

American Routes Interview
Daniella Santoro and Paul Landry
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00:26

DS My name is Daniella Santoro and I'm with Tulane's Talking to New Orleans and I'm here with Paul Landry, member of the Prince of Wales Social Aid and Pleasure Club. And as I understand it, long time family connections with the Prince of Wales so—

PL Yes, yes. Starting from with my grandfather, Judy Landry.

DS Can you just say your name and then continue to talk.

PL Ok. I'm Paul Landry and I'm a member of the Prince of Wales Social and Pleasure Aid Club and I been a member just a member—just started—I came in last year but I didn't parade. I had to wait a year to parade this year. And it's fun, it's fun doing this. And it's a generation down from—its goes down from my grandfather to my brother and then to me. This here's been long long long long going.

DS And when did you—so do you remember when you were growing up first hearing about it?

PL Yeah, when I first grew up, my mother had moved from out the 12th Ward down into the Lower Nine, and every parade that they did have, I would go up there and parade with them, ya know, the second line I wasn't in it. But I was like twelve, thirteen years old when I really got into it cause I was able to leave and catch the bus and do things on my own at the time. And-sometimes my mom had never did know I went to the parade but I did go, went to 'em. And my Aunty was standing on the street where the parade come down, on Annunciation. I think thirty four—forty six—it was in the forty-something hundred block of Annunciation when they come down that street. And I noticed some of the guys, their example, they'd be all rolled up around when they parade. And its parade time, you gonna see, you gonna see the people come in, you know and so that was one fun thing about it. Parade have fun, and we never did, I never noticed nothing in our parade with the Prince of Wales—they had no problems. I mean every time we parade—we parade it was good—everybody come back and tell ya how good it was. Then they be big—some of 'em big, real big—we had a lot of members into it. Which, I have a few pictures I would like to show you you know, that some of the years back when my brother—I was trying to get this picture of my grandfather. I mean this was the picture where they was in purple and white at the time, and daddy was next to him. So that was one picture we had before the storm came. I think the storm came and took some of the pictures from the people that I wanted to get. I don't know, I was trying to get this from my brother, sister and they didn't have-

all the pictures they had. They were—we had that picture—but I think we might have lost it through the storm, and that was one picture I wanted. ‘Cause it was something that—it was my daddy, my grandfather, my brother and I’m in it too, so—

DS Can you explain for me a little bit—since we don’t have the pictures—maybe some memories of what your grandfather looked like? Is he a big guy, tall?

PL He was a short, short, old, old grouchy little man. But he was like the little police up there in the Twelfth Ward, you know, you know, that he’d go around and—cops try to call like keep people in straight lines. And so you know—they—he wasn’t no drinker or nothing like that, he was just a person that was joyful. He was a neighborhood person and that he also, you know, was in this club called Prince of Wales, and it was fun. I mean, you know, when you go up there, when the time, when you go and watch your grandfather up there or my daddy grabbing me with my hand bringing me to go see my grandfather walk the street with his umbrella and stuff like that and you know it be good. He was old, he was old. He was getting around what he was doing and it was fun going up there, every year going, and see him parade. It’s fun, believe me. It’s fun if you really get into it. And see for me, every time I hear that music, I wanna second line. And I, lately, since I really got into it—you know, I mean really really got into it—I know years back my brother wanted me to do it. And you know at times they give this, a thing, the coalition give a picnic at Audubon park, before—I think after we parade, after the parade for next year—and everybody come in. So my, the President that I have today, kept, he did some thing that my brother here, Lonzo, (pointing to photo) did to him to get in. He said, ‘Man, what’s wrong, bruh? What, you’re scared to have fun?’ And he said ‘no man, it ain’t that, none of that.’ So he didn’t parade, but finally he did, when he did get in there, he been in here a long—his name is Alvin. This—I’ma show you the president. See that’s him right there, that’s who my brother right there was trying to get him to come in at the time. So he like, you know, I mean, we was growing up together and I watched him, I was kinda like jealous a little bit ‘cause I wasn’t in the parade. I always been around parade, and then I just parade have fun have fun have fun. But then I just made a decision, last year, this picture here—when I came out in that blue—

5:58

DS This was your first year.

PL This, this not my first year. This is me right here.

DS Oh, ok.

PL But you see this color here? When they came out the door to parade, I didn’t know they was gonna wear that color, and also, also, I had this little outfit right there. I’ve been having it hanging in my closet, and since my brother passed

away, and I'm saying I'm joining the club, so I'm—and it seem like to me—this is something, brother, this is a time to wear that blue. And when I wore that blue, I went to the bar room, you know, to leave from the Rock Bottom and when I got to the Rock Bottom, I'm having fun walking around—I ain't know their colors, didn't know their colors, cause you don't, we don't let, like let people know your colors—as soon as they hit that door, and I saw they had blue on, and I looked at me: I said oh oh, this is, this must be, brother must be trying to tell me something, cause this is it. And when I came out in they parade, as you see on that picture, I was having fun with them.

DS Absolutely.

PL And I told the president that that we have today, 'Alvin, I'm ready to join the club.' And when I joined the club, I joined the club on that parade party right there.

7:19

DS And so just to clarify, so the colors that year were like a periwinkle and maybe like a royal blue.

PL Royal blue.

DS And you were wearing—

PL I was wearing—

DS Like light blue pants—

PL The same color pants.

DS The same exact color pants, no, I can tell. The same exact color pants and the top is like the same color but with a dark—

PL But with the striped colors and stuff in it.

DS Right. And so you have both the main color and the accent.

PL I had, I had their color on at the time. You know, it's about their color and it inspired me to go and join. And December came around and I had to get my little cousin Bruce—cause we had to go in with someone that they'd want to nominate to bring in to the club—so they know me as a long time person that's been with the Prince of Wales. I said my brother's name was affiliated with the Prince of Wales and had no problem with me joining the club. I join the club, I go, I go, it's on. It's like a nonstop thing now

DS Right.

PL It's gonna be maybe till I die.

DS Can you just tell me, in terms of the years, when you were born? And so how many years has it been since you had been attending second lines and being involved until the first time?

PL Ok, I can tell you, I started out—I'm fifty, fifty-one years old right now, so it goes back like thirty years for me. Thirty-five years or so for me, you know what I'm saying, that's how long it been. And I know about fifteen or twenty years of it, this man here (pointing to picture) had been trying to get me to parade but on an incident that I—you know about me here having this disability—of wearing shoes, a problem of wearing shoes. They bother me. And I keep telling my brother, I say, Lonzo, I want to do it, man, I want to do it, man but my shoes, my shoes. Man we'll make it, you'll get the shoes, man, you'll get the shoes, man. Some shoemaker somewhere to get the shoes at does make 'em, and some just come regular for regular sizes of people that would have, you know, normal foot. And so this time, it was the same way this time here. I tried to get a pair of shoes—now there was a problem for me getting my shoes—now, now I was hurtin'—that I wouldn't probably be able to parade 'cause I couldn't get the shoes right. So I did have a chance to take 'em to the shoemaker and see what he can do for me, so he stretches them enough for me where I can get my foot in. And from that point on, that's when I paraded. This year was the year. I did it. And this is me, this is me coming down right there. That's some of me right there.

DS K, so it was this year. And the parade was on...

PL October 11th.

DS October 11th, 2009.

PL 2009.

DS You look, you look sharp.

PL Well you know we was at the Voodoo Fest. This is the picture I took at the Voodoo Fest.

DS Ok.

PL Yeah.

DS So you were—

PL That Saturday and Sunday we did the parade at Voodoo Fest.

DS Oh, I see. The whole club?

PL Some members from the club—

DS Ok, got together.

PL Like we had four members for each day, Friday Saturday Sunday, and I did, I had a chance to do Saturday and Sunday for the club.

10:50

DS Would you mind talking a little bit about your foot and what the condition is?

PL Well, I was born with an enlarged foot. And I've been having problems to wearing, through the years, just wearing shoes period, you know. I'm normally wearing tennis shoes. Some shoes where I can get into them I buy 'em. But someone of em I didn't, so that was a problem for me. That worried me about second line all them years, them shoes. Cause I know they wear leather, they wear sharkskins, and you got ostrich legs now this year and these shoes—yeah, ostrich legs—these shoes are pretty, you know, and they're real expensive. And the shoes that we bought, boy, this year were like three hundred twenty-dollars.

DS Each person.

PL Each person had to pay three hundred twenty five dollars, and we're just twelve members, twelve men. We got we got fifteen in the—no, the ladies—we got twelve mens and like six womens we have, that's the Lady Wales. So far—right now today—so far so good with the club. They worrying about me right now 'cause I been, last Sunday at that parade I wore my shoes and, you know, 'cause I really stuck a needle in my foot. And I didn't really went to the doctor for it, and it got infected on me from wearing tight shoes, by my foot being the way it is. It got infected on me. Now I'm going through the process of healing, trying to get it to heal well—which it's doing pretty good right now—and I just got to go through these six weeks of treatment with the antibiotics. And right now you could say, as you see me right now I'm moving around, at first I couldn't, I couldn't walk on my foot. And I'm ready to get back on with the club. We got a few things we have to do. We got to start getting some functions going on so we can raise some money for next year that way we won't have to make pay too much like we did this year. We paid too much money on this parade. Yeah, we almost had, we had eighteen thousand, and—I'm talking too much with the money.

DS (laughs)

PL But we had a little money in the bank in the parade, with the parade, with the band and all the other stuff. We had to—we came up a little but short, but we made it.

DS But funds is an important part of it.

PL Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DS Putting on a whole street party.

PL Yeah yeah, we really have to make it work for us to parade there. And for the parade to be a good successful one, you got to go out there and do what you got to do. Like we got to throw functions and stuff like that, take bus rides, and you know, throw little parties and stuff like that there are people that come in buy drinks and stuff, that stuff go towards the club, help the club to parade.

DS So—

PL It's a lot into this club that you have to do for it to be successful with it, you know, and the main thing you really don't want—when you coming into the club, you don't want to be short on nothing. You want everyone to have everything that we wearing, if we wearing the same thing, we need everyone to have everything. And we don't want a member—people come short sometimes—it be real short in the club and you put money into the club you can, you cannot break us if we have to help you pay for some of the things that you have. So we try our best to let our members catch up with some of their dues and fines and fees that they be having and then some of 'em be having fines from things they not supposed to be doing with the club. And we, I mean, we really need, I mean, I know I want, what I want from the club—that's why I'm into it—but I know this club been going for so many years—that we really really not being recognized. I mean that's the way I feel. The other members don't feel that way, but some places, you know, when bands go out of town and stuff like that they do some functions out of town, we not doing something, some second line clubs do go. So it's time for us to get established to where we can have somewhere—I mean, we might get someone to sponsor us—and you know go out out of town and show some things somewhere else that we do here in New Orleans. And that's what we looking for, that's what I'm gonna try to work up on. So that's what we gonna do through me. I brought it up last year in December for the first, it's our first meeting, our first day paying dues, starting our dues again. But this month here, tomorrow, tomorrow, that's Friday, there's a meeting Friday for new members. And from what I'm hearing right now we got six more new womens coming in and a few more guys so we

15:53 looking at a big club now. We looking at something like twenty people in the club, you know. And it's getting bigger and that's just the more, the more people, the more we can advance and the more we can make things happen. Now a lot of club members that parade, they kind of like fear the Prince of Wales—they fear us, you know, 'cause we don't never tell our colors to 'em. But, you know, some of the clubs you want 'em to tell 'em your colors—and to tell you their colors they want you to tell 'em theirs. Which is not that, that's not where its supposed to go. You tell us your colors, fine. But when we hit that door you gonna see the

colors be come out and everytime they come out they come out sharp, we come out sharp. And as you look at some of 'em, if you look at some of these pictures that I have, that's what they do: come out, be pretty. Every color be pretty that day.

DS So why is it so important that it's, that each year has different colors and that nobody knows?

PL The reason why they change colors up like that, 'cause each year, each year, all all all the second line clubs—that's the thing, that's the thing now—their colors. You, some might come in gray and black, some might come in black and white, some might come in blue and others, but seem like to me our colors that we do wear, we be having three sets of colors on. Some come with two. We have three. And as you see, we got that peach and we got olive green, and that's all into the suits. It's olive green, peach and, it's the colors that really throw us out. I mean, it be nice when you throw 'em on.

DS It's the surprise.

PL It's the surprise, really, it is. 'Cause like I say, right on this picture here, nobody told me the colors, and I didn't know. I mean, I hang with some of the brothers that's in the club, like this guy here, this Noland, he's the vice president. I hang with him, and he wouldn't give up the colors. You say, give up the colors, I say, fine, can't talk out Prince of Wales business to no one. Like right now, I'm sharing a little business 'cause it's an interview, but outside the club, anybody that's outside the club shouldn't hear or know anything about what's going on. And so right now we in the established business of trying to do this other color that we have while I got it in my head. I can't really share it right now. It's a surprise. You have to come out there and see it.

DS Right, and now I have to wait till October.

PL Yeah, see, that's our date. See, every October the eleventh, it's the day we parade. So we get ourselves together through these months right here. We doing functions, we gathering money, we throwing picnics, we doing bus rides, frying fish, you know, outside the club. Selling a few beers on the up—see Sunday's is the parade, we go get the truck fill it with beer, with ourselves beers. 'Cause it keep us from it coming out of our pockets, 'cause we, see, you know, the suits and stuff, the shoes, the hats, that is, wow, it costs, it costs. Look, that hit me, it hit me good: twelve hundred dollars to parade, you know, just to parade with that suit.

DS Do you still have the shoes?

PL Yeah, I still have 'em. See, Sunday, and I did a parade for the Voodoo Fest, you know, I came home and it was muddy out there and the dirt, I have to clean em up—ostrich leathers, that's the one that I do have.

DS So do you think you'll wear them again or are they special and you'll only wear them next year or you'll wear them—

PL No, see, we got another time to wear them, on Jazz Fest. See, we always parade on the last year of Jazz Fest, so that's when we gonna wear this suit again, Jazz Fest. And we used to come out like 2:30, walk around in the park for the line that they do have out there and we just have fun, get to do the parade and then just walk around Jazz Fest and have fun. You know, that's our day for us to go in to parade—Jazz Fest—that's our last event. From then on that suit can be hung, put on the side, and get ready for this next one.

20:57

DS I'm just curious about some of the neighborhoods, 'cause the parade this year-started, and you mentioned it, at Rock Bottom,

PL Rock Bottom, yes.

DS And that we're now sitting in the Seventh Ward.

PL Yeah, we in the Seventh. They do have a club here down in this ward too. I don't, I can't recall the name of 'em right now, but it's a club in the Seventh. There's a club in each: Ninth Ward, Sixth Ward, Seventh Ward, Eighth Ward—all of em have clubs. I think it's thirty-two clubs in the city right now. There's thirty-two clubs.

DS And, so where you were born?

PL I was born, I was born in the project. We move from the project Uptown, Uptown we moved to the Ninth Ward. I mean, I was a kid still, so I lived my life down in the Ninth Ward until I was able to get on my own. I was on my own since I was nineteen so. Mother, you know, they passed away a couple of years—my mom nine years, my dad been gone like seven.

DS So you were raised—you mentioned you have brothers, how many?

PL I have nine, I have seven brothers. There was fifteen of us all together.

DS Wow.

PL Seven girls and eight boys. Now today we have—wait I got to count—Ronald, Clay, John, Wilbur, Me, so five boys left, seven girls.

DS Wow.

PL Eight brothers passed away—I mean, three brothers passed away, sorry.

DS So that must have been—can you give me—I grew up with one sister, and the house was loud even with just me and her.

PL Living in a house with family members large like that—at first when we was living in the projects, we had like, we had three bedrooms. But when we move to the ninth ward we had five bedrooms. The majority of my older brothers and sisters, where there was four of them that did stay over, the rest of em were living with my...As they got older, they, you know, got their little wives and left us with five: me, my little sister—who was a Lady Wales, ex, former-Lady Wales, she's in Houston right now—and my little sister Sheila, Clay and me and Will. We was the ones left at home and till I left it was four. You know, till it got down to just one little baby brother left in the house. And it was good coming up, you know, it just, mom raised me, mom and dad raised us, they raised us. But when doing time, when time life for us, living that way, it was kind of bad. 'Cause you were—I always wanted to be like the next person, you know, they did, they wanna be gangster and this and that—that's how it was coming up in them days. I mean, it's gonna change a lot, you know, when guys were-all fussing and things and they would use their hands fighting, you know. But now a day these kids are going so crazy they got to have these guns, man. And it's ridiculous, you know, so we walks, we do walk for the violence right now—like we did our last walk for violence a couple of Thursdays ago. And we parading around and walk around and we had the bands stop with us-and parade with us. I was able that day to walk for violence, to stop the violence—it need to be stopped. So that's what this club is all about, to go around and show people how to have decent fun. And maybe one day, maybe one day it'll happen, and we won't have all this type of violence. Kids today see that if they get around people that's with good intentions and having good things, more things come honestly to 'em. That's what my heart feel, that's the way that I feel, that I would want to put something in store into somebody's mind to make 'em live, to want to be righteous in life. And like I said, I'm gonna be with this club till I can't be with them no more, you know, so it's good to be, when I did join, I felt good. And so right now today I feel like I resemble that. It been in me, now I'm there. Now let me see what I'm gonna do with it, it's time to see what I'm gonna do with it. And I'm a Sergeant-at-Arms today with the club, so I'm in a little place, a spot, into the club where I can rise, you know, from Sergeant at Arms to Treasurer or Vice President up to President, you know, so.

25:43

DS So, Sergeant at Arms, what are the—

PL Mostly you keep the order to the meeting, when we have a meeting. And if you find something that's going on wrong with what the club members are doing in the club, and you can warn 'em. You move on- but if you don't stick with that warning, 'pop!', you pop 'em with a fine. That's what I do. They call me the Fine Man.

DS (laughing)

PL What you gonna do, fine me? Yeah. Do something wrong with the club, I'm gonna fine you. And that's where I'm at with them. I miss my members 'cause I haven't seen 'em in like two weeks now, you know, 'cause I been off and on—running back to the hospital and couldn't go out to Sunday. Sunday's parade, we all meet up together to parade. We'll have our shirts on, Prince of Wales, you know, we all have—we dress with a different type of shirt on, showing, you know, supporting our club and also supporting them out there. That's a parade. It's fun, it's fun, it really is—wanna join?

DS (laughing) I love going as much as possible—

PL So, you know, why not? You can join the club.

DS Yeah? So when did women start joining the club?

PL We starting—like I said—tomorrow is the day for people to go bring in new members. And you got till December to get all the members in, 'cause once we get that second meeting—first we have two, we got two meeting out of a month, the first Sunday and the third Sunday—so either one of those meetings a person could bring a member. If they interested in being in the club, tell 'em what you have to do for the club. We don't want no arguing and bickering in the club, fussing and fighting or whatever like I said: do it, come in, you get a warning. If you still doing it, you gonna have to go.

DS How big do you think the club could get?

PL We can get real big, real big. I mean cause it's getting there now. Like I said, we started out with twelve men—one, two, three, four, five women. Now we about to get six more. That's what was told to me by some of the lady members in the club, that they bringing three girls. Some other members bringing three. So that's eleven members all together with the twelve men. Plus we got kids, we got a bunch of kids. So all together we got about maybe twenty, twenty three people in the club with the kids. And it's big. Now the woman bring—'cause they gonna want to put their child in there too to parade—so this year I won't know till we get to the meeting. Find out how many members are coming, I mean, and who all's gonna bring this in. Plus the Queen she have to bring her crew with her too, her matrons and all that stuff, they come with her. And we don't know: just the women, the Queen and her people, plus the Prince of Wales and they people, wow. Yes, it be amazing, when you see us, we all might be in that getting ready to come out that door. You get so nervous, you know. For me being my first time coming out that door like that, I was back there shaking and my legs was jumping and when they said to call me to come out that day—when I hit that door, 'ooowee'. I was doing a buck jump. I was—I mean—I got this guy who was

taking pictures, that our little photographer, that we do have that follows us around to the parades and take pictures. He showed us some of the pictures and
30:34 I'm ready for em to get 'em, but you know, the pictures'll cost me one sixty. You know, 'cause I'm getting the whole package: the video of it and everything else too. So all that comes with that package and I'm waiting on to get that. I wish I could have had it to show you some of the moves and how we working and how we was doing, how the club was doing it. I mean, we was really doing it that day. We had a ball, a ball. We stopped—and another thing I want to mention, ok—a lot of clubs, I don't know if you know about the Commander's Palace. You know about the Commander's Palace?

DS The restaurant?

PL Yeah.

DS Ok.

PL St. Charles.

DS Was a stop on the parade.

PL Yeah, it was one of our stops. And they didn't believe that. See a lot of 'em, they hate up on—like I said—they fear the Prince of Wales. They don't get much out of us, information out of us. And when we do come and share some information, they were saying, 'They ain't going in no Commander's Palace. They got to show me.' And as soon we got from where we Charlie Wright, walked around to the Commander's Palace and was working our way back in, and that was our stop. We stopped walking and, 'They really is going in the Commander's Palace!' So we were at the time, they really didn't think we was gonna go. It was on our route sheet, but they didn't think we was going in to the Commander's Palace. Cause it was told to me from one of the-members that was a ex—he was a ex-Prince of Wales at one time—he said 'Bruh, I didn't believe you all was going to the Commander's Palace. Y'all really showed us this year man, you all really did.' And he said congratulations, man. And I thanked him for telling us that, 'cause we was on the ball, we did what we had to do to make this parade successful.

DS What was it like when you went into the—

PL Ooh they let us come up, sit down, had a little water drink and stop. We stopped and talked to the owners and took a few pictures with them. Yeah, we gonna send them a picture—a big plaque picture—of us when we took our last picture out there on Tchoupitoulas and Napoleon. We took a picture by Tipitina's, and it's like, this background of this picture is like we in the forest somewhere taking the picture. And it's just beautiful, so we want to send them a picture, maybe they want to hang it on their wall. And we gonna ask ;em again, can we make another stop this time.

DS So this was the first time?

PL They used to let people stop, one time, but it was years ago, but that stopped. We was able to talk to them, to give us the ok to it, so now we trying to see if we can make that a stop for us. And that be good out there, that'll bring our recognitions up a little more, so people be feeling the way that they feel about the Prince of Wales. They don't share nothing, they don't give nothing. We not playing, we for real.

DS Do you think, from what you know of your grandfather, and father, or maybe people who had been in the club in your position when you were younger—

PL Well I didn't just have my grandfather, I had my cousins and, yeah, I had a lot of members of my family was in the club. My daddy brothers's sons was in there, you know, and it was big, it was big back then. You know, like I said, it was something in for me. I mean, I'm going to second line every Sunday, that was it. You wanna go somewhere? I'm going to secondline on Sunday. And it was good, I mean, that was—everytime that I do go—I hear that music, I want to jump.

DS Right.

PL I wanna buckdown.

DS It's contagious.

PL Yeah, It really is, you really get into it, once you start learning some of those steps and moves. I mean, if you get the basics of it, you gonna like it. When you get into it so good, when you learn the beat to the music, the beat to the music make you dance. You really got to listen to that beat. And when you listen to that beat, and when you listen to that beat, you gonna take a step: boom, boom. You know, so, that's it, that's—

DS That's the trick?

PL That's one of my secrets I'm gonna give to you. I give you a secret now. I really want to share more but I can't.

DS Cause the step is, it's a moving dance step.

PL Yes.

DS You have to keep going, you have to go fast, right?

35:19

PL Yes. You've gotta move. If you gonna move, you can move fast or you can move slow. It's all according on how that music going and how you feel, and if you feel good you gonna move. You gonna show your stuff. Like, if you got fans in your hands, you gonna play with 'em. If you pick them fans, you gonna dance with that music, show that fans, you gonna show it off. That's why we dress the way we dress. Our streamers be with the way we need 'em to be, to lock up on us righteous. And when you dance, (snapping), its beautiful when you see it. You see it the real most. It's good to see it. That's why some people, when they go out—they be having their video camera. They don't want to miss nothing, they don't want to miss none of them steps. They want to see you through that whole little dance through the parade and that's fun. I mean, I wish we could have had the guy—we didn't do it this year—we were supposed to have someone out there videoing, but sometimes he don't take. The guy that we was gonna get, he don't follow the parade all the way. You know, he'll take some of the pictures, and there'll be spots of pictures. We want someone who's gonna take the pictures and follow us all the way through the parade. When we make our stops, come out the doors and come back out and start off till we come back in. We didn't get that this time, this year.

DS I know some people from my class have video.

PL They do?

DS Yeah.

PL I think Joe—at one time I think Joe said that we was gonna get some copies of that.

DS I'm sure you will, yeah.

PL Yeah, 'cause I would love to see, you know, I would love to have em 'cause I would put it with my collection. That's my first time, that's my first love right now and I'm willing to go all the way with it. So I'm just gonna follow my Landry's tradition. I'm just gonna try and carry it on.

DS So if secondlining and being in the club is your first love, does—

PL Well wait now—my first love is God now, don't get me wrong—and then my wife and then the club, you know. I just want to say this is my first time being with the club so (unintelligible) it'll work out.

DS And so where does your talent for carpentry and your skills in that—

PL My, my carpentry started—see my daddy was a part time carpenter, my grandfather was a carpenter. Carpentry came down through me. Then my sister married a carpenter. So when she married him, I was young, I was like twelve

years old, trying to stay out of trouble, wanted to get my own job and stuff. So he learnt me the first basics of it. And when I got the basics of it, I started mostly building kitchen cabinets. That was my first start up. And after I started that I learned to trade on that, making cabinets, selling cabinets, doing that type of stuff, we hear got us a shop. I was at the shop and started making cabinets, and then we started, moved from that point on, started building houses. I started building houses, I learned some more trades on that—never did went to school for it, never did went to school for it—all I was taught by me doing. And when my brother found out that I can do all these things right then, he said, Paul he just told me, he said, Paul, 'I remember when I used to teach you and show you how to do things. I teach you how to do these things, and now it's time for you to be on your own.' So when he cut me loose—this is what I do now. So I been doing carpenter work on my own for thirty-something years.

DS You are sitting on a chair you made.

PL This is, yeah, this is a little temporarily—you know—the chair, the back part of the chair broke. I said, aw I need a table, so I took me a piece of three-quarter plywood and screwed it on and put it on the table. And this chair then here, this was a little end table I just cut it—you know it was a little end table like that—I just cut it, measured it, how back, how far I wanted it to go back and just made it and put it on the screws and put it together. When I ain't had nothing to do, that what's I was doing. I go find something to do with wood, do little simple things like that. That's for my speakers, I made a little part on the inside of that, you know.

DS Do you have a favorite type of wood that you like to—

PL Any, any type. There's nothing, not a wood I wouldn't want to mess with. I would love to mess with all of them. Like I just fixed my umbrella- I had broke the handle on it

DS Oh your umbrella.

40:24

PL Yeah, and I had it (unintelligible)...as I had been telling you on the phone I was just doing something to my umbrella—and so what I did was I took the stick. Be right back.

DS Ok.

PL The stick part, it needed a handle.

DS Oh, right, right. So now it will never break, it's much sturdier.

PL Yeah, see it's not as flexible like it was before. So now it kind of it sturdy, I can handle it from here. So when you parade, you be dancing so much with these little light umbrellas. You got to get a real, real, real expensive umbrella—like you pay fifteen dollars for an umbrella—so you have a nice one.

DS There's a Barbie doll on top.

PL Yeah, that's my girl. That's my second line power right there. See, the majority of the umbrellas you gonna see from us, you gonna see some type of woman on top, or some type of little thing on top of it. That's my little—she was exposing herself right around—it was together you know what I'm saying, it wasn't no problem, it was all good. See I don't know if you see some of my brother's umbrellas right here. See how he got his doll on top of his? And see that's years and years ago now. That's many, that's probably back in the seventies some time, when that came up.

DS So who make—do you make the umbrellas?

PL We make the umbrellas yourself.

DS Everyone makes the umbrellas?

PL Yeah, if you want one you make your own umbrella, the type that you want to make, how you want to design. You put your own design there, and you see the tip of that one right there?

DS Oh there's a dove or a bird—

PL Yeah it's a dove on top.

DS And so does everyone in the club then have—

PL No, no everyone—some of them, some of the guys don't want umbrellas. So if you don't want it, you don't have to make none if you don't want. Cause sometimes you be having fans. See some stops this is how we do it: ok, we'll take the umbrellas and bring it to our last stop. And when we get to that last stop, we take off some things that we have, like these two fans right here. We walk with the two fans, until we got to the umbrellas. You see when we get to the umbrellas, we took the fans down and use the umbrellas to second line with. Carry on and finish the parade on up. See that's the different part about some of the things we do with the Prince of Wales that the other clubs don't. And see, just like we change them costumes, right. So that's what we doing through the years. And I can say this is Joe, and he's got his umbrella with his dove on top. Yeah, see, Joe's young on that day. I got a picture so, Joe so young, he was young real young. Let's see, right here. Now this is my boy, and this is a few years ago

DS Who is this?

PL That's my brother Lonzo. He was the president at the time.

DS Who passed.

PL Yeah, he passed away. See that's him, see how all the members we had back then in day.

DS Oh wow.

PL That's when Joe was real young right there, you know what I'm saying. He wasn't young, but he was—

DS Was this the whole club?

PL That's the whole, that was the club back then. I can't remember what year that was, but it was back—

DS 70s?

PL It was back there, this look like it was back in the 80s or the 90s, somewhere in there. Mostly the 80s 'cause that's my brother-in-law, he was in it, and this is my nephew. This is Noland—Noland right now he's the Vice President. He's the President.

DS Ok.

PL Now Joe here. He's gone—you know what I'm saying—some of them not there no more.

DS Do you know who took the photo?

PL No, I just got it from my sister. See now this is all my brother's pictures.

DS Ok. So can I ask about some of these photos—so your sister had both—

PL No see, this is my brother right here.

DS Ok.

PL His wife had this album.

DS Ok.

DS And she was, since he passed, she was giving things away of him. And so some of the things she give to him, all those pictures in there. And since we are having this interview I say I would like to show some of it. I thought I was trying, the main one I was trying to get was my grandfather. He was the main start off for a Landry, you know, to be a Prince of Wales. And he noticed my grandfather doing this stuff, so he took over.

45:26

DS Ok. And, your grandfather founded Prince of Wales?

PL He didn't really found it. There was a lot of other guys, he was one of the members of—

DS One of the first members?

PL Yeah, one of the first members of the club. It started out, the club started out in 1928, you know what I'm saying. That's when it started out. We had eighty-one years anniversary. On this picture right here, that is eighty years. This is eighty-one years right now, the one I'm in. It's eighty years of parading, so it goes back a long way. You know they got the name—a lot of em was asking—how we get the name—how y'all get the name of Prince of Wales. Prince of Wales was named from a bunch of guys worked in the riverfront and the railroad, back then in the days. So they all got together and started forming and singing and talking and dressing up—everyone wanted to dress up—so they started a club. And how did it get the name? All of 'em was sitting down drinking JB, JB. And if you buy a bottle of JB, and you look on it, and you read it, the bottom label of it, you gonna see it: the Prince of Wales. And that's how the name got formed. A lot don't know that, but that's how it started. We had to go back and do a little research ourselves, and my cousin really showed me showed me a JB bottle with the name the Prince of Wales on it.

DS So no one told you—

PL At the time I didn't think it was a problem about the name. But when we start hearing people say how did y'all get that name Prince of Wales- and they went back and back and back and found it. That's how they got the name, from a bottle of JB.

DS Do you know much about your grandfather's life here and where he—

PL No not too much, not too much. All I know is he stayed in the Twelfth Ward, and he was a neighborhood, you know, friendly neighborhood man—walks around, you know, like, if you had any problem. You know back then, people respect elder folks back then. They don't—if they say to you something, better do it now bring it to your mama. You get a worse whipping from that then from not letting

him tell you when you get tapped from him oh crying crying why that man hit me that man hit me. So if you have something like that come to you like, 'cause you know that, cause he know the guy that did it, trying to get him not to be so bad coming up. So that's the way my grandfather was. And he always did go around helping a lot of folks. And he like a little handyman, you know, so. My daddy, when my daddy—we had a home up there in the Twelfth Ward where we didn't stay to the Twelfth Ward. We moved down into the Desire projects and that's in the Ninth Ward; this is Upper Ninth. We moved to—after we left from Upper Nine, we moved to the Lower Nine, so we on the side of Canal. And I been there the rest of my days and my life, till I got on my own, and I was able to go buy my own home. Bought my own home through the flood, but I was buying it at the time. The buyer get it and bought me out, so when he bought me out I came home and fixed my home and I'm back, I'm back to stay. I went to Texas. Texas was real good, treat us real nice. I have nothing to buy but things up there for me. I don't think I would have made it you know cause the work that they have—carpenter work that they have there—it most Spanish and Mexican working on the job and they didn't speak English. And I tried to get work from them: 'we no speak English we no speak English.' What I say to myself: if I can't get no work done, I know where plenty of work at, and it was in Louisiana, and they had a bunch of houses I could be fixing on. That's when I came home—came home and fixed this house. I was living in my trailer. My trailer was parked right there in front of this door. You can see I added on a part of this porch here. Yeah, I put this porch together too. I had to widen it out, 'cause I had to widen out the house. And I think this gonna be my home till the rest of my days. My wife, she be thinking about moving or selling the home or something I don't know. I don't think so, I'd rather keep it, rent it out then go buy something else, let this house pay for another rather than get rid of it. I'd rather let this house pay for the next, rent it out to someone. She wants something else, so maybe later on in life we gonna make that decision, make that move, but right now I'm not ready. I wanna enjoy this a little before I go and move to something else and then I gotta start all over trying to live somewhere else.

50:54

DS So how long were you living in the trailer for?

PL I was living in the trailer almost two years until I finished up the moving into here. I had it where I could move in, 'cause they were talking about asking for the trailers at the time and I would tell him come on get this thing out of here cause it was too tight for me anyway, you know. Feel like I live in it so long, feel like it was closing in on me, you know. I was putting a lot of stuff in there, a lot of furniture you know things I was doing. I even made little shelves, little entertainment centers and stuff to hang my tv on and put my computer on and stuff like that. I had to make stuff to put up in the trailer, so it was nice and tight, but it was cozy enough cause I was the only one there.

- DS Right. And so now you and your wife live here—
- PL Yeah. We's here right now. She has to go back to Texas and get some paperwork 'cause they got some more things that they have to give us from Road Home. We trying to get that to finish out the house. That's why I was trying to tell ya that I wasn't finished and we in the process of doing it, so she have to go back for a few days. I'm gonna be here 'cause I can't go nowhere right now 'cause I'm doing treatment.
- DS Right.
- PL Yeah. I'll be doing treatment for like six weeks. I'm gonna have five more weeks left. And hopefully when the doctor do another run, another test on me, show me everything is clear then I could go back and try to not let it happen again, and life goes on from there.
- DS If you don't mind me asking: what is the relationship between the work that you do and your injury and maybe your health insurance and this doctor? Do you feel—did you have coverage for everything? I mean, do you work independently with the carpentry?
- PL No I don't. No, see, what I'm doing like self-employed. I might go get a little job and do a little something. I don't really have no long contract jobs, nothing like that, just partial work that I do get sometimes, might last two, three days. That's how it's been with me through my life, so it's keeping me honest with life, 'cause that was helping pay my bills. You know 'cause the little money I do get, you know, it's not really no money. And it was something I had to do to survive with my disability. It help me to go so far with this work. You know, I can't go out and do no big old construction job. No, no I be, I really hurt myself then. 'Cause I do have a spinal cord injury and everything else too, you know. All that's—I might look like I'm in shape, but I'm not. I'm in bad shape, my body messed up.
- DS Is the spinal cord injury from a long time ago?
- PL Yeah, yeah. I had a little freakish accident stopping someone from fighting, got hit in my neck, you know, it paralyzed me a little bit. It kept me from doing a lot of things but with the strength of God and my little strength of me thanking God for getting me back on my feet, I just say I could do something to try to help myself get back. By me doing that, it helping me to get myself back in shape enough to do some work or do some type of work to help myself. So it's been—
- DS Sounds very scary to be partially paralyzed.
- PL Oh yeah. Well this side of my leg—it's burning sensation, this is my weak side. But I don't, beyond, gonna tell you the truth, I don't, I do not let it stop me from

doing anything, I don't. And that doctor was talking about cutting the foot this time. I said, Doc, you not cutting my foot.

DS Why did he want to do that?-

PL 'Cause it's infected. I had a bone infection—my whole bottom, my whole foot.

DS Oh, he wanted to amputate the foot?

PL Yeah, it was at that point for it to happen. 'Cause you never know how far the infection went up my bone. And with their knowledge of it, they treating things that shouldn't be. See now some of the temperature is down that was giving me problems is going away. Some of the antibiotics that I'm taking is really really doing a little something down there but it's not stopping the pain from—I still be in pain 24/7.

DS It must be hard to be out the street on your feet at a second line for hours.

55:50

PL See I be full of them pills, the pain pills, and I try to take them pain pills. See what it does, it cover the pain. When it cover the pain, when I get home and take off my shoe, and lay down off it—wow—some pain will come in on you. I be up half the night—oh lord, oh oh—and you know and then swallow some more of them, try to go to sleep. And the next day get up and try not to let it hold me back. Gonna stay on my foot for at least about five, six hours. And then the pain hit me a little bit, swallow more pills, try to cover till bedtime. But with doing this, I knew I had to take a couple more—you know drink on it and everything else—just to take the mind off of the foot, which it did. But when the parade stop, all the dancing and stuff stop, that's when it comes in. Try to go home and soak it, lay down, rest it, get off it, elevate it. Do what you got to do to get the pain away. And it's been like this all my life, all my life. And like I said, I'm not gonna let it stop me. I motivate myself. I can walk around and see these healthy guys running around doing things and I said 'boy, if I had your legs and all your strength and everything, boy, I be somewhere, I will be somewhere.' But I know I can't, 'cause I can't do some of the things that I see some other guys do. That's why I remember, I'm gonna tell you, I try to be like the next one—move up and make something big for myself, which I'm doing. It's just coming slow for me now. I'm grateful for it, for what God putting in my life for me. I'm able to provide for my life and my wife. That's the main thing that I want, you know, keep me going. It happens—

DS Was religion and God, was that a big part of your childhood or did you feel that you had—?

PL Yes. A big part of my life was, is, not be feel down, you know, felt bad about my condition. 'Cause I, it's coming up, you know. You see these guys, they dressing good and looking good so—and it was all good back then the way it was coming up so and I felt that I wasn't like 'em, you know, and when I felt that way I felt like 'uh uh no,' I'm not gonna let this condition stop me from doing and looking like them, dressing like them, trying to perform like the next one. Nice about that, dressing nicely. And then successful so far, so good. Life is good, 'cause you know, its how you live it. Live it good 'cause it's gonna be alright. There's ups and downs in it, and I'm going through a lot right now, but like I said I'm not gonna let them. I leave things in God's hands, I know God will get me through this. If I didn't have all my hurt anymore I would still ask God for forgiveness. And sometimes so much blessings come to me. Sometimes I wonder when I am gonna get my bills paid. God might send me a little job—one, two days. I'm not able to work on my feet every day, and some days when I do a job, I don't get paid from when I rest myself. And sometimes a bill come around and I need to get paid and I don't have the money, (snaps fingers), he send me a job. So I know I'm blessed. I just gotta keep doing what I'm doing, keep living. Life is good. It's how you live it, it is. I notice, now I mean, I try with the Prince of Wales now that's another part of my life that I'm involved with. So this is gonna be an involvement that I want to see how much I can accomplish. That's my goal, is to make something happen with this club, in my life too—to celebrate my life, do something with my life, instead of trying to get out there and hurt myself everyday trying to work, trying to provide. Think well maybe I can settle down a little bit to the club, do things with them, do a little work—you know what I mean—just keep my life on a level basis where I feel better that I'm not doing so much working. So hard not having too much to really show, I mean, just taking the money to pay bills then buying other things and stuff and not really seeing something for 'em. This here might give me my—part of my life—that I could say, oh look, I look back and did this and this year I did this and this year I did that with the club. So that's the main thing I want. I mean I'm looking forward to having fun with the club. It's like my brother say, you just scared to have fun. No, I'm ready to have fun. That's where I'm at with life—this, with my life.

1:01:29

DS Sounds like a good place to be.

PL Yeah, yeah. Right.

DS You had talked about the night, the preventing violence night—I forget what you called it.

PL Night out on Violence.

- DS Night Out on Violence. And so you had said—I just want to return to that for a second in terms of your plans for the club—events like that are the type of what you envision?
- PL No, see, it's the, when the Coalition—see every club member have a date to go do a night out on violence, and that night I think it was the eighteenth of October, 'cause we had a few days out after our parade to do it. It was around the eighteenth or nineteenth or something like that we did the night out on violence. And we walked from Annunci—from Tchoupitoulous to—we went down Peniston, came up Annunciation, and turned right, came up on Magazine, back down Peniston to the club. Just singing, sharing words about 'keep the violence, stop the violence' and stuff like that. We hollerin', paradin' in the streets. And everybody coming out doors, looking at us, joining us, you know, 'cause that's what we want: to stop some of this violence. You know, stop the killing, stop the violence. That's what we was doing, and that was one of our days to do that, that night out, so. And it's not over with 'cause the club that's coming up after us got to do the same thing. They have days to do the night out on violence too 'cause it's a Coalition thing, you know, it's something about stopping violence period. That's why the parade has been like this and we want to try and keep this going on like this forever.
- DS And that's what you'd like to see as part of your contributions.
- PL Part of my contribution, I wanna see if I can, how many people I can make contribute of this. Not just having fun, but doing something with their life to make their life righteous for someone else. And that's that's my goal, really. I want 'em to see 'hey, Paul can do it, why can't.' So I came a long way, I mean, really I did, and as far as to parade like that with them like that—I think I did good.
- DS Do you ever talk to some of the younger teenagers or—
- PL Yeah.
- DS About your experiences?
- PL Yeah, about I living everything about life. Everything I said I talk to someone and I share my experience in my life, and how far I came from. I always tell them I say, man, what you doing right now I done did, you know. So I'm a tell you it ain't fun, it ain't fun in the jailhouse, it ain't fun-being locked up. You only gonna be around a bunch of guys, that's what you want, you know, and that's what's in there. So you know we tried like want to tell you like, hey man, like I done did this. It ain't fun, it aint good. You ain't gonna get nothing out of it. You gonna get that go to jail. So it's the best thing for us to try to do, is keeps them from going to jail or keep 'em from getting killed. (dog barking) She fussing at something.
- DS She's excited 'cause guests are coming.

PL See I got her tied up and she sees somebody outside, and she's fussing letting me know somebody outside.

DS What you were just saying, were you talking from personal experiences of being—

PL Yup, yeah.

DS In terms of being arrested and being in jail and doing time—

PL Yup, yup—all of that. (leaves to check on dog) Sorry.

DS Would you want to share some of—

PL Oh, I don't really want to put that on tape.

DS Ok.

PL That's a little too much. I mean it's, I mean like—it was just some days in my life that just wasn't—I wanted to be the bad boy. So, ain't nothing in being the bad boy, so I see you got to change your way of life to be a good boy. That's what's happening to me. Good things come from God from being good, not from being bad. So that's my way I want to give back, should try to keep someone from doing the things that I went through, and it ain't good. I'd rather see them go out there and find a job, help 'em with work and show em how just to, show them some of the things that I know. And when I pull some of 'em with me on jobs like that, seems like they don't really want to work, you know, but I try to keep 'em. If I can't keep 'em, I can't just keep no one who doesn't try to help themselves. I'm trying to help 'em, except that you want to help yourself now.

1:06:57

DS Absolutely. Sounds like there may have been a time when you realized you had to get yourself to where you want to be.

PL I had to, I had to. 'Cause I wasn't getting anywhere, you know. And, you know, to having the people come to your door, your people gonna have to get you from being in jail. And you out there in the street hanging with this one and that one, and you don't know what they done did. And so I didn't want to be around all that. It's time for a change, plus I was getting older. I got a little wiser. So I'm gonna try and share some of my experiences and hope to someone else. That's the best I can do today for someone. They're going through a lot, or that's in their world like that. And it's, and some of 'em gonna be drug dealers and it ain't good, 'cause you really not gonna make any money off of it. The money is a little vicious circle, just stays in one of the circles, you know what I'm saying. And if you know you got, if you selling drugs they know you got it. Somebody want to

come kick your door in. blow your brains out. I already try to keep a guy from going through that type of problem. Like I said, I done been through all that, you know. It don't make sense for me to be out there and not tell them what's real with me. I'm gonna tell you what's real. If you want what I'm telling you, it's good. If you go try, it's on you. I done did it so why you gonna do it. See, I'm telling you the problem behind it, situation that was with it, it ain't good. Find another life, it's all good. I hope this interview was beautiful for you.

DS It was. Are you feeling tired like you want to—I have a couple more questions, but I can stop now.

PL Well keep on asking questions and I can bring it on and see if I can answer a few of 'em.

DS Ok. Well—first of all—do you have any children?

PL Yeah. I have two of my own and two with my wife.

DS Ok. And where are they?

PL They all scattered.

DS Ok. In New Orleans or all over the country?

PL Yeah, they got in Texas, across the river in the east, Houston. Out there in, that is, LaPlace, my son stay out there in LaPlace. That's my stepson. I got two stepsons and a stepdaughter with my wife.

DS OK.

PL And I have two girls of my own, grandchildren galore.

DS So who comes to Thanksgiving dinner?

PL Oh they all do come. My—she do the cooking.

DS Yeah?

PL Yeah, she do a lot of the cooking so they come here. This is the house where they come when they come.

DS Ok. So you're expecting them all, and Christmas is here too?

PL Yeah. Christmas might be here, might be in Texas this time. Our last Christmas was in Texas. Most likely my wife's own will come out there and see us, and we'll have things ready for them, yeah, and its gonna be a big party. Everytime,

anything we do big around here, it's fun, it's a party, it's about party. I mean we have fun. I got a little more work to do to it but—you see I left my walls white 'cause I'm gonna paint 'em the color that she want. You know, I just primed, all this right here is primed. So when you put the colors on it, take it perfect. That's where we at right now in the process of trying to do for to get my home straight, get my function down here and I can start living again. Right now I feel like this ain't the house, 'cause I feel it's empty. I don't have all my things here, I don't have all that little stuff. I want that room finished, I want the washroom finished, I want this front room finished, it's not. So I got to get that, to get it together.

1:11:18

DS Are there certain things you have in mind in storage that you miss?

PL Yeah, all my stuff is up there. Everything that I have is up there in Texas. So that's what me and my wife is going back to do, get things straight so we can get it done, you know. It's gonna take probably a couple of months, you know, at least two months. 'Cause she's got to step in do a few things to get ourselves straight back up, so she can come on home too. 'Course my grandchildren up there. She got one granddaughter that's not in school and she'd have no one to watch 'em till she get to the age where she can go to school. That's what's going on with that.

DS I'd love to hear about how you and your wife met. Is she—

PL Well, we met while I was staying in this apartment back there in the East. And a guy brought her around and I asked him, I said, man, who that chick is. Well you know from that point on, we met, we talked and got together. And we've been together eighteen years—eighteen—eleven in here at this home, seventeen—well wait no that's wrong. We lived in this house here eight years, the rest of the years we've just been together, you know, for the whole eighteen years. We've been together eighteen years, so we've been married for almost six years—five years now. We just have, we've been together long as we've been married, so all our childrens getting married so we decided we gone do it. And that's what happened, we got married after that, and its been us ever since.

DS And are you Catholic?

PL Baptist.

DS Baptist.

PL Baptist.

DS What church do you go to? You go to church every—

PL The church that I'm affiliated with is Pilgrim West Baptist Church across Canal in the Ninth Ward. It's not quite up right now 'cause things are still not together down there.

DS You mean, since after Katrina.

PL Yeah, after the storm, yeah. It's still not, church is still not built back up. I tried to find out where they holding Sunday classes and things, but it's on Claiborne and Fostaff (sp) under a tent, you know. They're still gathering folks, but I just have been going to see this guy Delvan, is a Deacon, was the Deacon in the church. He trying to get something going to get the church back up again. I found out through my sister so I'm just waiting to get back in church. And me and my wife might come back and go over to the church that we had back in the East too so. I'm affiliated with the Lord, doing my own way right. I still, I still know the Lord, you know. And I think it's gonna be alright. I still praying and waiting full-time, day by day, just praying for whatever, just to live. That's me. Now you have any more questions you want to ask me?

DS Well- is there anything else that you want to say? I didn't get to hear a lot about the name Landry, your family line—if you know your heritage and history?

PL Well, some of the history that you gonna get—it started up in the Twelfth Ward, you know what I'm saying. Always having a big family. We have, we got a big family; a lot of grandchildren, nieces and nephews and everything else too. Landry's was started with my grandfather. So everybody know the Landry's up there in the Twelfth Ward. See, it was a family thing, a lot of families, it was about how big the other families was, and your name was, your family was big, your name was all around. So you knew everybody that was in there in that Twelfth Ward that you know that had big families. They had a bunch of families like that. And then back then the longshoremans, they always did compete about how many kids they, how many they gonna have so that's how some of them big kids big families started, you know. Longshoremans—they always wanted a big family and dad was a longshoreman.

1:16:18

DS Your father was a longshoreman?

PL Yeah, he worked on the riverfront. Also my brother, he worked on the riverfront. He got 'bout seven kids on his own, and some outside too, outside the family, so—that was something back then in the days.

DS Yeah, sounds like you definitely have a lot of descendents that are all over New Orleans.

PL Yeah, we definitely do. We got some Landry's, that's right. We really do. They out in there, we got a history long, the Landry's. Then my Daddy's brothers, they got a bunch of Landry's in their family, so we got here three other brothers. And my cousin, they got a bunch of children Landrys, so it's a big family. And when we throw family reunions, like we have to throw them in City Park when we throw them—not City Park, Audubon park—that was our last two family reunion was at. It was so big, we had Landry's all over that place. Yes, yeah, it was big, it was.

DS Do you think every Landry you are related to?

PL Yeah.

DS Like a Landry in New Orleans.

PL Not all of them, cause some of them they got—excuse me for saying this—some white Landrys, that's in St. Bernard. I'm thinking that's my face, really you do think that way. So you go looking, you got some of the features in the face and everything else too. So I'm, you know, it goes back—back in the slavery days—when all this stuff, they was doing stuff like that. And every part of the French Quarter got these slave quarters in the back of their houses. The slaves were living there. And if you ever do go into the French Quarter, if you see a building that's in the front and what look like a little club house in the back, all of them was called slave quarters. And that's the way they were living, so slaves living in the back. See there's some history down here in Louisiana.

DS Is there any Creole heritage in the Landry's?

PL No we don't have no Creoles in our—that's what I'm saying.

DS Is that you don't know—

PL Like I said this name back here in the St. Bernard, this is white folks. And to tell you the truth, if you really look at 'em sometimes, you look at them, you see some resemblance. Now I'm not gonna say they kinfolks or anything but you could see some resemblance. See most of us all have small squinty eyes, and some of them have small squinty eyes (laughter)—some dark eyebrows over their eyes and everything else like that. Yeah, it's life living in Louisiana, it's fun. I mean, it was a small like community for me 'cause you know everybody—I mean everybody—in the neighborhood. You know. You know if you go eight nine ten blocks away they, somebody know you from where you stay at. So that's how it was in life down here period with us. People—you gonna know somebody, somebody gonna know you.

DS And, do you play any instruments, or do you do any—

PL No.

DS And in terms of your carpentry, have you ever wanted to make things, have you ever had the time or space to make—

PL Oh, I be having plenty time to do something. Just about having the money and getting the material to do it. Yeah, see, like I said, when my leg's bothering me, I can't do so much like I want to do, getting older on it. So if you had asked me before then, well yeah, I'd tell you I done build a lot of stuff. Just pick up and go in my backyard, and do some work a few years back. Right now I'm getting to where I can't do stuff like that. I can do a little bit of something, take a break, and be alright.

DS Do you have any memories of, are there any second lines that you've been to—

PL The last few years, the last few years before the storm, that's that's the second lines that I really had a good time at. And then this last one here, this last one right here I did it. It made me come out to be a Prince of Wales. Yeah, it really did.

DS You'll never forget that day or that outfit-

1:21:12

PL I never forget it. Like I said, I said my brother must have just talking to me. He said wear that suit, wear that outfit-right there. 'Cause I was going to second line's eighty years anniversary, I didn't know they colors. In the closet, you have that suit. Put it on, and from there it was history, history about to begin.

DS Well, I think that sounds like a great –stopping place- history about to begin-

PL Yeah, it about to begin. I feel it. I mean, I feel some good coming out of this. It's gonna, it's gonna work out. Then I might sit around, be the president, like my brother was, you know. I might wind up being the president of this club. I'm going for that history right there—president—I'm gonna run that club. I ain't tell no body else that.

DS (laughter)

PL See, I'm telling you a secret now. That's another secret.

DS I got three secrets.

PL That's another secret, that's another one. I'm working on that, that's what I'm gonna do. And with the strength of God and my strength and he gimme some strength to do it and I just keep on going. I'm gonna do it. I'm a do it. And that's the grandbaby. Here come my grandson and his wife.

PL Say hello. How are you? Tell her your name.

LL Lamar Junior.

PL Lamar Junior?

LL Yeah.

PL Yeah, he's cool. He's down here doing a little talking now.

DS How old are you?

LL Two.

DS Two? Wow.

PL You put your two fingers up there? He telling. You going in the back?

DS Do you often have family visiting a lot, in and out, a lot of family?

PL Yeah, they come.

DS That's nice.

PL This is a fun family right here-that's what I'm trying to say, it's fun. Any time we throw something it's gonna be fun. So, if you in town, might see you at one of them second lines and if we have something going on, I invite you to come over and fun with us and see some of how we, we call this, get down.

DS (laughing)

PL We have fun food: barbecues and seafood and whatever goes with what we doing. You know, it be fun.

DS Fun just happens when you're all together?

PL Sometimes it (snaps) pops up just like that. Somebody might say- go get Tommy and Phil, come over. Next thing you know we go and buy some food, cook something. As we cooking, the music's jamming. When we start jamming, everybody start coming in. Start coming, and there goes a party, it's a party. It's been like this, on this corner, for years.

DS On this corner.

PL Right here. For years, we have us a party.

- DS So everyone knows, everyone knows where to come.
- PL Yeah, where we have fun. If you want to have some nice decent fun, you come right here. I got my neighbor next door, these two neighbors next door, we all get together, and we throw us a party. If –if – it might start here, next door. If this one start kicking it might start all over like that
- DS And for a good party you need your people, you need music- what kind of music do you need?
- PL Jazz, second line music. I mean everything. Boy, you bring second line up in here you might rock the house, you cave it in ‘cause that’s how everybody be getting down. I mean we do get down. It’s the last party we had, my wife came down, we had to throw something. All of a sudden we just pop up and throw a party, and I had a house full of people, a house full. It be nice. She got to go, she really got to go. I mean, she got to get some paperwork that we need to do for our house. And it’s up there in Texas. So tomorrow she have to leave. I don’t want her to leave but she have to leave. I mean you know, she got to go take care of that business.

1:26:19

- DS Do you need people to come help you out? Do you just drive—is that your driving foot?
- PL No. No, it’s not. I just try to stay off it. That’s T girl (looking at his dog) she’s something.
- DS What was the name of the dog?
- PL Before? Her name was T-Girl. Yeah so, and she looked just like her, so I just went on and named her T-Girl too. I got her when she had puppies. I’m gonna get one of her dogs, one of her boy dogs from her, and I’m gonna get me a T-Boy. And I’m gonna have T-Boy and T-Girl. I had ‘em like that and I lost ‘em. Yeah, I loved the dogs, you know. See, when we left Hammond, we all had pitbulls and stuff like that, I had my, she was tied up and I said no, I’m not gonna tie her up and let her run the yard. Thank god that I did, ‘cause if I left her tied up, she’d have drowned, ‘cause she wouldn’t have got loose. But my dog, so big and tall like this one here, when that water started coming up she went over the fence and my next door neighbor stay in this brick house told me where she went. She then jumped on this school house on the corner, and that’s where all the dogs was, on the house. And then my neighbor down the street who had my dog, she kept her with her, cause she was protecting them you know. ‘Cause people was going around, and they was in their boats. They wanted to take your boat from you and stuff like that so. It was, ohhh back then, in the Katrina days it was ridiculous to live here. ‘Cause you couldn’t go nowhere, the water was so high. You know, the

water got to six feet inside my house, so half of that wall—that's how much water I had in my house.

DS And where were you?

PL I was in Texas, going to Texas. I was stuck on the road almost three days.

DS At what point, when did you decide to leave?

PL When I, when my nephew was down here and the water receded, came in my house. You know, he was going around checking, see how people's houses was then. And he told me, Unc, he told me that a guy was around here taking— see I had two trucks and a jeep, and a jeep parked right there in front of this door and one truck here and one truck on the side—and they were stealing my trucks. And with the truck wasn't no good or anything, they was taking stuff you know. So I said let me come down and see what's going on. And make me come down here and stay in the trailer and start fixing up my home. I didn't want to take everything out here, you know, plus, when I did come in this house here, I cried 'cause everything was tipped all over. It was a mess. I lost a lot of pictures; lost pictures of my mom, daddy—something you never get more of. Have to have those memories. I mean just the other day I was thinking, Daddy, Daddy. We used to do some things, You know there's a lot of things, I mean, that—I don't remember his voice. I think 'bout how my Daddy used to talk. Listen there, I try to listen for it and I can't hear it. It kind of mess your head up a little bit. And then with the pictures I had, I always did go back and look at my Mom and Dad in the pictures—I can't go back and do that. My sisters and brother them got some pictures 'cause they was able to take some. See we didn't think we was gonna go away and the levees was gonna bust. And we thought if we was gonna get waters, get water come up to the house. Like normally that was what water was doing back up in here—it'd come through to the porch. But this time, it tore up a lot of people's houses, and a lot of people lost a lot of stuff, and memories and things are gone—something you aint never get back—pictures, the house. I mean, you could, a thousand words you could get out of a picture, but if you don't have it, you can't. You remember some of the pictures that you had.

DS You remember certain aspects.

1:31:22

PL Huh?

DS You remember certain parts about your mother.

PL A little, a little. I mean, even my daughters' pictures, you know. I had my daughters' pictures when they were babies. So I lost all that. I mean, I can picture back at some of 'em, picture back to my mother, when you think about it like

they're still around. Can't do too more about it 'cause it's gone. Just try to live when you see 'em today, take more pictures today, try to build you another collection like that. And that's what I've been doing, taking pictures of my grandchildren andand things like that. That's more, that's another generation I started. Yeah, another generation. I got them, so that's the good part about it. And I still see my sisters and brothers. They might be out four hours, but they do come back in. And when I do see them, we are glad to see each other, have fun, take pictures, have parties like I tell you we do. I do the same thing with my sisters and my brothers when they do come in; throw a big party. That's why we call this party city, nothing but a party.

DS (laughing) There's a party going on in there. (Paul's wife has been visited by his son, daughter in law, and grandson over the last several minutes)

PL See- we about to kick off something right there. You see what I'm talking about? That's how it be, that's how it started. It be like that, I mean, that's the way it is. That's the way our life is, that's the way, we won't change it. I ain't trying to change it. I mean, try to change some suspects in your life. Some of the things you still got and you want to do 'em again, you know, like having fun. Fun is fun. But also you want to live too. I mean, my life, there's some things in my life ain't going so good, that's what I feel. I feel some things just not right, and I just, I hold it in. I just hold it in, ain't good to be holding a lot of this pain in sometimes. You get angry, take it out on someone else and that's something I don't want to do, so I ask God to guide me through my life, to make things right. And this little condition that I'm going through right now is keeping me from doing some things in my life that I normally used to do. I can't do all the work, I can't go out. Guy called me the other day and said Paul, I need you to do somethin' for me. It's a little job, I need you to do it. And I said, man, I'm willing to do it but I can't. And that's money being taken away from me. But I can fault, I need to fault myself on some of it, 'cause doing those last two little parades right there brought some of this on. But I ain't gonna hold it against, that's my fault. I had fun. You know my cousin, my cousin took some pictures of that day when we was second lining. We were secondlining with Rebirth up there on the stage, and we had a good time. I wish I could get a copy of that one. I'm a talk to Joe, see what Joe can see about it, see if they can give us a copy of some of that. See, Joe had the paperwork on this guy who was having some of the members that's up there. And tomorrow's the meeting—try to make the meeting—I'm a call later and see and find out where the meetin' at. And I might just go, but if I can't go I just stay home you know. But I'll find out some information on, if they, you know. I call one of the members and they didn't know what's going on- Joe always call and see how I'm doing anyway so he'll probably do something to me. That's me.

DS Thank you so much.

PL I hope it was enough for you to get by with. I mean, you know, did you hear enough or—

- DS I mean, I could always hear more. And if you want to be interviewed again or have members of your family that would want to do some other interviews—
- PL Well maybe maybe if you—I mean like—if I can get something with my cousin and then some of the members—if we could do a little, a few member thing, I would get together on that and do that with you if you want. See, we all could sit down and talk some. See, I have a cousin—he can go back even farther than me.
- 1:36:23** Yeah. He can go back, he can go back, when he used to stop by my Auntie house and he used to make a stop there to get some water and cool off and cool off there. We didn't stop there, it was just a normal stop 'cause that's the neighborhood, and they know my Auntie. Boys start coming around, and stop right there, 'cause they been already for a walk over there, so just stop and just show appreciation. It happened every year like that. That would make me go Uptown, in the Twelfth Ward, sit down and watch them parade. It goes back some years now, believe me it does. There's a lot of things I might not, I can't tell you about—some of them, cause some of them I done forgot on me. Getting to the age—sometimes I think about something, sometimes I can't—so that's where I'm at with some of it just right now. But I hope I did tell you enough for—
- DS I really enjoyed listening to you tell me your stories and everything. I was very thankful for you taking time out.
- PL Well I'm glad you did come over, and I know Joe said that we need to get this interview done wit' y'all. And you willing to do the interview, and she gonna call you set it up. I was waitin' and the last time you did call I was in the hospital. I was in the hospital when you called, and I didn't know the number or who called. And then Joe called me, and let me know, and I think your number was right before him, and I seen the number and I call your number, left you a message, that's how we get to do this. I really wanted to get it done.
- DS So six more weeks of your—
- PL Yeah, I have five more left, five more left. And now I get some decision from the doctor, hopefully tell me something good. I know it's gonna be good 'cause I haven't done nothing wrong to upset it, you know, upsetting my ankle, my foot and stuff. And I know the antibiotics probably doing good 'cause I can walk on it again. At first I couldn't, so, I mean, I was crying like a baby.
- DS I mean a bone infection sounds pretty serious.
- PL Bone infection—it was my whole foot.
- DS You don't want to play around with that.

PL No, no. He told me and I went to tell my cousin. I went to crying right then and there. I said no, please Lord, not right now, not right now. And so, and I told Doc let's go through this fifteen, six weeks of this therapy and let's see from that point on. And that's where I'm at with that.

DS When my father was about your age—a little older—he's diabetic and so he has to be careful when he steps on something.

PL Yeah, diabetic. When something don't heal, it don't heal.

DS And he didn't pay attention, he had like a hundred and four fever for a week, and he had a staph infection in his knee and it almost took over his whole body.

PL It'll get in your blood stream, and blood, and that's it. Once that's it they gonna cut you. Tell ya I know 'cause I ran around this lady that had it; she had sugar diabetes. And she fool around, had stepped on something in the yard, 'cause she liked to work in the yard. Call us over there and help her do her yard and everything else. And she loved to work in the yard. And she was a Diabetic, she cut her foot. And when she cut her foot it didn't heal, and it was her toe. Once they cut her toe off, they cut her ankle off. Once they cut the ankle off, they cut the leg off. The leg was the last one, she died. It got in the blood, it works. It works, that's how fast it works up on you. If you don't catch it right, and I thank god that I did—I caught it right then and there.

(grandson asks a question)

PL You need what? A spoon of medicine? You had some?

LL Yes.

PL That's good. Look like you had some too, you got dreamy eyes.

DS No, it's one of those things that remind us that we, our bodies, are susceptible, you know, to bacteria.

PL You gotta watch it. See I was hardheaded, I was hardheaded, 'cause I wasn't supposed to secondline. I was hardheaded on that day right there. I went did, 'cause I wanted to go to do the Voodoo Fest. That was my day to do it, Saturday. And I know I was hurting, I know I had my foot a little swollen. I went, got it in my shoe, and once I got it in my shoe I told my wife I'm goin'. And I went, went out and partied that day and came home. It wasn't that bad as it was. And that Sunday, that Sunday was the last day, and that's when it was hurting real real bad. That Monday I went to the hospital. Yeah, I'm glad I did.

DS Do you get to see—do you have your own doctor that always deals with you?

1:41:33

PL No, see I was, I had stopped that after the storm. I couldn't get back to Charity— Charity was the place for me to go to the hospital. I had my own doctors there. And, you know, I had my personal doctors there. I was being seen with them every two days out of a week, so. Had two days out of a week I see him, you know, so.

DS So, I mean, after the storm you—

PL I haven't seen a doctor. But I seen a doctor in Texas, you know, I got the bill of health in Texas to come down here and work on my home. So I was alright from then on. So the only things I did caught down there was colds and flus, and got over it too.

DS So you don't have any regular insurance or do you have any state insurance?

PL Yeah, I get disability insurance.

DS Disability insurance.

PL Yeah, I get Medicaid and Medicare.

DS But it doesn't give you a private doctor?

PL I can go get me one, I can get one. I'd rather go to the hospital, they got good doctors. Charity hospital had good doctors. LSU and Tulane, they good doctors. I'm a Tulane patient.

DS It's good to know that there's good doctors.

PL Yeah, this is the place to be. I mean, people come from all over to have to go to Charity Hospital, and they doing the same thing now here today with University. So it's all good. I mean, it's coming back, it's coming back, it's coming back slow. But we just got to be patient and wait on life. We can't rush life, can't rush it. Just be patient enough about it, and it be alright. I mean, life is simple, it's how we living it, you know. You wanna live it good, you gonna be alright. Try to living on a foolish basis, it's gonna be that way. But we make it complicated, we make life complicated and it's so simple to live. Do what's right; right come to you. Do wrong; it's gonna be wrong. That's the way it is, really. You know it took me many years to learn some of that, and you know it was already embedded in me. Do good with life; life come at you good. But being the person that I was at the time, I mean, it ain't about me. Wouldn't worry about it. I just want to be that person—that person want to be that person—so when God slap you one time, it wakes you up. He'll spank you, yeah, he'll spank you. Settle you down and he'll straighten you up, from that point on you'll be straight. And you won't get

spanked no more. That spanking could have been a bad, you know, but I wouldn't do right for me. So that's where we at, that's where we at. I'm glad you enjoyed this.

DS I absolutely did. I want to—can I take a picture—

PL Sure

DS Of the umbrella and that doll? Is it a secret what you're gonna put on the umbrella next year?

PL It's gonna be a different color...(walks across the room to get the umbrella)

DS So is it heavy?

PL No.

DS Can I pick it up? I mean, it's not light. I mean if you have to carry it for blocks-

PL Yeah, you gotta know how to handle it

DS It's definitely that.

PL See when I carry it I carry it on my shoulders (unintelligible)

DS I see. So you rest it on your shoulder. So you can spin it-

1:46:22

PL Yeah, I can spin it right now. See, I got some glue in there that need to get hard. I just repaired it—that broken part—I drilled a hole and another one down. See right here? I'm trying to wait for that glue to dry, then I can spin it like I want.

DS I see. That's the important element: the spinning and the resting and the spinning.

PL (talking in background, unintelligible)

DS It's so pretty.

PL I'm gonna go to these second lines, I'm gonna have my umbrella with me. One of these Sunday's come around, I go to a second line, bring it, put on pants to match the club.

DS And everytime you go to a second line you always want to wear—

PL You bring something of you.

DS 'Cause I've seen, like they have the Uptown Swingers shirts a lot.

PL Yeah, yeah.

DS You see the same people at the second lines.

PL Yeah, you gonna see the faces, you gonna see them again. Every club that's a second line, if they done second line already, they going to these second lines. You gonna see 'em at a club—I mean, at a second line. You gonna see them at the one that parade before me, or the one coming after us. You gonna see 'em. You gonna meet 'em. They have their shirt on of their club. You gonna shake hands, talk to them a little bit, they gonna get to know your name. Right now I'm getting to know a bunch of 'em. See I don't, I never did socialize with some of the clubs, the other clubs, 'cause I didn't know em, so I just stuck around with the Prince of Wales and I deal with them. Now the other club members got to know me and I got to know some of them. And through some of these picnics that they give, you meet them through the picnics too, you know. So you go to they picnic table where they set up at. Some come over there, and you get to know 'em. That's what they do, that's how they doing it now today. Everybody be wanting to get to know each other. I mean that's what we trying to do, make something happen.

DS Do people, do you ever see people—like, do you ever go to Indian practice or—

PL Oh yeah, that's the main thing I came up here is the Indians.

DS Yeah?

PL My nephew is the Big Chief of the Ninth Ward.

DS Your nephew.

PL My nephew. Yeah, he's the Big Chief of the Ninth Ward—Ninth Ward Hunters.

DS Ninth Ward Hunters, ok. And anyone else in your family—

PL My brother Jean was an Indian back then too. He's in a wheelchair right now. I mean, I came up from a home of second line Indians, you know, so.

DS Ok. Which, which tribe?

PL Ninth Ward.

DS All Ninth Ward, ok. So how old is that—how long have the Ninth Ward Hunters—

PL Ninth Ward Hunters is no more—it's a different name, a different club. A different Indian got that name now. But they still got renegades down there, they run a gang by theyself. So like they run, they run renegade. When you run renegade, you by yourself. You go be a Big Chief Indian, you go be a big Chief- a Spy Boy, Wild Man, whatever you is. You makin' your own club, your own. That's how it is right now over there. See back then they used to come Seventh Ward, Third Ward, a bunch of them. They got an Indian club come from out Lacombe (?) a few blocks up, and he sews and come out every year, come up here. I'm not affiliated with some of it. I just live in the Seventh Ward, but I don't go to it. I'm not that big type of person, always dealing with tribes. I just deal with myself. I have a few friends, come over, we have fun—stuff like that. I'm a fun man, I'm a fun guy. If you ever get to be around me now you'll see.

1:51:21

DS I believe it. I'm sure that you've got good parties in here. Well I will be in touch and I would love to have a picture of your family, if you're not busy.

2:01:09