his own pocket to keep them together. He was an amazing man. Once he was asked to write music for a play – a task that usually required several months. He stayed up all night and had four songs that he turned over for *Chocolate Kiddies*, which played for two years in Berlin. The promoter made a fortune but Ellington didn't see a cent from it.

The Ellington Band played at the Hollywood Club on West 49th in New York – a basement venue that seemed to be catching fire quite often. The owner, who probably was a gangster, advised them to remove all their instruments one night since there was going to be an accident. When questioned by the authorities, Ellington denied knowing anyone in the mob. He probably knew them all. On one occasion thugs tried to extort some money from Duke, but Capone told them to cease. Ellington was never bothered again.

Ellington and his band members played gags on each other from time to time. It was a way of releasing tension. One time, Duke was half asleep when he joined some men climbing onto a bus. He was soon sitting with prisoners on their way to San

Quentin. Fortunately, the road manager chased down the bus and rescued Ellington.

His frequently had engagements in Europe. At one of these jaunts, the only way to get there was by boat. Ellington wasn't thrilled about hopping aboard. His mother scared him off with one story and he knew about the Titanic – the boat, not the flick. The captain tried to calm him saying the boat was steered by an automatic pilot. Duke wondered how that type of pilot could see an iceberg. In later years, the band successfully toured the Near East, Africa, the Orient, South and Central America, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

In 1943, his orchestra – the first African-American group to play at Carnegie Hall – performed *Black, Brown and Beige*, a merging of classical, jazz and spirituals. In his life, Duke also covered blues, pop, movie music, show tunes and sacred music. Ellington transformed race music – the uncultured and vulgar – to the music of the decade in the 1920s. To a New York Times reporter he stated that he wasn't playing jazz, but instead the natural feelings of the people. Someone wrote a letter advising him to take his jungle music with him back to Africa. Duke's reply was that it was impossible since the blood of the American Negro was so mixed with that of the letter writer that Ellington might not be accepted in Africa.

In 1932, *Creole Rhapsody* won an award for best work by a new composer. In 1959, he won three Grammys for the motion picture *Anatomy of a Murder*. He also wrote for the movies, *Assault on a Queen* and *Change of Mind*. The United States, Chad and Togo honored Ellington with postage stamps. I won't list all the awards that Duke and his orchestra accumulated, since there are so many – you can find more than three hundred of them at the Smithsonian Institute. Wendie C. Old's 1996 book, *Duke Ellington: Giant of Jazz* gives more details on his life. One word there in the title says it all: he was a giant.

He died on May 25, 1974 at age 75. His legacy lives on in the Duke Ellington School of Arts in the nation's capital, a few miles from where he lived. Langston Hughes offered that if he were rich, he would have bought a house in Harlem and had chimes playing Duke's tunes. Ellington proved to be beyond any category ever invented.

Michael Jackson

Michael Joe Jackson – not Joseph as many people were led to believe – was born in Gary, Indiana in August 1958, the eighth of ten children of Joseph Walter Jackson and Katherine Esther Scruse, whose grandparents had been cotton farmers in Alabama. Katherine's great-grandfather was a slave to a family named Scruse. There was also Native American blood in the family – from the Blackfoot and Choctaw tribes. Michael's siblings in order from oldest to youngest, are Rebbie, Jackie, Tito, Jermaine, La Toya, Marlon, Randy and Janet. A twin brother of Marlon, Brandon, died shortly after birth.

Katherine, also known as Katie, had a beautiful voice while Joseph was a steelworker who played in an R&B band, the Falcons. Without his dictatorial driving directions, the Jackson Five may never have reached the heights they did. Of course, Michael took them even higher. This was one musical family that may not have been matched by any other. I'm moving ahead of the narrative here, but in 1974, the Jacksons – including Rebbie, La Toya and Janet – performed in Las Vegas. They must have done all right because they were invited back a few more times.

Michael was a musical giant even as a child. He sang and danced and people took notice. When Sammy Davis, Jr. saw and heard the lad perform, he was astonished, saying, "This kid's not supposed to know so much at his age." Similar words were said about Davis when he dazzled others at a similar age.

Michael was described as highly inquisitive, nosy, sensitive, possessing a great sense of humor and a first class prankster. When his brothers fell asleep with their mouths open, he would place a piece of paper on their bottom lip with the words, "My breath smells." The brothers also roped Michael into going into their parents' bedroom while they were sleeping and going through Joseph's pants pockets, which were lying on the floor, in search of loose change. There may have been quarters and dimes on occasion, but usually it was just pennies and nickels, but Michael brought home the candy money. It was later when Joseph and Katie admitted that they weren't asleep but admired the young lad and had smiled.

Randy was a bit young – he would join them later – so the other five brothers became the Jackson Five. With Michael leading the way, they performed and mesmerized the audience, but Barry Gordy of Motown was reluctant to hire them at first. Eventually he heard them and changed his mind, promising them they would soon have three number one hits. They accomplished that with *I Want You Back*, *ABC* and *The Love You Save*.

The Jackson Five were a sensation and soon were running for their lives. Paparazzi were bad news but nothing compared with screaming fans. Privacy was no longer offered them. The artists fled the performances on numerous occasions and ran for the limousine. Some concerts were halted because of unruly fans. It got worse as stalkers soon showed up, soon described as *Billie Jeans*. You can imagine some of the other harassments and false charges levied against the Jacksons, including racism. When the second youngest brother witnessed that, he wondered how people could act that way.

In 1986, Michael was diagnosed with lupus and vitiligo. Both made Michael sensitive to light. Vitiligo results in blotches of dark and light skin, brought about when body cells responsible for pigmentation malfunction or die. The cause could be genetic – Jermaine also had a very mild case of it – stress, viral or neural. The tabloids weren't too accurate in reporting this matter, even the mainstream media.

The music of Jackson Five embellished soul, R&B, funk, disco, rock and roll and even bubblegum pop – somebody had to do it. They sold one hundred million singles with hits in the Billboard Hot 100 as well as the R&B chart. Besides their smash hits at the top on their first releases, they also followed those with top five hits and kept the cash registers at Motown busy. At first they had songwriters create the songs for them, but eventually they began writing and producing themselves.

The five brothers managed fifteen dates in 1970 before their national tour the following year, which involved forty-six dates. As brothers, they were very supportive of each other and Michael still was up to an occasional prank. Bill Bray was an ex-detective who traveled with them, who they nicknamed, *Shack Pappy*. He could take a joke and at times dozed before a gig.

Michael tied his shoelaces together and on awaking Bill fell flat on his face.

In July 1977, Michael visited Jermaine at his Malibu house. The former was in the ocean, but Jermaine kept an eye on him. When he noticed that Michael seemed to be in trouble, he ran to his rescue. The younger brother was gasping and Jermaine drove him to the Malibu Emergency Hospital, breaking a few speed records at the time in his Mercedes. It was discovered that Michael had pleurisy, but after a few hours was discharged. On the way home Michael said, "That was the most frightening journey ever."

His older brother added, "Yeah, you had me worried, too."

"No Erms!" Michael said. "Your driving! It was scarier than being in the water."

Guitarist Phil Upchurch had played with the Woody Herman Band, Dee Clark and Curtis Mayfield. He met the Jackson Brothers after a show and mentioned working on a demo with the group. Michael asked Phil for his autograph and he obliged. The young lad prized it and a few years later, Phil asked Michael for his autograph. He also played on the latter's album, *Off the Wall*.

Besides being a singer and dancer, Michael was an arranger, choreographer, songwriter, businessman, music producer, philanthropist and actor, referred to as the *King of Pop*. His music was soul, pop, disco, dance, R&B, swing and funk. He released ten albums and there were nine movies and videos that he was in. He sold four hundred million records, including thirteen number one singles. He received thirteen Grammys – including the Lifetime Achievement Award and Legend Award – twenty-six American Music Awards, including American Music Award Artist of the Century and two Millennium Awards: Bambi Pop Artist and World Music Awards' Best-Selling Pop Male Artist. He has many Guinness World Records – eight in 2006 alone. The 2000 Guinness Book of Records recognized him as supporter of more charities than any other pop star: 39. He has Honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters from Fisk University and the United Negro College Fund. He was a double inductee into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, inducted into the Songwriters' Hall of Fame, the Vocal Hall of Fame, the Dance Hall of Fame and Hollywood Walk of Fame.

As much as Jackson loved the fame, fortune and thrill of being on stage, he found more joy in helping those less fortunate, especially children throughout the world, in any way he could. On his way from the airport to his hotel in Mumbai, he was riding in an open van and standing to take in the people. Suddenly he asked the driver to stop, he got down and out of the vehicle and began dancing with the children. They were all smiling. He soon passed out candy to them – he had done the same as a young child despite the fact that his family was struggling – and went on his way. This was repeated a few more times that day. On the last day at his hotel, he trashed his room – but in a polite way. He signed his name to pillows, furniture and towels and then left a note to sell everything off and give the proceeds to charity, which resulted in a small fortune.

In early 2009, Michael was getting ready for the *This Is It* Tour, which was to take place over ten days. There was so much demand that management added forty extra dates, which sold out on-line within five hours. Michael wasn't on stage for that tour, as he died on June 29th of that year, but not by what many thought was the cause: a drug overdose. His death was from acute propofol and benzodiazepine intoxication, administered by a doctor who wasn't concerned about the Hippocratic oath. You can read more in his brother Jermaine's insightful, engaging and spiritual 2011 book, *You Are Not Alone Michael: Through A Brother's Eyes*.

In January 2011, Jermaine and his wife, Halima, went to Senegal to visit friends. After spending time with them, they drove for three hours to a community that had neither electricity, water nor much of anything else. They met a 97-year old sage named Waleef, who spoke little, if any, English, but an interpreter was on hand. Waleef blessed them and wished them a safe journey. Halima then asked if he had heard of Barack Obama. There was no recognition of the name so she then asked if he knew of Michael Jackson. In this case there was recognition and Jermaine wondered how in an area so remote they had heard of his brother. Soon it was revealed that Jermaine was Michael's brother and before long children flocked to the area shouting, "Michael Jackson! Michael Jackson! Michael Jackson!" This was the power of Michael and his legacy.

Besides the families of Brown, Jackson, Marsalis, Osmond and others I have mentioned, you probably know that this barely scratches the surface of talented musicians within one clan. Besides the Motown family, we shouldn't omit the Stax influence. The former may have been known as *Hitsville*, but the latter we all know as *Soulsville U. S. A.* Robert M. J. Bowman's 1997 book, *Soulsville U. S. A.: The Story Of Stax Records* may be a trifle long, but it tells of the Memphis Sound that came out of that city in Tennessee – that of rhythm and blues. This captivating book provides us with other musical families, many of whom we weren't aware, as well as short histories of the producers, performers and the hits that filled our radios a few decades ago. I recommend it very highly.

John Coltrane

John Coltrane released his fifth record in 1960, *Giant Steps*, on Atlantic Records. It expressed the direction jazz was taking at the time, but it also said something about music in general. I first heard Coltrane's music on the 1965 LP, *Selflessness*, from a record club grab bag. There were only three selections on the record, *I Want To Talk About You*, *My Favorite Things* and the almost fifteen minute title track. Here, the song from *The Sound of Music*, the Broadway musical and movie, is seventeen and half minutes in duration, and a pure joy to listen to. From then on, I was hooked. A local radio station used the tune as a sign on to a weekly jazz program and I'm sure it wasn't the only show that did.

Jazz greats of the past include Charlie *Bird* Parker, Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Count Basie and Miles Davis, but none compare to Coltrane and his contribution to music. People who went to his concert raved and cheered while others in the audience weren't so impressed – they actually walked out. This happened quite often because John was experimenting with new kinds of music as well as other music forms. He listened to music from the Middle East, the Orient, India and anything else he could. You could hear those influences in what he played. His music was described by critic Ira Gitler as “sheets of sound.” Abstract expressionist painter Willem de Kooning stated, “He's almost like an Einstein of music.” I couldn't agree more.

Coltrane and I share the same birthday, except for the year. As an aside, so does Jay Scott Greenspan, better known as George on *Seinfeld*. If you don't agree that Jason Alexander is a musician, you missed the episodes where he sang – he also danced. Jason starred on Broadway and you can see him in the 1995 TV version of *Bye Bye Birdie*. Other musicians that share my birthday are Roy Buchanan, Jermaine Dupri, Lita Ford, Julio Iglesias, Bruce Springsteen and Ani DiFranco.

Returning to Coltrane, if you look at the CD of his that I have, *My Favorite Things*, it mentions that he was born in Hamlet, New York. Actually, he was born in Hamlet, North Carolina. His life was far from easy as he experienced discrimination. His family moved to Tampa because of it. At the end of the 1930s, within a few months, his elderly aunt in Virginia died, then his grandfather, 79-year old Reverend William Blair, followed by John's father, Reverend Blair's widow, Alice, and John's uncle, Goler Lyerly. These deaths had to have affected him.

Coltrane had bad eating habits, indulging in junk food and too much candy. This was brought about because of his being on the road so much. In general, he may have had an eating disorder, as shown by his big frame. He got involved with drugs, too, but in later life he overcame them – cold turkey. Though he died of that dreaded disease on July 17, 1967 in Huntington, New York at the age of 40, his food and drug habits probably contributed to his death.

I mentioned the Coltrane book by Rachel Barron earlier. He was very quiet and reserved, but expressed himself through his music. He was a jazz revolutionary because he listened to every type of music he could and incorporated much into his own recordings and performances, always experimenting. He was very spiritual and investigated what various religions were all about. Barron and many of Coltrane's other biographers credited his experimentation and spirituality with the notes that came out of his saxophone as he developed. However, I think it was a reflection of his life and troubling times: the assassinations; civil unrest; Vietnam in the 1960s; the racial discrimination even a century after the Civil War; his life of travel. He was totally against war. What he played was the music of strife, violence, struggle and

consternation. His many albums of conventional jazz displayed the peace he was always seeking.

You could see what John did as fusion but also as evolution. He influenced countless musicians, even those who didn't go the way of avant garde jazz. He listened to classical music and probably heard some Beethoven, such as his *Ninth Symphony*. Many of Coltrane's performances were rejected by fans, but listening to his version of *My Favorite Things* was truly the sound of music. It was joyful, completely joyful. The notes on the cover are from the beginning of *Joyful, Joyful!*

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee,
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

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1 Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flow'rs before You, Op'ning to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day! 2 All Your works with joy surround You, Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays, Stars and angels sing around You, Center of unbroken praise; Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea, Chanting bird and flowing fountain Praising You eternally!

"The Hymn of Joy" (often called "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" after the first line) is a poem written by Henry van Dyke in 1907 with the intention of musically setting it to the famous "Ode to Joy" melody of the final movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's final symphony, Symphony No. 9. Van Dyke wrote this poem in 1907 while staying at the home of Williams College president Harry Augustus Garfield. He was serving as a guest preacher at Williams at the time. He told his host that the local Berkshire [Chorus: Choir] Joyful, joyful Lord we adore Thee God of Glory, Lord of Love Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee Clearly as the sun above Melt the clouds of sin, sin and sadness Drive the dark of doubt away Drive it away Giver of immortal gladness Fill us Fill us with the light of day Light of day.

[Rapper 1] Check the rhyme Joyful, joyful Lord we adore Thee And in my life I could not afford Thee 'Cos as youngster I came to know That you were the only way to go.