

Talking to New Orleans Project  
Leidy Cook, Noland Stansberry and Bruce Goodrich  
November 12, 2009  
Transcribed by Leidy Cook

(0:00)

LC This is the Tulane Talking to New Orleans project, my name is Leidy Cook. It's November 12. We're at- what's the address here?

NS \_\_\_\_\_.

LC \_\_\_\_\_, in New Orleans.

NS Louisiana.

LC Louisiana. And I'm talking to-

NS My name is Noland Mac Stansberry.

LC Mac, is that your nickname?

NS That's my middle name.

LC Middle name? Do you have any nicknames?

NS I've been called "The Cab Driver", "The Taxi", "Third", "Third and Seventeen", but really my name is Noland. Most people call me Noland.

LC Ok, and you were born in New Orleans?

NS I was born in San Francisco, California. Yes I was.

LC When were you born?

NS I was born in 1958. Yes I was. And my father's name was Larry Stansberry. His father's name was Larry Stansberry. And he was a member of the railroad. Well, he worked on the railroad. Back in the early 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s. He retired in 75, 76, somewhere off in there. And from there, life started. That's when life started.

LC How'd you get over here?

NS Well, I was living in San Francisco with my father, and he passed, and I had to come back to New Orleans. So, when I came back to New Orleans I lived with my grandfather and grandmother and I went to Walter L. Cohen High School. Which I knew some of the people in New Orleans already.

LC What part of town did your grandparents live in?

NS My grandpa- my grandfather lived in Hollygrove, but my mother lived in the 12th Ward.

LC Ah, ok, ok.

NS So when I went to the 12th Ward to live with her a little while, I got acquainted with some people that I really enjoyed being with. It seemed like they knew how to have a good time. And by being with them I found a place called- well, the name of the place was Cousin's at first- and the name changed two, three times. But it was still owned by one person, Robbie Lee Jones. And that's where I got acquainted with the Prince of Wales Social Aid and Pleasure Club.

LC Ok. What year was this? Decade, or whereabouts?

NS I joined the Prince of Wales in the early 90s.

LC Ok.

NS Round, let's see- I met a young lady named Shirley. I married her in '89. So I joined the Prince of Wales in '90, yeah, '91. 1991.

LC That's a while, 28 years [18.]

NS Yes.

LC What made you join Prince of Wales? Aside from the good people at Cousins?

NS At the time I was runnin with- well, they had a guy named Lonzo Landry (sp). Lonzo was the Vice President of the Prince of Wales, and me and him hit it off real good. And we used to have fun, we used to go out places and his slogan was "Don't be scared to have fun". And fun was my middle name at that time. I was wild, I was driving a cab, I was making money and that was the thing to do. You know, you work all day, come home, take care of the kids, the wife, and you go out in the evening and have a drink or two. And Prince of Wales was a bunch of men who loved to have a good time. And I loved to have a good time. And that's the way it went. So when I joined Prince of Wales I was a member. I stayed a member for two years, and at the close of those two years I came across a young man named Norman Diverny. Diverny (sp).

LC How do you spell that?

NS Please don't ask me. Anyway, his nickname was Bo. And Norman Diverny

and Lonzo Landry was good friends (sp). Well, being the Vice President, and Bo was the Business Manager, they hung together. See, most of the people in Prince of Wales, they hang together. They do things together, they go places together.

LC Like you and Bruce.

NS They go to barbecues, they go to outings and stuff- yeah. So it's like a tight bond between them. Once you join this club it's like you join a new family. And you in this family, you don't ever want to leave this family. And that's the way it is.

(5:28)

LC To get back to you, for one second, and then we'll get back to Prince of Wales. Just so we have what you've been up to- when you joined Prince of Wales you were driving a cab.

NS I was driving a cab back in Prince- well, me and my brother was the two youngest cab drivers in the city.

LC In the whole city? How old were you?

NS When I started driving a cab I was 18.

LC Wow.

NS I started driving a cab in 1980, yeah, 1980 I started driving a cab. I started driving a cab before the World Fair got here in '84. Right. Me and my brother was the two youngest cab drivers in the city.

LC How did you- how did that happen?

NS Well, my grandfather bought a cab, and him and my brother worked that cab until they bought another cab. So my brother had his own cab and then my grandfather retired and give me his cab. So, then, since they had a cab sitting out there, nobody wasn't driving it, told me to go to work.

LC So, you were 18 years old. Was there any sort of danger to it, crazy people getting in your cab?

NS I was wild, I was wild, I didn't really care about it because, see, we had a stationary business. We drove from Winn-Dixie. We hauled groceries all day long. And we had a clientele, people who was waiting on us every day. Every day, they had somebody standing out there waiting for their particular cab. So, it was like inheriting the family business.

LC And what are you up to now?

NS Well, right now I'm starting, I have started my own business called "Noland's Honey-do Service".

LC And how long has this--

NS Well, I started this business in February of this year. And basically I do home repair, carpenter work, small hauling, cutting trees down, anything you need done around your house. Yeah.

LC Can you tell me a little bit more about the family that you had that was in the city at the time? Had they always lived here?

NS My mother, yes, was born and raised in New Orleans. But she was raised in the 7th Ward, that's downtown. And my father was raised Uptown. And at that time, they had canals all through the city. The streets wasn't paved like they is right now. Back in the early 30s and 40s they had canals and little bridges that you had to walk over and stuff like that. And the story that I have gotten from my mother and my grandfather is that my father used to ride a bike all the way downtown.

LC All the way down to the 7th Ward to see her?

NS To see here, yeah. So you know, basically the same way things going round here right now. You always going on the other side of town to find your girl.

LC Trust me, I know that.

NS Yeah.

LC Were there any traditions in your family growing up? I guess- well you were 18 when you were here, but were you deep in the second line culture at that age? Would you go out and dance behind?

NS Well, when I moved back to New Orleans, back in '73, when my father died, I followed the second line, the social and pleasure club culture, every weekend. My grandfather and grandmother didn't know where I was on Sundays. Because I'd get up on Sunday morning, I'd go to church, come home from church, soon as I come home from church and close, I hit the door. From 12 o'clock until 6:30, 7 o'clock they didn't know where I was. But, if they had a second line, I was there. So, basically, that's part of my life is, I started growing up. And the only one club that I could really recall when I was a small boy was the Young Men. When I would stand on Danneel Street, 7th and Danneel, every year the Young Men would come down Danneel Street and turn at Harmony. And I always wonder why, and I see the pretty colors, ooh I liked that, and I wanted to be part of that, but I just didn't know the ins and out about it. Up until I got older. And once I got

older and I had to find out what you do and how you go about doing it and who you had to know. You see, to get in the club, you have to know somebody. You can't just say 'oh, I'ma join them'. No, you have to know somebody to bring you in. You can't just say 'I want to join this club'. You have to, like, you have to be like- what's the word I'm looking for- initiated.

LC Initiated, yeah.

NS Yeah. You had to be initiated in the club. That's what I'm trying to say, yeah.

(11:20)

LC You mentioned that you would go to church every Sunday. Just out of curiosity, what church?

NS The New Home Missionary Baptist Church.

LC And where is that?

NS The address right now is 1616 Carondelet, and the pastor is Robert Blake.

LC You still go?

NS Well, not often as I should, put it like that.

LC Ok, let's talk about Prince of Wales.

NS Let's talk about the Prince of Wales.

LC First, I guess, well, when Bruce came to our class he talked about this, but, the origin of the name Prince of Wales.

NS The origin of the name Prince of Wales. Ok. The name, well, first of all you have to realize this. The people who started the club in the Prince of Wales worked on the riverfront, or they worked on the railroad. And the railroad is still part of the riverfront. So these men they worked hard, but they were getting the top pay. Say like, 75 dollars back in the 20s was a lot of money to be made in a week. So you can afford to splurge on yourself. You can afford to buy a new car, when other people had to pay their rent. So you had a top of the line job. So you could afford to do this. And when the Prince of Wales got formed, it was men who worked on the riverfront, or either they worked on the railroad. And most of these men, or the majority of them, were scotch drinkers. Most of them drunk J.B. So, if you look at a bottle of J.B. closely, all the way down at the bottom, you'll see that that bottle is dedicated to the Prince of Wales.

LC Do you have a bottle here?

NS Unfortunately I drunk the bottle last night and throwed it away.

LC I'll go look for one, I'll find one.

NS From the smallest bottle, to the biggest bottle, of J.B., you'll find the Prince of Wales under the bottom of it.

LC Can you tell me a little bit, overall, about social aid and pleasure clubs? How did they get started, to your knowledge, and what do they mean, just in general?

NS Well, the name "Social Aid and Pleasure", means you socialize with all clubs, but you aid a person in need. Say like most clubs give small functions to give back to the community. That's when you aiding. Socializing, aiding, pleasure. Well, quite naturally we're gonna have pleasure because we all like, most of em like to drink. Most clubs, most social and pleasure clubs are drinkers. I ain't gonna say alcoholics. I'll say we like to drink. We like to have a good time. We like to dance. And that's a part of our culture. Because early slavery we had to sing and dance to take our mind off our miseries. So, at the same time, if you have a problem you bring it to your club. Your club help you out, and at the same time, make you feel better. So, social aid and pleasure. Yeah.

(15:27)

LC What about Prince of Wales? What makes Prince of Wales a unique club, or- it really was for you, you met these two friends-

NS Lonzo and Bo.

LC - and it became good for you, but is there something else that sets it apart from other clubs, aside from its age? Or perhaps its age is what sets it apart?

NS Well, you have to realize Prince of Wales is one of the three oldest clubs. There's the Prince of Wales, that's established in 1928; you have the Jolly Bunch, which I have no idea how old they are, and I do know the President, but every time I see him I forget to ask him the questions I want to ask. Because the Jolly Bunch was the original club that I was supposed to join.

LC Oh, I see.

NS Yeah. Because me and the President, Neece, was tight. And I was supposed to join that club. But something happened, and the Jolly Bunch kinda faded out. And I was trying to find out what happened to them, but I couldn't get the ins and the outs and also the details about it. And there's another club, called the Young Men. Which I never did want to join the Young Men. Something about them I just didn't want. It was too many of 'em. See, the Prince of Wales is a close-knit club.

You get a chance to meet and talk to each and every person, each and every individual, one on one. You can meet em in the street and they'll still be the same. In other words, they're not- I'm not gonna say two-faced- but I'ma say they're always the same. Put it like that, they're always the same no matter where you see them at. And that's the kind of people that I want to be around. People who never change, always the same. They're not grouchy, they're not grumpy. But if they are in one of the moods, you can always talk to them and get them out of that mood.

LC Are there a lot of people that joined up when you joined up? Are there people in the club now who have been in longer than you have?

NS Let's see. When I joined the club, it was me and a guy I went to high school with when I came back to New Orleans. His name is Gregory Overton. He only paraded one year. Me and him joined the club the same time. He only paraded one year. I don't know what happened, he just couldn't hang. But before I joined there was a guy named Alvin Epps, Bruce, Sikes, and there was another guy- here we go. Ok. [Holding a group picture]. This is Alvin Epps, this is the President right now of Prince of Wales. Joe Stern, you know Joe Stern.

LC I met Joe Stern, yeah.

NS Ok, Alvin, Joe William, where is he, Keith, DJ Junior, all three, all four of them joined the club at the same time. There's another one but he's not on here, Sikes.

LC What year was this?

NS What year was this taken? This was taken in '96 or '97. And this was taken at a dance, at a Lady Buckjumpers dance. '96, '97. I took this out of Rock Bottom three years ago.

BG Yeah, when Stanley had it.

NS Oh, when Stanley had it.

BG Tell the other guys for her.

NS Oh, Walter.

BG And the man next to him.

NS Gilbert.

BG Right.

NS This Stanley, this is Gilbert, this Walter, I don't what that guy name is right there. But this is Keith, that's Bo, that's Junior, that's me, that's Lonzo, who was the

President at the time, that's Alvin, that's Joe William, that's his uncle, and that's Joe. Tight knit family.

LC Tight knit family.

NS That's right.

LC It looks like a family portrait, it definitely does.

(20:28)

NS That's the way we roll. Matter of fact I forgot I had this here. And this is the first year that we started wearing the airbrush. The gray, we had the gray dicky outfits with the airbrush.

LC What color is the airbrush? Is it just black with-

NS Black with red.

LC Red around it.

NS Right. Red to highlight.

LC And, what you're wearing in this picture- actually, could you describe it?

NS These are gray dicky outfits.

LC And you're wearing this for a dance?

NS Yeah, we all decided to, we was going to the Lady Buckjumpers dance. Which was, the Lady Buckjumpers is one of the clubs that we affiliate with. Whatever we do, whatever we give, they come to. Whatever they give we go to. See, social and pleasure clubs, we swap, you know. Like say for instance this week the Lady Buckjumpers have a dance. Well we'll go to that dance, we'll have ten tickets and we'll go to that dance. And then at the same time we'll run up a bar tab 'cause we like to drink. And then maybe a month from now, we'll give a dance, and we'll give the Lady Buckjumpers ten tickets, and they'll come back, they'll come to our dance, and they'll drink, and have a good time, and that's what it's all about. Having a good time, you know, leave all your troubles at home. Come out and have a good time. They still gonna be there when you get home anyway. You know, so.

LC How often are these dances? Would you say there's kinda one dance a month someone throws?

NS Well, right now they have 52 social and pleasure clubs. [Pulls down a picture]



- This is a picture of the purple that we had on back in- what year that was- three years ago.
- BG 2000. Two-oh-one.
- NS Two-oh-one.
- BG Two-oh-five.
- NS No, two-oh-six. Yeah, this nine. Two-oh-six. This is two-oh-six. I mean, yeah, this is six, seven, no, eight, no, that's got to be seven. 'Cause that's eight, and that's nine. 2007.
- LC So 2007 was this really really bright purple.
- NS Right.
- LC So how do you choose the colors?
- NS Well we, what we do is- the club members. Each club member pick a color, and then we decide, then we all get together and we vote on the colors. To see whether or not, you know, we like the color or not. Because you have to pick colors that's gonna coordinate, that go together. Say for instance this powder blue here, I mean this purple. The light purple coordinates with the dark purple. It brings it out. Just like the powder blue and the royal blue and the navy blue brings this blue out. But this year we was trying, we was going for something altogether different. That's why we came out with the peach. You try to bring, you try to do colors that nobody has already done.
- LC That was brilliant, yeah.
- NS So when we came out with the peach, and olive green, we haven't- see, most gentlemen in the Prince of Wales, we go to other social and pleasure club's parades, just to see their colors. The colors, you watch, you look at the color of their suits, the color of their shoes, the color of their hats, the streamers, the fans, the plumes. You look for everything. Because detail is what makes the suit. You have to watch everything. Otherwise it's not gonna coordinate. See how this coordinates with that? This coordinates with this? And this blows em clean away.
- LC That was, yeah, that was sick.
- NS That's what I'm saying. So, it's the colors. You have to be able to pick out the colors in order for to make it work. Just like that picture right there behind you. Take that picture, that last picture down. The one I just put up there. Yes, that one. Don't worry about all that falling on the ground. Look at this picture. Look at the grass, and look at the shoes. Look at the hat, and look at the trees. All that

coordinates, all that goes in together, right? That's how you pick them colors. You have to pick something that's gonna blend in, and also stand out.

(25:54)

LC When does the selection process start?

NS We start picking new colors right after we parade. Matter of fact we pick colors before we parade, for the next year. But it's- we pick the colors, but we still had to bring them to the club to vote on. I mean, we just can't say we're gonna do this, or we're gonna do that. No, we are a voting club. But, there are some things that we don't vote on, that you have to take the initiative to do.

LC What would those things be?

NS Like the stop at Commander's Palace.

LC Right.

NS Some things you just can't wait for the two weeks for to do. You have to take initiative and go ahead on it and do it, and then bring it. That's when you, Vice President or the business manager, you got to take the initiative to make your club move in the right direction. Because you can't depend on- see, cause everybody in the club have a job. The President have a job, the Vice President have a job, the business manager have a job, the assistant business manager, recording secretary, secretary. Each person have they job, in order for to make your club function. If they're not doing they job that means whoever below them or above them have to do they job. So you have to pitch in. And that's the way Prince of Wales work. And that's why I love it.

LC We should clarify, because I don't think you mentioned it, that you are the Vice President.

NS I am the Vice President of Prince of Wales.

LC How long have you been the Vice President?

NS Right now I've been the Vice President for two years.

LC And is there a sort of hierarchy you have to go through to become the Vice President?

NS You have to come through the chain of command. See, you can't be the President without knowing what the Vice President or business manager do. Otherwise, your club is not going to be ran sufficiently. See, when I started in this club I was a member, just like Alvin. Me and Alvin was members at the same

time. Alvin became recording secretary, and I became business manager, I mean assistant business manager. See because you have to learn from the person above you. Like Bo took my hand and brought me along to show me his job. Just like I'm taking Bruce along to show him my job. Where I showed him how to do his job, also my job too. So that way, if something was to happen that I wouldn't be able to fulfill my obligation, we have somebody who know how to do my job. That way the club is always functioning as a whole. Ok?

LC I see, I definitely see. I just wanted to make sure that we got on tape, Vice President.

NS Yeah, yeah. I'm still here with you.

LC I guess, we've already touched a lot on this, but what would you say the purpose of the club is? I mean, we've talked about how it's a family for you guys, but for the public, I guess, what does Prince of Wales do or how does it serve?

NS Well, the Prince of Wales is a- how should I put this- we are part of a community. But at the same time our members are from all over the city. We have some members staying East, some stay in Gentilly, some stay in Carrollton, some stay uptown, some stay downtown, some stay cross the river. We have a few club members that's- we have one member that's, where he say he's gonna come back this year, that stays in Houston. We've had members from out of town. So, really, we all are- we're still a family, but we have people from all over that comes. And then when we parade each year we have people come from all over the world.

(30:43)

LC Yeah, you did. Everyone I talked to, I talked to people in town from New York City for like one day.

NS We had people come from Atlanta, Houston, Chicago, New York. Pick a part of the United States and, yeah. We are, we draw people. We like a magnet that draws people who want to come to have a good time. And they know that when we parade we're gonna have a good time. Won't be no fighting, no shooting. They might have something going on, but it won't happen inside our parade. Maybe five blocks this way or five blocks the other way, or round the corner, not eight, nine blocks, but it's not gonna happen right there where we are. Because we try to keep all the violence and all the foolishness down. It's like on our flyers we always put 'Leave your attitudes and your guns at home.

BG And your dogs.

NS Leave your dogs and your cats and all that at home.

LC And your troubles.

NS Leave all your troubles at home. When you come out here, come out here to have a good time, because that's what we all about. After we have our parade, if you want something to eat, come on in, we got something to eat, we can feed you too.

LC I didn't know that, I should have stuck around.

NS You should have stuck around, we had plenty food. We always have food.

LC Next year, next year.

NS That's what you're saying, you're saying next year. But always remember, whenever the Prince of Wales goes somewhere, they always have plenty of something to eat, and they keep something to drink.

LC Well, how did this year's parade go? Was it a typical parade? Was the crowd size normal?

NS Oh, this year the parade was lovely. I mean, it went off without a hitch. We didn't have any problems. The crowd was beautiful. I believe, let's see, from the time- the weather was beautiful.

LC The weather was perfect.

NS And it was supposed to rain.

LC I know!

NS But guess what, but guess what. See, the difference between us and the rest of the clubs is that, before we hit the street, we go to church. We go to church, and have the pastor to bless us.

LC All as a group you go.

NS The whole club, we go to church. And after we go to church, then we come out, we take our pictures, then we go to Rock Bottom. And proceed. Now, if you noticed, this year, the whole day was pretty, up until the time when the parade was over with. And when the parade was over with-

LC Then the rain came.

NS Then it rained. Not a drop fell until after the parade was over with. Nothing but the Lord can do that, that's right.

LC Which church was it you guys went to, this past year?

NS Church was on Upperline.

BG Upperline and- I can't think of the name.

NS I really don't know the name of the church. Our senior, our senior member in the club, he goes to that church regularly. And that's who invited us to come up there to that church. His name is Sidney Morris. He is the senior member of the club. Matter of fact, let's see, there's Sidney Morris, there's Henry, can't think of his last- Henry William, we call him Trice, and Joe Stern. That's the three oldest members of the club. After that there's Alvin Epps, Noland Stansberry, Walter. I don't know what Walter's last name is. Walter's just a member. And from there we have Bruce Goodrich, Bruce Goodrich, Stan, I never did know Stan's last name either. I supposed to know all that. When you used to calling people by their first name all the time you never do ask them what their last name is. When you see 'em, 'Hey Stan...'. It's something that really you don't, really don't, I mean, I think you really supposed to know it, but sometimes you just don't have time to ask for it. 'Cause you be having such a good time, you don't have time to think about, 'Oh, what his last name is?'. You know that? I'm only sure that you know a couple of people you don't know their last name.

(36:11)

LC I know a fair amount of people, yeah, it's only first name basis.

NS First name basis, yeah. But you have a good time with 'em. But you couldn't say what their last name is. See? So, I'm human. I'm human.

LC No, absolutely. Tell me about the route, is it the same route every year? And Bruce talks about going into Central City and then coming back, he calls it sassy and sweet?

BG Right.

NS See, we do, we basically keep the same route every year. We start at Rock Bottom, we leave Rock Bottom and go down Peniston the wrong way, one block, till we get to Annunciation, then we turn Annunciation and we have the march for all the people who done passed in the club. Which we stop by Mr. Jimmy Parker's house. Mr. Jimmy was the President for over 35 years. He stayed the President a long time. He stayed, Mr. Jimmy- matter of fact when I joined the club Mr. Jimmy was the president. Jimmy Parker was the President, Lonzo Landry was the Vice President, Norman Diverny was the business manager, they had a young man named Caboo, (sp) I can't think of what his name, what his real name was. He was the Sergeant-at-Arms. Ooh boy, ooh, when I joined the club it wasn't nothing nice. They had, I think we had sixteen members. All men. We had no women. All men. And oh man, it wasn't nothing nice in there. We had, our

clubhouse was on Magazine St., at a place called Eddie's Lounge, on Magazine. We used to have to, the clubhouse was in the back. You had to go by the bar and you had to pass on the side of the bar and go up the steps to the clubhouse, and, man, we used to have some fun. Sixteen men in there, having, just talking and running their mouth and aw, it was chaotic. But, Mr. Jimmy always kept things in order. He kept a book. The President kept a book, the Vice President kept a book, the business manager kept a book, the assistant business manager kept a book, the recording secretary kept a book. That way, everything always was the same. Whatever was collected on one book, was on another book. There was never a discrepancy in the books. That way, if something, say, ok, we gonna take out a hundred- we gonna take out, well, we got sixteen members, we gonna take out 40 dollars at the club meeting, so we can have something, we can have us a drink. Which we used to do that all the time. So, before anybody leave, each one of 'em had to take that 40 dollars off the books, off the books. That way all the books, no matter what went on, all the books had the same thing. See, now since we started this new thing, since we started this new thing with the 5 dollars, see, we pay our club dues, and then we put the 5 dollars, extra 5 dollars up for emergency fund. That's in case somebody gets sick, or somebody die, close, that we have to buy flowers, or we have to buy medicine, or whatever the case may be, you won't have to go into the club money.

(40:15)

LC How much are the dues?

NS Right now?

LC Right now.

NS 100 dollars.

LC How much were they when you started?

NS Ooh. When I started, club dues was 25 dollars a month. 25, I think it was, 25 dollars a month.

LC Can we talk about your book for a second? Can I see it? So, we'll just describe this I guess. This, you kept this book since ninety-

NS Five.

LC Ninety-five, you said.

NS Let's say '98. Ok. '95.

LC And so it's roll calls of meetings?

NS Yeah, this is roll calls. This is roll calls over here, but this is dues. Let's see, we had L'il Bruh, Joe, Bruce, Alvin, Arthur- that's who I was thinking about, Arthur, Arthur was Lonzo's brother-in-law- Michael, Lonzo, Joe William, Noland that's me, Timmy, Timothy- who the hell is that. Yeah, Timothy, that's what his name was. On the gray picture. Timothy. Timothy, Trice, Bo, Davey, Alamo, Renee, and Melvin.

BG You're missing DJ Junior.

NS He wasn't in the club in '95.

BG He came in the next year?

NS He came the next year. Renee, Renee gone to the Young Men. Melvin, I don't know what happened to him. Renee gone to the Young Men, Lonzo dead, Davey dead, Bo in Houston, \_\_\_\_\_, I don't know what happened to Timothy, I'm the Vice President and Joe William retired, he living in Mississippi.

BG He has a little son, the little guy did all the dancing.

LC Yeah.

NS I don't know what happened to Michael, I don't know what's happening with Arthur. I haven't seen Arthur in eight, nine years. Alvin is the President now. Bruce is dead, somebody shot him. Joe Stern, you know Joe Stern is still recording secretary, and L'il Bruh.

LC And you have receipts in here?

NS Yes I do.

LC And the receipts are from paying for the suits, or?

NS No, the receipts are from- I have receipts- I wouldn't have the receipts for the suits and stuff like that, because Lonzo and Bo would have kept them. No, dues were 20 dollars. Dues were 20 dollars a month when I joined the club.

LC Ah, I see.

NS That's right. See? That's from February, April, May, June, July, August, we didn't pay dues in September 'cause September was when we paraded. It's the following year, ok, October, November, December, that's when we started collecting dues again in October, because we started having Christmas parties and New Year's parties, you know we like to party.

LC Where were some of these Christmas or New Year's parties held?

NS A place called Gene's. On Martin Luther King and St. Charles. It's right, ok, do you know where the Voodoo, what's that, the Voodoo BBQ is?

LC Yeah, that's where it was?

NS Ok, right behind there is an upstairs house, upstairs and downstairs, that's Gene's.

LC Would you have a live band?

NS Yeah, we'd have a band.

LC I mean, I figured. So who would play?

NS Let's see. At the time, the Hot 8 was just starting out, so Hot 8 was our band. But before the Hot 8, Pinstripe was our band. We used to have a contract with Pinstripe. Pinstripe was our band for everything. One year we used, no, one year we used Rebirth. I think that was, no, that was, no, well when we first used Rebirth, the first time we used Rebirth was at our 70th anniversary and what happened was, they jumped on our cameraman and disrupted our parade. Rebirth did that. Yes. And we sued 'em. Yeah. And we didn't use Rebirth no more. We haven't used Rebirth for 10 years. Until this, last year, last year when we had our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Hot 8 just so happened to be overseas. So. And Rebirth volunteered. Course we still had to pay them for the parade. That's when we used Rebirth again. But we hadn't used Rebirth in 10 years. Hot 8 was our band.

(46:28)

LC And this past year it was the Stooges.

NS Right, because Hot 8 was out of town again.

LC Again?

NS Their business manager booked them to be in- where they was at? Illinois? Oregon, I think it was in Oregon. For a homecoming. And when we talked to them they said the business manager did that cause they didn't want to miss our parade. Matter of fact, Rebirth, I mean Hot 8 was at the parade. They came to our parade. They met us on Magazine, I mean, they met us on Louisiana Avenue and Tchoupitoulas.

LC I had no idea they were there.

NS Yeah. They didn't bring their gear with 'em, but they was there. Because Hot 8, when they first started, they was fresh out of Fortier. And nobody wouldn't give



'em a break. Nobody wouldn't hire 'em. And we did. We did. Always give a young man a chance, you know? We gave 'em a chance. Gave 'em their start, matter of fact. We use 'em every year, since then. For ten years. Well, nine. They didn't make it to the 10th year. This a dance that we had, in February. February the 25th. And this is how much we collected at the door. \$130.

LC At the door.

NS That was back- \$130 was-

BG The dance was 2 dollars a ticket? One dollar a ticket?

NS The dance was 5 dollars a ticket. 5 dollars, 6 dollars at the door. It was cheap. It was real cheap. I oughta have a ticket in here somewhere, from somebody dance. Matter of fact, look how many different clubs they had ok, Lady Jetsetters, Lady Buckjumpers, Lady Sequins. They had a bunch of lady clubs. They had a bunch of lady clubs. They had more lady clubs than they had men clubs. Devastating Ladies. They don't parade no more. Devastating Ladies, Lady Sequins, don't even parade no more. Lady Buckjumpers still parade. They come out in, what, January. They start back in the Calliope. Lady Buckjumpers' a part of the Calliope High Steppers. Lady Buckjumpers, Lady Buckjumpers, West Bank Steppers, Lady Jetsetters, Ladies of Leisure, Lucky Ladies. I mean, this book goes on and on and on.

LC When did all the lady clubs start to come on the scene? Is that a more recent development?

NS Most of these clubs was already up and running when I started in. Come on out of there, let me see what this says. This been in here a long time. That's where we used to get our liquor from, City Wholesale. City Wholesale Liquor. Huh, High Stepper Brass Band. When the last time you heard of them?

(50:17)

BG Been a while.

NS High Stepper Brass Band. I used to have a, I was the business manager, assistant business manager. I kept everything, everything. Dances that we used to go to. Who that is? Black Magic Ladies. Black Magic Ladies, that's the club in Hollygrove?

LC Do they still parade?

NS No. Devastating Ladies, that's part of Devastating Men. They club was on 7th and Dryades. That's where they started, and that's where they ended. Right around the corner from Elk's Home.

LC Yeah, I do.

NS Elk's Home is on Harmony between Danneell and Dryades. What else I have in here?

LC You have everything in there.

BG He got a good little bit of history.

NS I was trying, I had to keep- look, I had to keep up with stuff. Seafood boil, June 17, 1995. I was the business manager, I had to keep up with all that stuff. Original New Orleans Lady Buckjumpers, I get it. You see that ticket right there?

LC Fourth of July Blast, with the King of Disco.

NS See? I had to keep up with everything, because at the time, at the time, I was the business, the assistant business manager. And what the business manager didn't write down, I had to write down. So, my book always had more stuff than the rest of 'em book. 'Birthday Party at Joe's House of Blues.' Dede (sp). And Ronnie. Who that is, Ronnie. Ronnie Tyler. You see what that say?

LC "'Come one come all and shake that ass with Baba and Ronnie"- that's beautiful.

NS That was back in '95. You know that's old. That's what, 13, 14.

BG What the saying was this year?

NS If you don't know now you know.

LC Is that the official 2009 saying?

NS That's official, that's on our route sheet. If you don't know, now you know.

LC Is that another voted-upon selection?

NS That's right because see, it goes like this, if you don't know, now you know, because this is how we do it. 'This is how we do it.' That was a bad jam back in the early- nineties? And I almost forgot about this club. They started in Rock Bottom. 'Get your diamonds and pearls.' That's right, Diamonds and Pearls. They started at Rock Bottom. They lasted about a year. That's where some of the Lady Wales come from.

LC Ok. Can you, actually explain Lady Wales? No?

NS I can't explain Lady Wales. Oh, I just said that- this is how we do it.

LC How we do it, yup.

NS Yeah, I can't explain the Lady Wales. I really can't. I mean, I'm gonna rack my brain trying to figure out the Lady Wales. 'Cause they, you know, I love 'em, but I just can't say it. Devastating Ladies. I have tickets for-

BG You would have to get an interview with them to find out.

NS No, you would have to get an interview with Betty.

BG Or Phyllis.

NS Or Phyllis. One of them probably could tell you more about Lady Wales than I could. Because I just couldn't, I don't know how to explain them. Who the hell, who is this? Original Four. Now what I'm doing with they route sheet?

BG You kept it.

(55:43)

NS Hey, back then I used to keep everything. That's another club that we affiliate with every now and then, the Original Four. I know one person in the Original Four- Gerald. He's also on the board of the Coalition. The New Orleans Task Force Coalition. That's a bunch of social and pleasure clubs that get together to do things for the community, as a whole. And— how many clubs are there in the task force right now?

BG About 10?

NS I think they got 16. 16 members, 16 clubs, inside of one club.

BG Last year we gave a big picnic.

NS Oh, last year we had a picnic at Audubon Park. Beautiful, beautiful.

BG We don't know what they're gonna do this year.

NS Matter of fact, this year they're talking about doing a- what is it- they're talking about, they wanna do a cruise.

LC On the river?

NS No, on a cruiseboat. But I'd rather do a picnic. Because, see, everybody can't afford to go on no cruise.

BG They give back to the community though.

NS That's right.

BG And every club give to it.

NS That's right. And see, and when you have a picnic, you invite the whole city to it. And that way, when it's over with you clean up and you can go home. Can't do that on no boat. That too much water. Talk about, 'I'm going home.' Going home? What you mean going home? You talking about going into your cabin. You in the middle of the ocean somewhere. No, no, you don't want to dive off into that water.

LC Let's get back, actually, to the route for a second. I guess, you had got us to-

NS Mr Jimmy.

LC Mr. Jimmy's house.

NS Ok. And then once we get to Mr. Jimmy's house, most times, well, we started a new tradition where we pick up the Queen at Mr. Jimmy's house. And once we pick up the Queen, we proceed down General Taylor to Magazine Street. Where we turn on Magazine, because we are the only club out this way. Matter of fact we the only club in the city that goes down Magazine Street, and that's a part of our neighborhood. So, we take Magazine Street to Louisiana Avenue, turn at Louisiana Avenue. Now we used to stop at a place called Kilimanjaro's, which they done changed the name three, four times. But originally it used to be the Nightcap Lounge, back in the early '70s. They done changed the name so many times that we just can't remember. It's Ja Roux, Le Roux right now. You know where, it's right across from Rally's, on Louisiana Avenue. Well, we used to stop there, but things happened where you know you can't be turning around, police don't like u-turns and all of that, so, our main stop be the Sandpiper, on Louisiana Avenue. And once we leave the Sandpiper, we continue down Louisiana Avenue to Lasalle Street, turn down Lasalle Street, and- well, our next stop would have been Kemp's. Washington and Lasalle. That used to be the place to go on a Thursday night. Everybody in the city know what Kemp's was. Sweet old man, give you the shirt off his back if you needed it. Leave Kemp's, we goes further down Lasalle Street to Third Street, and go to Mr. Charlie Wright.

(1:00:16)

LC Tell me about Mr. Charlie Wright.

NS Mr. Charlie Wright has been a faithful, and I mean very faithful, participant of the Prince of Wales for over 35 years. Never been a member. Never been a member. But always had a stop for the Prince of Wales. Always had something

for to eat for us, something to drink for us. Cups, handkerchiefs, he always has something for us. Very faithful member. Matter of fact, this year, we dedicated a plaque to him. The man had tears in his eyes when we gave it to him. 'Cause he was surprised. It was something that he didn't, he really wasn't expecting us to ever give him anything. But my Vice President, from way back, Lonzo Landry, always told me "man, we need to do something for this man." (sp). He's always been there for us. And, when I became Vice President, I always thought about it, and last year I put it into motion. And when I seen that the club is doing good, good enough to take \$100 out the club, to give this, to present this to this man, it made me feel good. And it also made me feel like I had did something for Lonzo. Because he always said, but we need to do something for this man. So, at the same time, it made me feel like, not me doing it, but we did it. Something that the club should have been done. But, now that we are- now that we pay \$100 a month, a \$100, you can take \$5 from each member, and do that. And that's why, when we did that, I had a warm feeling in my heart, and I felt like something was lifted off of me, because Lonzo probably was looking up saying 'I been told you to do that.' I say 'oh, alright.'

LC Can you tell me about the plaque? How did it look?

NS The plaque was, it was supposed to have been 8 by 10. But I think it was 10 by 12. It was, the writing was in gold, English gold. And on the plaque it had to Charlie J Wright, from the Prince of Wales and Lady Wales, for 40-

BG 35.

NS -for 35 years of dedicated service, with love. And the man cried when he seen that plaque. Gets you right here, don't it? So, once we leave Mr. Charlie Wright house, we normally have an option on which way we want to go. See, we can go one block down, turn down Carondelet, and go to the Turning Point Lounge, or we can just keep going down until we get to St. Charles. Which, most of the club members, we like to shine. So we take St. Charles. And at the same time that gives the people on the streetcar and the tourists a chance to take pictures. 'Cause most people don't- now, if you see most commercials out of town, they always take, they always show you parades and stuff like that. So really that's one of the things that draw the people to the city. So, in a sense, we are what makes the city an original. Because, where else in the United States are you gonna see people going down the street with a brass band behind 'em, jumping up and down having a good time? Not on the East Coast. Damn sure not on the West Coast. Not up North. So you have to come down South, to New Orleans. And that's what makes us so beautiful. Then you also got to think about this New Orleans is a melting pot. You have a wide variety of people here, people from all walks of life. Think about it. Just like a big old pot of gumbo. Once you put some hot sauce, some smoked sausage, some gizzard, some chicken wings if you're doing chicken wings, if you're not doing that put you some crabs, some shrimp, a couple of

pieces of okra down in there. Come on now. Let's get back to the route.

(1:05:42)

LC Now you got me hungry.

NS Aw, sorry about that. I'm sorry about that, I'm sorry about that.

LC Well, this past year when we came down St. Charles, we held the streetcar up. Everybody was leaning out the windows taking pictures.

NS That's what they do.

LC Tell me what that felt, you know, to be right in the middle of that.

NS Well, it make you feel like a celebrity, you know, at times, but then you realize that this is your everyday life. So this is nothing really new, 'cause we do this all the time. So you don't mind stoppin and showing, this is how we, this is us. This is how we do it.

LC Yup.

NS You don't mind stopping and saying 'look at me, don't you like it? 'We are not a class act, but we're classy. That's right. We're not the, we're not trying to be the biggest. We're not even trying to be the best. We just want to be us. Not trying to knock nobody down. And if we can help you up, we don't mind. All we want to do is have fun, that's what it's all about. Have fun on our day. 'Cause when your day comes, I'll be right there on the other side of that rope looking at you saying 'you go girl, you go boy. it's your day, take it, do it.'"

NS So, now, back to the route. Once we come down St. Charles and hit Washington Avenue, there's only, there's one place that we always pass in front of, every year. Commander's Palace. Commander's Palace is a five-star restaurant. Best in the city. We always pass in front of Commander's Palace. Matter of fact, we always, when we get to Commander's Palace, we always stop for a few seconds. Because they always have people on a balcony or people coming out, so we always stop in front of Commander's Palace. And this year, I said let's go in Commander's Palace. So I got with the business manager and me and him went over there. I, ok, first of all I used to work for Brennan's Restaurant, I mean Brennan's Produce Company. Back when I had left cab driving for about a year. I got tired of it, my grandpa and I had fell out, so I thought maybe I'd let the cab sit in front of the door and I went to work driving a truck. And Dick Brennan own Commander's- Dick Brennan owns Brennan's Produce. But Dottie Brennan was his sister, who own Commander's Palace. Well, it's owned by Dick and Dottie Brennan. He did one thing, he let his sister do the other thing. So, I used to deliver to Commander's Palace all the time, and I know the ins and out about

Commander's. So I said let's go over here. I'ma talk to whoever's in charge, and come to find out that Miss Dottie just retired from Commander's. But she turned it over to her granddaughter, who told me— well I talked to her, then Bruce talked to her, we got everything, then she told me to talk to the sales rep or the marketing manager. And we got together and she asked me what I wanted, and I said, we don't want nothing. Whatever you want to give us, all we want to do is stop, sit down, take a break, got water, fine. If you want to give us something, cool. If you don't, it's still cool. Just want to stop and have a break. And that's what we did this year. And while we was in Commander's Palace, the band did not stop playing.

LC I know, I know.

(1:10:11)

NS And that kind of surprised me when I came back outside that the band was still playing, and I was like 'hmm'. Band ain't stopped playing. But then when I got ready to leave I had to go down there, I had to walk a block and a half to tell the police we were ready to go. He said, "What? I thought you all were going to Commander's." I said, 'we done been there already.' It's time to go. It's time to go. So, we left Commander's, straight on Washington Avenue, till we get to- well, we normally turn on Annunciation and go straight up Annunciation, but this year we made a couple of different turns because we made different stops. See, we had the Queen from not last year, but the year before last, wanted us to stop at her house. So we stopped. Well we do, you know, say like you the queen last year, and you want us to stop by your house. If you close in our neighborhood on the route, well of course we'll stop. There's no motive there, it's courtesy. We don't mind. I mean if you don't mind us stopping, we don't mind stopping. So, and from there we going home. Home is where we start. Rock Bottom Lounge. Now most of the time, when we get to Louisiana Avenue, now see if we done came up Annunciation, when we got to Annunciation and Louisiana Avenue the police would have left us. 'Cause they always do. But, since we went down Tchoupitoulas, they stayed with us.

LC Why is that?

NS Because they don't want no cars to come up behind us. But normally, if we go down Annunciation, police leave us by. They already at home. Because they know we're not going to come out into Annunciation. We go straight down Annunciation till we get to Peniston, and we're not going to come in the middle of the street. We're not going to come to Tchoupitoulas. We're gonna stop a half a block before we get to Tchoupitoulas, that way they don't never have to worry about the traffic stopping on Tchoupitoulas. But, since we coming down Tchoupitoulas, they had to stop traffic at Marengo, they had to stop traffic back that way. So you know we had Tchoupitoulas tied up. But when our parade is over with, we make sure the street is clear before anything happens. Because we

don't want nobody to get hurt. We don't want- the police out there on the horses, we don't want them to walk over nobody. Peaceful day. Start peaceful, end peaceful. Still want to hang, we got all this here, behind the bar, on the sidewalk, all across the street to hang out. Don't be in the street. And then more than likely, I know if you been with us all day you're hungry, so you better come on in and get yourself something to eat.

LC So what do you guys eat after?

NS Sure.

LC No, what do you eat?

NS Oh lord, let's see, red beans and rice with smoked sausage in it, or pickled tips with tails, or we have swedish meatballs, finger sandwiches, pasta, shrimp creole. What else they had? Chicken, of course you gotta have chicken, you know that. Fried chicken, barbecued ribs. The guy upstairs, he always cooks five pounds of red beans and rice for us. Ok, he cooks that. That's not counting the stuff that we have catered for us. And then they had a guy out there frying fish. So we got that. Course you know we like to eat. You know we like to drink. So we got to have enough for everybody, you know. Wish I'd seen you, I'd of made sure you had a plate.

LC I wish I had stayed. I was feeling a little sick that day.

NS Ah, because you didn't have nothing to eat. See, you got to eat. I mean our route is what- seven and a half miles I believe. Seven and a half miles. So you figure, you got to have something to eat between that.

LC How do you guys last that long? It seems like a marathon, if you're dancing the whole time.

(1:15:00)

NS It's routine. Well, see, you know most people go to second lines, most people go to parades every week. Every weekend. And when you go to parades you have on heavy boots, with ankle weights round your legs and stuff like that, so you can build up your stamina. See, everybody works, so they don't have time to go to the gym. The only day that you get your exercise is Sunday. And if you know you're gonna parade in two weeks, you're gonna start wearing your ankle weights a week, two weeks before that. So you can bear to jump up high, kick your leg up, or jump down, or do the things you like to do. You have to build your- that's just like a guy who want to be running a marathon, training for it, training for it. You be ready for it, so when your day come what you gonna do? Break out. That's right, that's right.



- LC So you're out there leaping and jumping. Are there moves, or are you just doing what you feel?
- NS Now see like tonight is Thursday night. Every Thursday night the band plays in Rock Bottom. See, back in the days, in the 90s, round '90, all the way up until Kemp's closed in- Kemp's closed in what, 2000? 2000. So, see, there's always a place uptown that a band, the local bands play. See now, Thursday night, here's the schedule. You go to Rock Bottom 'bout 8:30, 9 o'clock. You listen to the band at Rock Bottom till about 11. Then when you leave Rock Bottom you go to Le Bons Temps on Magazine Street. You leave Le Bons Temps, and you go uptown, you go up to Carrollton on Maple Leaf to the, on Oak Street to the Maple Leaf. And listen to the band up there. See Rebirth probably going to be playing at the Maple Leaf tonight. Soul Rebels going to be playing at the Le Bons Temps. Free Agents going to be playing at Rock Bottom. Three different places, three different bands. So what you'll be a little late for work Friday morning. You know, a Friday morning, of course. You're gonna get off early anyway. You build your stamina up. And then you- after, then you rest Saturday evening, then you come out Saturday night and listen to a little music, then you go home and get ready for Sunday. Then you follow the parade all day Sunday. Now since the timing changed, parades start at 12 o'clock instead of one o'clock. So that's 12 to 4 instead of 1 to 5. Now see back when I first started parading we used to get 5 hours to parade.
- LC When you first started, did the cops come with you at first?
- NS Yeah, they always, the police always. But the police done went up, the bands done went up. Because, let's see, when I first started it was 750 for the band, and we was paying the police like, 1100. Something off in that. Now the bands want, what, 3000, 2000 dollars. The police-
- BG Another 2000.
- NS Another 2000. It's ridiculous. But, you gotta look at it, that's 14, 15 years ago. Different prices. The price steady went up. It dropped a little bit when they started complaining about it. But when they dropped the price, they cut the time. They cut the time. Because at one time, we'll start parading at twelve o'clock. Matter of fact we'll start parading at 12, we didn't end until 5:30. 5:30, you know what I mean? We'll start parading at 12, we supposed to end at 5, by the time we get to Louisiana Aveune and Magazine, Louisiana Avenue and Annunciation, the police say shit, I'm gonna go home. I'm gonna go. It's time to go, let 'em go. See, because we used to have six hours, then they cut us down to five hours, now they gonna cut it down to four hours.

(1:20:16)

- LC Why do they keep on cutting it down?

NS Because they kept on going up with the price. They want more money for to do less work. We had to bring 'em to court for it. The Task Force. By the Prince of Wales being in the Task Force, we was part of that. So, you know, we had to go along with that. You steady going up with the price, but you steady going down with the hours, you know. So, now, we at a stable level right now. Don't know how long it's gonna last, but. Yeah, we have a new mayor coming in, so it's going to be a new administration, so we're gonna have to deal with that. Any more questions, young lady?

BG You missed one.

LC Which one?

NS Who? Me or her?

BG You.

NS What'd I miss? L'il Bruh?

BG You told her we do what we do, but you know where our mystique come from being the Prince of Wales. We come from England, and they was the best dressed men, that's why we the best dressed men in Louisiana.

NS My bad, I forgot about that. But yeah, I do remember that. But I mean, I got to let somebody else say that, brah. I just can't, I just can't, I just can't put it all out there. Put it like this, the Prince from England came to New Orleans, back in the early '20s sometime off in there. This on a trip. And he was dressed from head to toe, I mean sharp. He lookeded like [snaps fingers] like that.

LC Yes.

NS So, that is one of the reasons why Prince of Wales, when we pick our colors, and when we come, we want to be well-dressed. Because the Prince was one of the best dressed men in the world at the time. And that was one of the things that the Prince of Wales wanted to pick up on. Always be well dresseded when we hit the street. One of the best dressed clubs in the city. Not trying to be number one, which I think we are. But, not trying to be number one, which I think we are. But, wanna be one of the well best dressed clubs in the city.

LC Yeah. That reminds me, could you talk about your shoes? Because Bruce brought in the shoes from-

NS I have mine.

LC They're the alligator?

NS With the eyes on 'em.

LC Yeah, yeah yeah yeah.

NS Of course I have a pair.

LC You gotta tell me about those.

NS Each of the men have on a pair.

LC Well they were works of art, they were amazing.

NS We did that. One of our club members from Memphis, his name is Desmond. He had brought a pair down here and showed it to us. The pair that he brought, he brought a pair of black gators with black and white eyeballs on 'em. And when we seen 'em we said whoa, wait a minute, can we get them made? And he know the guy who made the shoes. So, when we seen that, it was also something that we'd never seen anybody else wear. No other club in the city has ever- now, they have many clubs in this city that wear, now I've seen alligator boots with the eyeballs. But I've never seen alligator shoes with the eyeballs. That is where we got the shoes from. These shoes come from out of Memphis, Tennessee.

LC What about your shoes this past year? Where'd you get them?

NS We had them ordered. Special-made. Those are ostrich.

BG I call that part our artwork. The shoes, the hat, the streamer, they got to match and blend with the suit. If that don't blend, it won't have that wow. When you seen us, you say "wow". You told me that.

LC But still when we saw it, we were-

BG Right. See what I'm saying? 'Cause I can't see that when we wear it. I have to look at the expressions on the faces.

(1:25:46)

LC No, when you guys stepped out we were all just in awe, you know.

BG That's what I'm saying. All the other clubs be in awe, 'cause we one of the last two or three to draw, so by the time we come, it be time for us to-

NS [talking about the shoes] Eyes on both sides. These are so comfortable.

LC Oh my gosh, they're gorgeous.

NS These are comfortable. Excuse the cigarette.

LC Oh it's fine. So these are this year. Oh yeah now I can see the colors.

BG The darker green.

NS Right. But it's olive green.

BG You need to clean them up a little.

NS Yes I do need to clean them up a little bit. But you know I was at City Park, I was at the Voodoo Festival.

BG So, that's our artwork.

NS And at the same time I also like to have a little pizzazz.

LC Little flair.

NS Little flair. And that is pure alligator, through and through. Genuine gator.

BG These stamps on the bottom, genuine.

NS Genuine gator.

BG Yeah, and now you got genuine ostrich on the bottom.

LC Wow, I see. Ah yeah, there's a little gator.

NS And these, genuine ostrich.

LC Oh wow, yeah. Ostrich.

NS Ostrich.

BG You never would think that bird would be something pretty.

NS Or something that somebody would put on they feet.

LC I wouldn't have thought.

NS Oh yes, oh yes.

BG See, we're always looking for a different shoe. Once you wear something like that, other clubs look at it like- what they name, the Uptown Swingers-

NS We, we do stuff because once we do it, we know we can't do it again 'cause somebody else gonna do it. Just like them shoes there. Once we did that, we know this year, somebody's gonna do that. That's why we came out with something different.

LC Yeah, the ostrich.

NS Uh-huh. And next year, we're gonna have to come out with something else, because we don't try to be trendsetters. But at the same time, when we come out, everybody, all the other clubs be coming to see what we gonna have on, and how we gonna come out. 'Cause we are like- see, parade season starts in September. It ends right after Jazzfest, round, it ends in June. May, June. July, August, June July and August, they don't have parades. Don't have second lines, nothing like that in June, July and August, because it's too hot. But the first parade is in September. There's only two clubs that come out. [Unintelligible] Society Men, Men of Class. No, three clubs [Unintelligible] Society Men, Men of Class, and the Young Men. Those three clubs, they are three clubs that come out every year at the same time. But, when we come out, we come out the second week in October every year. See, everybody, by the time they done came out, you done forgot what they had on. But when we come out, you not gonna forget. They talking about that peach right now. Peach, curtain, peach, green. They're still talking about it. They had a club came out last week. Who that was?

LC This past Sunday was Sudan.

NS Sudan. Did you notice the colors that the men had on, the last club had on?

LC I wasn't there.

NS They had on peach.

LC Did they really?

NS They had on peach. They had peach pants, with peach shirts.

LC But I'm sure it didn't pop.

(1:30:41)

NS It did not. It looked good, I'm not gonna lie. They looked good. But, if you really pay attention to 'em, they had the same streamers and stuff that they had from the year before last.

LC Oh, yeah.

NS Because they always come out with the streamers with the orange and the green, and the what-you-call-em, the straw-like streamers look like, with the rainbow colors in it.

LC Yeah, yeah.

NS So you can't tell whether that's new or old. Because it's always the same. The suits, I mean, they didn't have on suits, they had on a shirt, and a pair of pants. It looked nice. But it, where that streamer is? All that's in the back. All that's in the back. This house here is a family house. My grandfather bought this house in 1973, '72, a year before my daddy died. And this has been a family house since. Katrina came, the water came all the way up to the top step. That's how much water they had in this neighborhood. The upstairs part of the house didn't go underwater. But it had wind damage. But downstairs was completely flooded, flooded out. And that's why I keep all my stuff upstairs now. Because I used to live downstairs. All my stuff got lost. Like 14, 13, 12 years of stuff got wiped away. Each one of the hats is \$150. And the shoes, that's another hundred and something, two hundred dollars. So all that got lost. Plus the streamers. The streamers and the fans, we pay for all of that every year.

LC And that was all downstairs?

NS All that stuff was downstairs. I had purple, gray, olive green, black, red, gold, blue, navy blue, light blue, powder blue, all that got lost. So now, so now, I'm starting all over again. Which, hey, material things, you don't worry about that. Long as the good Lord puts some bread in your body, you can handle all that over again. And then some. Yeah.

LC How quickly- the first Prince of Wales parade after Katrina, did you parade?

NS No, I didn't. I was out of town.

LC You were out of town?

NS Yes I was.

LC Were you back for-

NS The second one. Yes I was. The second one, that's the one in the purple. The first one they came out in red. Red. Red and gold?

BG Yeah, red and gold.

NS Red and gold.

BG Joe told 'em about it.

NS Yeah, the first parade, that was right after.

BG He told em. They asked all the other clubs first. Then they asked y'all, cause the other ones wouldn't do it.

(1:34:47)

NS Nobody else wouldn't parade. And we had missed our parade, because of the hurricane. So, what happened was, most of the people in our club who left took their stuff with them. Common sense would tell you, you just bought all that stuff, don't just leave it here to let the flood hit it. So most of 'em took all their stuff with 'em. Although they hadn't paraded, they still had- 'cause the flood hit in September. So most of the time we try to have all our stuff at least a month ahead of time. That way we can sit back and rest. You try not to get your stuff at the last minute. If anything be last, you want that to be your streamer and your fan, you know. Monk Boudreaux does all our streamers and fans. Big Chief Monk Boudreaux, yes, he do all our streamers and fans. So we, you know, we try to give him at least a month to do it, that way we got any alternations or he had to change something, he have time to do it. Other than that, we try to have all our shoes, suits, hats, gloves, all that, try to have that at least by the end of August. We supposed to have all that at home, hanging up in the closet. That way, whatever happens, make sure you take your stuff with you. Still in the boxes, so. If this storm woulda came, Ida, I think, I'm sure I wasn't gonna leave none of my hats this time. My hats, my shoes. See, the rest of this stuff, see like the suits, the fans, and the streamers, I don't worry about none of that. But the hats and the shoes, that's the kind of stuff that you can't replace. Well, I can't, I can replace the suits. But the hats and the shoes, you have to order that. I don't want to have to replace none of it. I'm not trying to replace none of this stuff, sometimes you have to. Now, see, one year we came out with a blue-green, a blueish-green, turquoise, we had a turquoise suit, made on the cowboy style. With the purple shirts, a purple hat and purple shoes. We stopped at Kilimanjaro's, that's what it was then, Kilimanjaro's, that was back in '97, '98. We went in there and what we did was, we took off the jackets, we took off the shirt. My sister was our seamstress. She made shirts for everybody in our club. We had purple shirts with gold and black and turquoise in it. And then what we did, we took off the jackets, we didn't even have the streamers on at the time. We left all that over there. 'Cause we came out with umbrellas and suits. So then we lookeded plain. When we got to Kilimanjaro's, we took off the jackets, took off the shirts, the ties, we came out with these fresh looking shirts that you don't put in your pants. They come over, you know, they come over the pants. With our streamers on, with the umbrellas, Lord that was clean.

BG Where's your umbrella at?

NS My umbrella? I have a red umbrella in there, I have a blue umbrella in there, and I have a purple umbrella in there. My peach umbrella, my fiancée Janice has it. Janice Riley (sp.). She stay across the lake, in Covington.

LC Well, how did you feel, the first parade you were able to step out in?

NS Oh, my first parade I felt like I was the king. I felt like I was the king. Wasn't nothing that I could do. I was- my first parade, we came out in olive green, and my sister had made the shirts for us. The shirts was olive green, with tan and brown, tan, brown, with a rust in it. We were clean. It was clean. My sister made shirts for us for four years. Four years. Yeah, four years. Four years in a row she made shirts for us. One year she made two shirts for us. We got invited to the West Bank Steppers parade, but instead of us coming out- that was the year we came out with the black, we had on black and red. We had red shirts, we had, the shirts was red, black, with gold and something else in 'em. Multicolored shirts. And instead of us wearing the same shirts over there, to the West Bank Steppers, we bought some more material, that was orange, and brown, and tan. And my sister made us some shirts, and she made a couple of the women suits, with the band to go around the hat. We came out with black, it was black and orange that we came out in that year across the river. They never invited us back, then. They ain't never invited us no more. See 'cause everybody else had on they old stuff. Only thing that we wore from our parade was our shoes and our pants and our hats. We had new streamers made, and new shirts made. Oh, we were clean.

(1:41:54)

LC You had to live up to the, you know, Prince's reputation.

NS Prince of Wales, best dressed. It's something that, you know, it's a reputation that follows you. Now see, Monday through Friday, look like shit. Saturday, or when you go somewhere, when you go out to a club, or when you go to a club function, they expecting you to look presentable. Like the king or the prince that you are. Which most of us feel like we kings anyway. I'm the king of my castle. When I eat everybody done eat. When I leave home everybody gone. Right? Just like you the queen of your castle, huh?

LC Yup.

NS That's right. And for each king, there's a what? A queen. Give me some depth on that. That's right.

LC Speaking very broadly, and especially post-Katrina, what do second lines do for the city?

NS It boosts the city's morale. It gives- see, there are some people who don't have anything to do on the weekend. And they build their whole life around getting out



on Sunday. See, the main thing about a parade is, it don't care how old you are, from the babies to the oldest. Matter of fact they have an old man that his daughter brings him to each and every second line. He cannot walk, but his daughter make sure that he be in a spot where he can see the parades, every Sunday. Because, it's something about being out here seeing the people. See, when you go to a parade, you're always gonna run into somebody you know. I guarantee you, ten years from now, if you leave here, ten years from now you come back, you're gonna run across somebody that you know at a parade. And I'm not talking about Mardi Gras parade, I'm talking about a social and pleasure club parade, on the street. Whether or not it be uptown, downtown, or backatown, call that backatown across Carrollton. See, now, how many clubs they got parading? Ok, they have the Pigeon Town Steppers, they parade in Carrollton, and the Buckjumpers parade in Carrollton. Buckjumpers are considered the men Buckjumpers and the Lady Buckjumpers. The men Buckjumpers have a charter, the Lady Buckjumpers don't. Just like the Prince of Wales have a charter, and the Lady Wales don't. So, although the Lady Buckjumpers may be popular, the men Buckjumpers' what makes the parade. You can't parade without a charter. So, see, you gotta be able- and that's what draws people from all over the city. Especially when, they got a lot of people that love the Saints. But they got a lot of people that don't care who win a game. So, on any given Sunday, if they have a parade, they gonna have Saints fans out there, they gonna have Dallas, Atlanta, whoever they is, they gonna be out there. They gonna be keeping up with the game, but they gonna be keeping up with the parade at the same time. Because this is a part of the culture that everybody loves, see, 'cause if you work Monday through Friday, Saturday you're doing a lot of running with your children, and your wife or whoever, your significant other, and then on Sunday, well, Sunday is the day either for lay back and relax or get your exercise on. And that's how we get our exercise on. Get your boots on, get your running shoes on. If it rains yesterday you know what to put on, put on something that you don't mind 'cause it's gonna get muddy. If it didn't rain, and it's cold outside, put your legwarmers on, 'cause it got to roll. That's right.

(1:46:56)

- LC How does it feel just to kind of like, to take ownership of streets, to make the streetcar stop, to just kind of take over for a day?
- NS You would have to feel this. This is something that you can't describe, you have to feel it. To have two horses behind you, and 30, 40 people behind you, and you just saying "I want to stop right here." And they can't do nothing about it. All they can do is say, we gotta stop. That's just like being President Obama. Shut that street down. Shut that street down.
- LC Yeah.

NS I'm coming through here. And that's what it feel like. You feel like, nothing they can do. 'Cause see, you paid for this day. That's why each and every club, eleven months they slave, for one day out of the year. That one day out of the year. Now, if it rain on your day, you got to wait until a day fall open. And by they having so many social and pleasure clubs, there's none open. So you really, when your day come, I don't give a damn whether it rain or not, let's hit the street. 'Cause the police ain't giving you no refund. And if you pay your band you ain't getting no refund from them neither. So, if they play five minutes, should I say, four minutes or four hours, they want they money. So if it rain twenty minutes, let it rain. Prince of Wales is one club that don't care whether it rain or not. If it rain we still coming. Then again you got to remember, we Wales. We love the water. Water don't bother us one bit. But we princes, so, we feel like we royalty. And if it rain on us, so what. Clean the street off for us, that's all it's doing. Just clean the street off a little bit for us.

BG It rained early that morning.

NS It rained early that morning, and it rained that evening after we paraded. So we fell right up under the rainbow, didn't we?

LC Well, I think we've gotten to just about everything I wanted to get to.

NS Well that's good.

LC Is there anything else you feel like we missed? Or haven't touched on?

NS I think we covered just about everything. And I thank you very much.

(1:50:23)