Raynee Woolfenden

Raynee (R.C.) Woolfenden was born on February 19, 1955 in Akron, Ohio. His father, Raymond Woolfenden, known as "Cousin Ray," was inducted into the Country Radio Broadcasters DJ Hall of Fame in June of 1999 in Nashville, Tennessee. Raymond was born in the community of Kopp, VA on September 5, 1916 and was buried at the Belle Haven Cemetery in what was Kopp and is now on the Marine Corps Base Quantico. Raymond was a DJ at WXRA in Woodbridge from 1961-1964 and owned and operated WPWC from 1974-2000. WPWC was in Quantico town until 1979 when it moved to Dumfries, VA.

Raymond's son, R.C. Woolfenden, started working in radio stations like his father during high school. He began working at WQSM in downtown Fayetteville, North Carolina and WVLY in Walter Valley, Mississippi. He continued on to work at his father's radio station, WPWC in Quantico and Dumfries. He was the operations director at WFAX from 1987-2022, when he retired after 53 years in broadcasting. R.C.'s interview describes his father's career in depth, and also explores the history of Kopp, the lost community in Prince William County that is integrally tied to his family.



Figure 1: Prince William County intern Morgan Peterson interviews RC Woolfenden in the basement of the family home, which held memorabilia from his father's career. Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation.

Transcript of Oral History Interview with R.C. Woolfenden

Interviewee:	R.C. Woolfenden (RW)
Interviewer:	Morgan Peterson (MP)
	Lauren Maloy (LM)
Date:	June 24, 2025
Interview Location:	R.C. Woolfenden's Mother's House in Triangle, VA

Please keep in mind that this document is a verbatim transcription of the spoken word rather than a written document.

LM: Yeah. So that one's going. And then this one is going as well. So, you should be all set.

MP: Hello. My name is Morgan Peterson. I'm an intern with the Office of Historic Preservation. The day is June 2025—or June 24, 2025, and I'm interviewing RC—how do you say your last name?

RW: Woolfenden.

MP: Woolfenden—RC Woolfenden at his mother's home in Triangle. Okay. So, first question, what is your first and last name?

RW: Raynee Woolfenden. I have to say that slow, so people get it. [Laughter]

MP: And can you spell that for me?

RW: Certainly, I can. R-a-y-n-e-e. Last name is W-o-o-l-f-e-n-d-e-n.

MP: Thank you. When and where were you born?

RW: I was born February 19, 1955, in Akron, Ohio.

MP: Okay. Who were your parents?

RW: Raymond and Doris Woolfenden.

MP: And what did your parents do?

RW: My dad was a musician and a DJ, and he also did odd jobs on the side picking up extra money because musician shifts never pay that great. So, Mom, she was a housewife the first few years. And then sometime in the 1960s she started going out once of all of us kids were a little older and working different jobs. You know. She ran a record shop for a while, did some waitressing—that type of thing.

MP: Where do you remember growing up primarily?

RW: Oh, that's a loaded question because my dad was a tumbleweed. As a musician—when I tell people this, they think Dad must have been in the military. But he was a musician, and a DJ, and in this field it's kind of like being a minor league baseball player. You're gonna bounce from town to town. So, I was in Ohio in various locations through kindergarten. And by first grade, I was going to Occoquan Elementary here in Prince William County. By the time I finished first grade, I was at Gunston Elementary in Fairfax County—where we stayed, believe it or not, until I finished fourth grade. And then fifth grade, we were in South Hill, Virginia down near the North Carolina line. By sixth grade, I was in the south end of Fayetteville, North Carolina where we stayed for a while, believe it or not. And finally, the middle of my sophomore year of high school, we moved to Mississippi. We were there until my senior year of high school, and we ended up in Milton, Florida. And then after that, in November of 1973, we moved back to Prince William County—which is where I picked up college again. So, like I said, it's a loaded question. You asked so—it all depends on what year you want to know about.

MP: That was a very good overview. Thank you. [Laughter] So this is probably gonna be hard to answer then, because there's gonna be so many answers. But the next question I have is, where did you and your family go often growing up?

RW: That was a loaded question.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: And I had thought about that. And believe it or not, Nashville, Tennessee, is the first thing that comes to mind. Because at various radio stations Dad was at, he would do promotions with the listeners, where he would get tour buses together and take groups of listeners to Nashville. And so, I'd been to Nashville lots of times. I'd been to the Grand Ole Opry lots of times. I've been in the Old Hall of Fame, which was on 16th Avenue South. I've been in the new one that's downtown. Nashville was the first place that—Dad was there far more often than I was, and you'll see some of that evidence here in the room. He would normally go at least twice a year, sometimes three or four. So, you know, even when I was in elementary school, Dad would disappear in the Fall, and Mom would say he was out of town in Nashville. And of course, you know, when you're in second/third grade, what's a Nashville? I don't know. But he'd come back with the stuff, some of which I have up here on the walls. And, you know, it didn't mean a whole lot to me cause I didn't know who Roy Acuff was, and Minnie Pearl was, and Loretta Lynn was. It was just something Dad was doing. But Nashville would probably have to be the answer—the short answer.

MP: Yeah. How often did—or how long did your dad stay in Nashville then usually?

RW: Normally at least a week—

MP: Okay.

RW: —unless it was a bus tour, excuse me, of listeners. And then, in which case, it would only be for an extended weekend. Cause normally that's how long one of those would go. We'd leave on a Friday and get back either late Sunday or early Monday.

MP: Okay. So, this might also—I'm coming up with a lot of loaded questions apparently. But what shops or other areas of interest do you remember visiting or knowing about as a child, besides Nashville?

RW: Well, we traveled a lot and went to a lot of places. I was thinking about that on the way over here from my house today to Mom's. And there's not many states that I haven't been in. Most of them are in the Midwest—the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, and Alaska. I think I've been in all the rest of them—and Hawaii. I haven't been there yet. But all the rest I've been to. And so, you know, my oldest brother—he's technically he's a half-brother. His dad has been married twice, but I really don't like that term "half." But I'll use it for this because it makes it easier, you know, sense for folks. He lived up in Ohio. He stayed there when Mom and Dad moved back to Virginia. And so, we'd go up to Ohio. Normally Dad would go in January of all times to go to Ohio cause it's normally gray, and cold, and full of snow. And I much prefer to go to Ohio in June, July, and August when it's really nice. And you can go out to the Amish farms, and you can go out to, you know, all the Amish country. And they have a great place there in Berlin, Ohio where they have—make cheese, and it's got a big "U" in there full of coolers. That "U" is just coolers, and you can go through and sample all the different cheeses.

MP: That sounds really good.

RW: It's a wonderful place to go.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: I love that place. But, you know, normally when I thought of home I thought of my grandparents because they stayed in the same place, you know, up until their passing. They were always in the same place. So, I knew no matter where Dad moved us to there was that rock of my grandparents on his side and on Mom's side that I could depend on—whether it, you know, my dad's parents lived up on U.S. Route 1 just north of Fort Belvoir. And Mom's parents lived down in Greensboro, North Carolina. So, no matter where we went, we ended up there a lot. And so those were places that I remember growing up. You know. You go up there on Route 1 now where my grandmother's place was at, it's a Fairfax County administration building now.

MP: Yeah.

RW: You know. But in those days, it was a farm. And she had—I can't remember if it was five or ten acres—something like that. So, there was a cow, and a mule, and chickens, and, you know, pear trees, and apple trees, and grapes, and all that stuff. So, you know, it was not the—it was not a suburban feel that you would get. You know. It was more living on the farm type thing. For Mom's parents, they lived in a trailer park. So, but her uncle—oh, shoot, my uncle—which was her brother-in-law—he had a restaurant across the street from the trailer park on Route 29. So,

the family always ended up in Knuckle's Restaurant. You know. Which I loved because you'd go in there, and Uncle Arnold would come up. You know. "Are you hungry? Would you like something to eat? Let me get you something to eat," he'd tell me. You know. And I always got the same thing—it was a barbecue sandwich, a Dr. Pepper, and a bowl of squash and onions. And I'd know it was gonna be good cause my Uncle Roger and my grandfather Clyde were both in the kitchen cooking. That's where they worked. And so, you know, I was always gonna get the best food there was because they were fixing it. So, you know, those memories of grandparents were, you know, the rock that we had growing up because we were always moving around.

MP: What was the restaurant called out of curiosity, if you—

RW: Knuckles Restaurant.

MP: Knuckles Restaurant?

RW: Yeah.

MP: Okay.

RW: It's a funeral home now believe it or not, but—

MP: Oh, interesting.

RW: —because, you know, Aunt Elsie had to sell it years ago when she got up in age and, you know, Uncle Arnold had passed away. So—but I miss that restaurant. It was, you know, it was more home than the trailer park. You know.

MP: Yeah.

RW: Cause we always ended up there. Except for Mom and one other sister, all of her siblings lived right there around that area. And so, when you showed up in town, everybody ended up at the restaurant and, you know, be a big, long table and there would be 30/40 people in the family on her side sitting around the table. You know. And the food is pouring out of the kitchen, and, you know, just a great time, so.

Kopp

MP: So, you mentioned in the article about your father—that he was buried in Belle Haven Cemetery? Correct?

RW: That's correct.

MP: Can you tell me a bit about the cemetery and your family's connection to it and—

RW: Certainly, I can do that?

MP: —Kopp?

RW: Yeah.

MP: The town of Kopp, do you know?

RW: When they moved there—well, let me back up a little bit. When Thomas first came to Prince William County—Thomas Woolfenden which was my great-grandfather, he was 18 and a Union private. And the year was probably 1864—probably in the winter months because in May they crossed Germanna Ford into the wilderness, and fought Lee, and went down to the Spotsylvania Courthouse. And, you know, the whole overlay of the campaign which he was a part of. But he had met the family, and they became friends of the folks that owned the farm that he would later buy. And he actually bought the farm after the war during the 1870s—but I don't remember the exact year. Then in 1885 they actually moved to the farm from Baltimore. I think he was, you know, raising money to help pay for it so it would be paid when he got here. But they moved there in 1885, and there was not a church. In fact, Kopp didn't exist at that point. It was just a rural community. There was no name to it. There was a post office down the road that was called Boyd, but that didn't last long. And, you know, in those days the post office was in the store. Wherever the store was at, that's where the post office ended up. But Boyd was on down past where Kopp would later become. And when that store closed, another store opened up nearer to where the church is at over the—the church was—the cemetery is still there. But and that became Kopp, and that was because of the post office. The post office did not want a new post office to have any name that was somewhere else in the country. So, you could not call it Philadelphia, or Greensboro, or Nashville, or anything like that. They had to have a unique name. So, it's named—was a German word that means "a forest of trees."[1]

MP: Oh?

RW: And so that's what they picked for the post office. But by then the church had already been built cause the church in that same year, 1885, they decided to build a church there. And Thomas donated that acre of land from his farm for the church. And they had a fundraiser Thanksgiving evening of 1885 in the Woolfenden home. It was an oyster dinner. I know this because it showed up in the newspaper. Cause in those days the county was so small, everything showed up in the newspaper.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: I mean I can actually look in there and tell you who showed up for my grandfather's 21st birthday.

MP: Oh, wow.

[1] Much of the archival information about Kopp is synthesized in a book available online at Prince William County Public Library's Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center (RELIC): Woolfenden Sr., Raymond, *Kopp, Virginia,* 2019. https://archive.org/details/combinedkoppbook/mode/2up

RW: They're all listed. It's the most amazing thing. Who would think of such a thing? There's a story in one of the papers that talking about the lemon tree that my great-grandmother had on the farm, and how great the lemons were, and how big they were. They were the size of grapefruits.

MP: Oh wow.

RW: I'd never seen a lemon that big, but they were. This guy game and interviewed her, and verified, you know, he actually saw one—put one in his hand so he could tell people that, "Yup, it happened."

MP: Wow.

RW: So, but the first burial there I think happened at Belle Haven in 1895, I believe? The church was in existence for about 50 years. But when Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7, of 1941, that was the beginning of the end for that whole community. Because the Marine Corps had been trying to get more land since back in the 1930s, but Congress was cutting back the budget on the military substantially because they needed money elsewhere because of the Depression. And so, once Japan, you know, attacked us, the military went up to the government. You know. The government goes, "What do you need? You tell us, you'll get it." And somebody somewhere in the Marine Corps said, "We need to expand Quantico." And they said, "How much land do you need?" And they said, "Fifty-thousand acres." There was no study—no nothing. There wasn't time for any of that stuff. I mean MacArthur was getting pounded in the Philippines. [Inaudible 0:14:14.2] was falling. Whatever the Marine Corps wanted, the Marine Corps got. And so, they said 50,000 acres and 50,000 they got. That included 15,000 acres here in Prince William County—a lot of which is still not being used. But, you know, they admitted later they took more than they needed. But, you know, once the government gets it the government has got it.

MP: Yeah.

RW: They don't give it back. So that's why there's land now for the Quantico National Cemetery. That used to be part of the base. The Prince William Forest Park—they used to use that to train OAS [OSS - Office of Strategic Services] agents there, you know, because they were just doing stuff everywhere. But Quantico's expansion was the largest existing base expansion on the East Coast.

MP: Oh wow. [Inaudible 0:15:06.8].

RW: None of the others were expanded that large, but there was a reason for that. And that's, you know, Washington is the base of power. And when you've got a base near Washington, you're near that base of power.

MP: Yeah.

RW: And so, they wanted, you know, the Marine—the Army had one. The Navy had one. You know. Of course, we got the Washington Navy Yard, and the Army has got Fort Myer and—

MP: Fort Belvoir.

RW: —Fort Belvoir and quite a few others all around the area. And so, the Marine Corps, you know, obviously wanted one of their own. So, when Quantico was turned from a temporary base in 1919 into a full-time base, that gave them what they were looking for. But they only had 7,000 acres. So, they wanted more, and, you know, thanks to World War II they got it.

MP: Yeah. So, you answered my next question pretty completely, actually. But I'm still gonna ask it in case—

RW: Okay.

MP: —Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you remember when Quantico Marine Corps Base absorbed the town of Kopp? And if so, what was that process like?

RW: Obviously I was not born when this happened. So, I've heard the stories from my father, from my Grandmother Hattie, and from my brother who all were around. And I've read a lot of stories—a lot of articles about it. It was very—it was a very painful time for the residents because if you lived in Stafford County, you were given 20 days to get off the property.

MP: Oh, wow.

RW: Twenty days. There's no way farmers could get off that property.

MP: Yeah.

RW: There are stories about farm animals who went wild—especially pigs and chickens who ran around for years out there because they couldn't get it all out in time. The Marine Corps—somebody in the Corps promised that they would bring trucks and Marines to help families move. Never happened. They sent a subcontractor out to dig up graves and move them. They started two cemeteries to move graves to. There was one—I forget the name of the black cemetery, cause in those days Virginia was segregated. And so, they had a black cemetery and a white cemetery. And the white one is over in Stafford County. For the life of me I can't think of the name of it right this minute, but they moved about 1,500 graves.[2] Unfortunately, it was so haphazard that the documentation is poor. And they're to this day not sure where—if they got all the graves and all the ones that they moved. And in some cases, they only moved gravestones and maybe a piece of a bone if they found it and that kind of thing. There was a lot of heartache and a lot of pain about that—a lot of complaints, so obviously. And the junior officers in charge of the whole thing admitted something was going on, but there was a war on, and we were losing. And so, the higher-ups swept it under the rug. And so, nothing ever happened about those complaints. But a lot of the farmers—they loaded up their wagons, hooked their horses to it or

[2] The relocation of Quantico's graves was segregated. Carver Cemetery in Stafford County was established for African American graves, and Cedar Run Cemetery in Prince William County was established for White graves. Both are still maintained by Marine Corps Base Quantico: https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/49720/carver-cemetery

their mules or whatever they had, and they hauled their stuff out themselves. Later they were allowed to come back and auction off the stuff they had to leave behind. I actually have a copy of the ad that ran in the paper for the Woolfenden Farm. They held their auction in November, but I forget what year it was now. I'd have to look it up, but whether you could go back out there and, you know, go through the auction and get whatever was left over. Sometimes they got to get their crops off the fields. Sometimes they didn't. But as bad as all that was the worst part of all was the lawyers were very slow transferring the titles. And so, the people who were chased off of their farms still had to pay taxes on the land until the transfers were complete. And sometimes it took months, and in some cases years before the titles were complete.
MP: Wow.

RW: And so, they were paying taxes to Prince William County—

MP: On land, they didn't have.

RW: —on land they could no longer use.

MP: Wow.

RW: My great-grandparents were so upset by the whole thing that they are not buried in Kopp. They're buried up at Pohick Episcopal. They would not go back. They had 960 acres. They got less than $1,000 dollars.

MP: So, was there financial compensation? Or like—

RW: Yeah. For the property. The government allotted $250,000 to pay for that 50,000 acres, and so no one got what the land was worth. They got a percentage of what the government had to pay for the property with. And so, in effect everybody got cheated.

MP: Yeah.

RW: You know. There was just no way around it cause there simply wasn't enough money to pay for what they were taking. And so, you know, some people like my great-grandparents never went back there. In 1948, they started allowing burials again. And so, they could have been buried there. And a lot of us, you know, in our family still do. But there is some that have decided, you know, they don't want the hassle. And I can't blame them, you know.

MP: Understandable.

RW: These days, you have to go to the Marine Corps. You have to get a visitor's permit. You know. And you'd go out there, and they've got gun ranges on either side of the cemetery these days. So, you have to steel yourself for that, you know, because they're sometimes out there shooting while you're trying to visit. We do get them to shut the ranges down when there's a burial, which is nice. Because, you know, that can be very upsetting to have, you know, guns going off while you're trying to bury somebody. So, the Corps has been very nice and working with us, all that type of thing. So, we only had it happen once, and that was an ugly burial. But

after that, it hasn't happened since. So that was not officially, some young lieutenant decided he was going out there with his troops regardless.

MP: Wow.

RW: So, the family marched over there and had a chat with that little lieutenant. And after that it never happened again.

MP: Yeah.
RW: So.

Childhood & Education

MP: Where did you go to school generally?

RW: Generally—well let's see. Kindergarten was at a church in East Canton, Ohio. I think I mentioned earlier, Occoquan Elementary was the beginning of first grade. We were living on Devil's Reach Road then. Then we moved over to Lorton, so I finished first grade at Gunston Elementary cause Dad had a—in addition to being a DJ at WXRA, he was also running a grocery store which also had a restaurant in it. And later he opened a record shop over in Woodbridge in the same shopping center where the Planet Fitness is now—across from the Popeye's. And then he got another grocery store and restaurant which was over on Hoadly Road [inaudible 0:21:56.6]. And he was still doing his DJ and playing in the band. Where he found time for all this stuff, I don't know. And then later he opened up a car lot, as if he didn't have enough to do. But all this stuff was going on, you know, but after we moved away from here the store site in Lorton on Route 1 became what's known as "Hillbilly Heaven" which was a nightclub in those days. The Dixons ran it, and Dad and the Dixons knew each other and were friends. Donna Dixon married Dan Aykroyd from "Saturday Night Live." And, you know, if you watch—I forget the name of that movie now. She's in at least one of his movies. Something about two spies going into Russia and getting ahold of this nuclear mobile missile. And they were trying to stop it from being launched or something, and she's in that. But anyway, I digress a little bit. After we left Northern Virginia, we went down to Fayetteville, North—no, we went to South Hill first—sorry—where I ended up at South Hill Elementary. That was a dark time because Dad got really, really sick and ended up in the hospital in Richmond. And he caught pneumonia in post-op and nearly died.

MP: Yeah?

RW: So that was a difficult time. I remember, you know, Mom getting me out of class, and she was pretty hysterical. We drove to Richmond, and she would go up there and sit with him. But they wouldn't let us kids up there, and I was 10 years old. So, my sister who was younger than me and I would wander the hospital. It was old—one of those old World War I hospitals. So, they had all these buildings stretched out and these big, enclosed hallways connecting all the buildings. And the hallways were so big that it was large enough for two electric carts to pass. So, there was actually a yellow line right down the middle of the hallway. So, we picked up a map, and we just wandered the hospital. Probably shouldn't have been doing that, but that's what

we did. So then after we left and went down to Fayetteville, then I ended up at 71st Elementary up until the schools integrated there in North Carolina at which time I ended up in eighth grade at what used to be a black elementary school. And it had become all eighth grade. Then Dad bought a house in the north end of Fayetteville. So, we moved again. And I ended up at a school in downtown Fayetteville. You could actually look out the windows—cause this is during the Vietnam War. So, you could look out the windows, and you could see prostitutes on the streets. And, you know, drug dealers running around. You know. Was not—wasn't a good place for a school at all. But then after that, I moved to another school because they'd built a new school closer to where we lived. So, we ended up there in tenth grade, and then Dad moved again. So, by the time I ended up and finished tenth grade, we were in Water Valley, Mississippi, which is a little town in Yalobusha County just below Oxford where Ole Miss is at. And that's when I learned just how slow people in Mississippi can talk.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: Because that's where I got on the radio with a full-time gig the first time, and it turns out Lafayette County is pronounced La-fay-ette County. Who knew? So, I had listeners calling me up correcting me cause I talked too fast. You know. I didn't know I was supposed to say La-fay-ette. But that's how they pronounce it there. Okay great. So, you know, I stayed there until my senior year when Dad moved to Milton, Florida, which is outside of Pensacola—next county over. And that's because he was trying to buy a little AM station there and which did not work out. The owner that had it was in some trouble with the FCC, but Milton, Florida is where I graduated from. It's my favorite high school by far. I wish I could have gone there more than one year. That was a cool school. I still am in touch with those folks. I still go to the reunions.

MP: That's awesome.

RW: So, the other three not so much. The first one in the downtown Fayetteville is a parking lot. I would have gladly helped them bulldoze that place.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: Ugh!

MP: That bad?

RW: Yeah. Ninth grade was not fun. Sophomore year wasn't that fun either. So, the senior year was pretty cool. And then I went to school at Pensacola Junior College, which is now a full-time four-year institution. But we moved, and I didn't have enough money to stay in school with Mom and Dad moving, so I moved too. And we ended up here in Northern Virginia again in the mid-1970s. I enrolled back in college at Northern Virginia Community College. And it took me a long time to get a degree because I was only taking one or two courses at a time. But finally, in 1984, I got my little two-year degree. Obviously, it didn't take two years. It took six or eight—whatever it was. But I got it. It's on my wall, and I'm glad I did it. I don't want to do it again, though.

MP: Yeah.

RW: So, you want to know about schooling, that's it.

MP: Okay. So main thing for college is associate's degree?

RW: Yes.

MP: Okay. Then can you walk me through your career so far?

RW: Well, I'm retired now. So, I think my—

MP: Congratulations.

RW: —career is probably over. But, you know, I was picking up odd jobs as a kid—cutting grass and delivering newspapers. And I made $10.50-some cents every week delivering those little newspaper at a penny a paper which was a lot of money in those days. Cause, you know, every Saturday I could stop by the Gillis and Lindsay General Store there in Fayetteville, and I'd get myself a 16 ounce soda. I'd get a candy bar, and I'd get a comic book. Comic books were 12 cents. A candy bar was 5 cents, and the drink was 12. But if you drank it and then gave them the bottle back, you'd get 2 cents back.

MP: Oh nice.

RW: Well, you can bet I gave them that bottle right back and my 2 cents—that was a lot of money then. Cause, you know, a candy bar is a nickel. You know what they cost now. So, you know, and soda was 12 cents [inaudible 0:28:21.3]. You know. You go to 7-11 now and see if you can get one for 12 cents.

MP: No.

Beginnings in Radio

RW: You know. It's just not happening. Then in those days, you know, everything was cheaper. So of course you got paid a lot less too. But finally, some—well I think it was in the late 1960s—Dad gave me an opportunity to do a—well I should back up. I was actually working cutting the grass at two stations before I had a chance to get on the air. Cause Dad worked at WSHB in Raeford, North Carolina—a little thousand watt AM station. And while he was inside in the air conditioning, I was outside with a lawn mower. You know. And it was a big piece of property. I needed a lawn tractor, but I had a lawn mower. And it was not self-propelled—I was the propelling force. So, and, you know, you'd cut part of the yard, and the rest of it was all pine needles from all the pine trees. So, then I have to rake the rest of it, but I got it done and made my little money. Then he went to WBYB in Saint Pauls, North Carolina. And both of those are near Fayetteville, so we didn't actually move. He's the one who moved while we stayed in the same house. But again, I was out working in the yard. You know. So, by the time he got to WQSM in downtown Fayetteville, which was a big 50,000 watt FM station, it dawned on me it's

a lot nicer in the air conditioning then it is out cutting the grass. And so, I got an opportunity on weekends—I think it was Sunday afternoons to do a little air shift which was a disaster. I can remember that first air shift quite well. We had these little Magnecord reel-to-reel tape machines. And when you put them in fast-forward, they kind of like—that's kind of slow. You know. You could take a nap while it was going fast-forward. But if you put it in reverse, there was a whole separate motor. And the thing would fly like a bat out of "beep beep." You know. So, and of course I turned it on. It did that. I freaked out. I stopped it. No one told me the brakes didn't work real well on this thing. I snapped that tape, and it started flying everywhere. It was not a good scene. And of course, you know, by that time I'm nervous. And so, I'm trying to put needles cause, you know, all the music was on turntables. You put a record down; you put a needle on it. By that time, I'm shaking, so I break a needle on the turntable. So, while somebody's going looking for a needle, I break a needle on another turntable. It's just—
MP: Oh no.

RW: —by the time the hour was done, I was not sure this was the career for me. But I went ahead, and, in those days, you had to get a license from the FCC—a third class with a broadcast endorsement. I failed that sucker twice before I finally took—got took it and passed it. But by the time I passed it, we were in Mississippi. And I'd gotten the job at the station there. Dad was there too, so he, you know, basically I was interning under my father which was good. He had a career and knew what he was doing, but he decided "I can go down and pass my test in New Orleans." Cool. I'd never been to New Orleans. Of course, Dad goes in February. Do you know what's in February in New Orleans? Mardi Gras.

MP: Oh, Mardi Gras. Yeah.

RW: He drives up. Hadn't bothered to check. So, I found out that they were closed locally—

MP: Oh no!

RW: —for the holiday. So, I can't take the exam. So, they're gonna be open the next day. So, of course, we had to get a hotel room. So, I'll go wait till the next day. So, I got to go to Mardi Gras, and I was—

MP: That's fun.

RW: —a sophomore in high school.

MP: Yeah?

RW: You know. Which is not probably where I should have been, but you know.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: I finally took it. I finally passed it. So, I was working at the station a lot. I got up there. Class let out at the high school at 2:50 p.m. My shift started at 3:00. You had to book down the street without getting a speeding ticket, of course.

MP: Of course.

RW: And normally I was getting there about five or ten minutes after because of the traffic. You know. So, the guy would just have to cover until I got there cause I was getting there as fast as I could go. And it was a daytimer, so which means you're operating from local sunrise to local sunset. So, my shift would end whenever the sun went down. You know. And I'd work Monday through Friday after school, and then I had a shift on Saturday morning and another one on Sunday morning. I didn't have much time to get in trouble cause I was working all the time. I think that was Dad's plan.

MP: [Laughs]
RW: But of course, I had to have a car to do that. So, he went and found this old Ford station wagon—ugliest piece of junk you ever saw. But he had to sign the loan, so he chose the car. And I was told, "You can take this, or you can take your bicycle." So, I took that stupid Ford, and I drove it. I never did like it, but I drove it—an old 1968 Ford LTD fake wood panel station wagon. You don't get a lot of dates driving that. But, you know, that was his plan too. So, I kept doing that, and that's when I finally got to go to Nashville with Dad one October while I was there in Mississippi. It was great cause I got to skip school for a week.

MP: Nice.

RW: And my parents okayed it—or Dad okayed it. Mom didn't get any say-so in it.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: But, you know, I got to go to Nashville. You know. And see the Grand Ole Opry. That was the first—no, it was the second time I got to go. Cause I'd gone on a bus trip when we were in Fayetteville. But, you know, you'd go in there, and you're backstage at the Opry. And, you know, that was when they were in the old Ryman Auditorium. And, you know, when you see it on TV you think, "Wow. This thing is huge!" And out there in the auditorium it is, but backstage was not. There's a little narrow aisle just long—just wide enough behind the curtain for two people to just barely pass. There was one dressing room on either side—one for the ladies on one side—one for the men on the other. That was it.

MP: Oh wow.

RW: So, it was very small. You know. So, you had no choice but to bump elbows into Roy Acuff, and Minnie Pearl, and Ernie Ashworth, and Skeeter Davis, and all these other people. Then all of a sudden, I'm meeting. And I'd been playing their records on the radio. I'd never thought I'd get to meet any of them, but Dad knew all these people. You know. And of course, I had no idea why cause I didn't know at the time that Dad had started playing music in the 1930s. So, he turned out to be one of the pioneers in country music. Who knew? I was just a kid. I didn't know this stuff. You know. But we were there, you know, Saturday Night Opry. And then Dad says, "Follow me." We open up the door there behind the curtain and go out into the alley behind the Ryman. Across the alley there's another door. He opens it up. We go through it. Here we are

at Tootsie's Bar and Lounge. I'm in high school. I've got no business being at Tootsie's Bar and Lounge. And all these people are looking at us while we're marching through like Sherman through Georgia. You know. And we pop out on Broadway and cross the road—cross Broadway Avenue there, and there's Ernest Tubbs Record Shop. Of course it's midnight, and Ernest Tubbs Record Shop has their "Midnite Jamboree" going. The place is packed. You've never seen so many people in a little store like that. I had never understood to this day why the fire marshal didn't shut that place down. If I'd passed out, I'd never hit the floor. There was no way cause it was that crowded. But it was an experience that obviously I've never forgotten. And, you know, Dad had been doing this stuff for decades cause he started going to these conventions back in the 1950s before I was even born. And it was the 1970s before I got to go, but it was an experience. I got to go a few more times. I got to go when they got into the new building that they're in now. I'd have to look up the year cause I can't tell you right off the top of my head. But what a difference in the new one. I mean they've got a big lounge back there, and there's tons of room behind the curtain. You could put a tractor trailer back there now. You know. And dressing rooms—they got tons of them on either side. They got an entrance back there with soda machines and snacks and stuff. And I'm like, "This is what you were expecting the first time." You know. And it wasn't there. But, you know, the old Ryman was just an old church, and they took it over. But I still met all these cool people backstage. You know. I met Glen Campbell back there, and Mel Tillis, and lots of other people that, you know, just—one of my friends in one of my men's groups at church asked me this one time. "Just who did you meet?" So, I started spouting off. It took me like 15/20 minutes to remember all these people because Dad knew everybody, and they all knew him. You know. So, whenever you're tagging along and if you keep your mouth closed, you could learn quite a lot. Like we were sitting backstage in the new Opry House one night, and he was talking to Grant Turner who was the Opry DJ at the time—the announcer. And it turns out Grant's son I think it was was working at the Department of Agriculture in D.C. And, you know, we were working here in Prince William County at WPWC. And so, and Dad had known Grant since at least back in the 1960s, excuse me, if not—more of—you know, if not earlier than that. I just know he did—you know, by the 1960s cause I got a picture of them in 1964 over here. But it's—the more I kept my mouth closed the more I learned when I was on these trips. There was, you know, I learned early on as a kid when I was small about being quiet. Cause we had to go to my Grandma Able's—really my Great-grandmother Able's house. She was also living up there on Route 1 across from Hattie—my grandmother's house after she got driven off of her farm there at Kopp. And when we went in there Dad always took a six-pack of Pepsi for her and a gallon of vanilla ice cream. You know, us kids never got any. She never shared a bit of it with us. It used to make me as a little kid so irritated. So, I was like, "Oh man. Pepsis and ice cream. Let's get some." You know. And she would always, you know, make a big fuss about Dad, but us kids—we had to sit on the couch and not breathe. Kids were, you know, you did not move at Great-grandma Able's house. You were to be seen and not heard. Try that today with kids and see how that works out? [Laughs] But that's the way it was. Anyway, I worked there in Mississippi until we moved to Florida. And so, there was a gap there because I didn't have a job in radio. I worked at a department store. So, I would go to school half a day, and work at the department store the other half. And when we got up here to Northern Virginia, I went to work at QVA because he was—Dad was in midst of buying that station. And it would later become WPWC. But when the staff found out that it was being sold, they all quit. And in those days, you had to have the station on the air if you were gonna sell it. You could not let it go dark. And so, the owners at the time got us to run it for them while the transfer was

being made so it would stay on the air so they wouldn't lose their license. So, I worked there from—oh probably eight months or so until the [inaudible 0:39:50.7] was able to get a hold of the license for it. And then we worked there in the Q town where the station was at. You know. We were up on the second floor of the old building there on the corner that the Marine Corps had used as a headquarters building back in World War I. And I think the building was owned by Mrs. Wall, I think, but I'm not sure. Her family had owned the Virginia National Bank there at Quantico, and also, they had a couple of other branches including that one in Woodbridge which is still there. Although I think it's a rug store or something now right across from Marumsco Plaza. But in fact, I still have bank bags that Dad had from those old banks in my collection. So, but anyway, I worked there at PWC up until probably 1987, I think, when I went to work at WFAX in Falls Church. And I worked there up until I retired three years ago. And, you know, I worked for the Newcombs. Doris Newcomb ran it most of the time. That was the daughter of the founder, Lamar Newcomb. Wonderful people to work for. I had a great time working there. They put up with me on the good days and the bad, and I was blessed to work there. It was a lot of fun. Of course I was blessed to work for my dad too cause, you know, I probably would have never gotten into radio without him. But it—you can see the transition in radio working there because when I started to work there at WFAX, we were still using turntables and reel-to-reel machines. By the time I retired, everything was on hard drives, and I was the guy that was programming the hard drives to make sure that, you know, if I didn't change, I was not gonna stay employed. So, I had to do something here. And so, I was the guy responsible for programming the software so it would download the programs that we ran. And I got it so that most of those programs were automated—so that the automation—go out and get the programs and download them without human intervention. And so, if I got involved that meant something went wrong. Normally somebody forgot to put the file up, and I'd have to go, you know, "Hey, where's this file at? We need this thing. It's got to run Saturday morning." You know. So, it changed quite a bit. I must admit that radio wasn't as much as fun in the end as it had been because I was no longer on the air. I was in [inaudible 0:42:32.8] in front of the keyboard doing programming and stuff. Where in the old days, you know, I'd pick out my records, and I'd decide what I wanted to play. And I'd answer the phone and take requests, and if they asked for a record and I could find it I played it. And so, you had a lot of interaction with the audience. I made better money working on the keyboard than I did, you know, playing records, but it was more fun. We had—we would do remote broadcasts here in Prince William County all over the place. This console behind me is what we normally used. Excuse me. I'm sorry. We would do remotes in Marumsco Plaza especially at Christmas time. It was real busy cause we would have Santa Clause dropped by parachute, or Santa Clause would come in on a fire truck. Or Santa Clause would come in on a helicopter. There are pictures here with us doing that right here in Dumfries in the Dumfries Shopping Center. We did it—we got newspaper ads from where he did it at Marumsco Plaza. And so, it was an event. You know. Every time it would—then there were Christmas parades. There was July 4th parades. Dad normally MCed the July 4th Parade in D.C. And I would drive the station remote studio which was a big old Titan RV, and we had a trailer behind it with a float on it. And so, I'd be driving the float through the parade while Dad was up on stage MCing the parade there in D.C. So, there was a lot of fun things we did. I mean they talked me one time. Gail was over in the fair office when we were doing a remote at the Prince William County Fair. I should have never answered the phone. She talked me into this. That year they were having ostrich races at the fair. And she called me up, and at first, I said no. But she sweet-talked me into it. And I finally broke down and agreed that I'd be one of the guys to race an ostrich at the

fair. Okay. You know. That's how stupid I can be. I'd realized that when the ostriches got there. They pull up the big, long horse trailer, and you can see them things kicking the side of the trailer cause they wanted out. And the steel was flexing on the thing or aluminum—whatever it was. And I thought, "My God. Those things are gonna stomp me into a muddle, and I'm gonna be dead before the night's out."

MP: [Laughs]

RW: I was really convinced I was gonna die. You know. And so, but I didn't, obviously—I made it through it. But when we actually raced the ostriches, they had little carts by them—little two wheel carts like they use down in Florida for pony racing—horse racing. And they had it hooked to the ostrich, but there were no reins. So, I'm like, "How do you steer this thing?"
MP: You don't?

RW: He's explaining it to us. He said, "You take this broom, and you put it up near the eyeball and it'll go the other way. And if you wanted to go the other way, then you put it on the other eyeball, and it'll go the other way."

MP: [Laughs]

RW: And I thought, "Yes. I'm gonna die tonight. There's no doubt about it now." And then I got the really bright idea of asking, "How do you stop this thing? Where are the brakes?" He said, "There ain't no brakes." And I'm, "Oh Lord." You know. At this point I think I'm starting to pray now. You know. Because I'm sure that this is not gonna turn out well. And there were two other DJs from two other stations, and they each had a bird. And we're all gonna race each other. You know. But I asked the guy, "How are we gonna stop?" He said, "Over there on the other end there's these big college guys, and they're gonna catch the bird." "They're gonna what?"

MP: [Laughs]

RW: "They're gonna catch the bird." "Okay, great." You know. So being an idiot I got right in that little seat with my little broom. And he pulled that gun up in the air and fired it—off we went. You know. And them things are flying, and I'm leaning over cause it's—the head on that thing is like a snake. It's always looping around and moving around, and I'm trying to get that—the handle on that broom was really short I thought.

MP: [Laughs]

RW: And I'm trying to get it up there next to that eyeball, and, you know, and I keep moving it around. And we're running, and the next thing you know, I'm down at the other end. And these guys yell, "Get off." And I'm like, "Man, you're rude. I'm getting off. It's not a problem." I got off, and I was gone. I was running as fast as the bird cause I wanted to get away from that thing. Later on, I found out I actually won. I'd come in first place there in that heat, but they had two more heats to go. The last one, the girl who was on one of them, had an accident and ran up on the fence. And it flipped over, and she fell out, knocked her unconscious, and broke her arm. So, the final race at the end was canceled because—

MP: Understandable.

RW: —you know. Which was fine with me cause that means I'm an undefeated ostrich racer.

MP: Congratulations.

RW: Yay for me. [Laughter] So, you know, like I said, in the old days radio was fun. And that's just one example of some of the crazy stuff that we used to do, so.

MP: Yeah.

RW: Of course I was a lot younger then too, so.

MP: [Laughs] So, what kick-started your interest in radio?

RW: Dad. For once, I give you a short answer.

Cousin Ray

MP: [Laughs] Okay. What do you remember of your dad?

RW: A lot of things. Dad never met a stage he didn't like. I suspect that if there's a stage in Heaven, he's probably on it right now. He and Grant Turner are probably announcing all the Opry stars that made it up there. I mean that's—that's where they are. You know. That's what they do. I remember so many bands that he was in playing, you know, they always called them the "Country Cousins." But there were so many different guys and gals in Country Cousins over the years that I can't remember the faces, much less the names of most of them. But I remember going and meeting all these artists in different places: The Lewis Family and Wendy Bagwell, and the Stoneman Family. The Stoneman Family ended up at our kitchen one time sitting around talking. The time at 1969 I think it was. Freddie Hart was in our driveway. And this was back before he hit big on Capitol Records with "Easy Loving" and all those things when he—he became one of the biggest artists in country music back in the early 1970s. But Dad had booked him in Fayetteville, and the turnout was abysmal. I mean it was really bad—maybe four or five people showed up.

MP: Oh wow.

RW: And so, Dad was in the driveway, and I was—and Freddie Hart, and some guy who came from Nashville with Freddie. And Freddie was just devastated. He was—that was it. He was gonna quit.

MP: Yeah.

RW: Go back to Nashville, and he was gonna stop touring, stop recording. He'd had enough. He was just disappointed, embarrassed. You know. He'd had all he could take. Dad stood there

and encouraged him and told him not to give up his dream and to stick with it. Cause Freddie had had some big hits back in the 1950s. But, you know, in the early 1960s but by 1969 he was, you know, forgotten. But by the time Dad got done talking—and Dad could sell ice to an Eskimo—

MP: [Laughs]

RW: —convince an Eskimo that he needed the ice, Freddie changed his mind and decided he's gonna stick with it a couple more years. And the next thing you know, out comes "Easy Loving." It's number one on the charts. He's got a CMA award. You know. And he's, you know, red hot. But people don't realize the pain and the struggle that artists go through to get there. And, you know, for Freddie it was a long hard road between hits. And I remember that day clearly because it was, you know, I realized the impact it made. I mean think about it. If Dad hadn't had been there to talk to Freddie after that day he would have probably quit. Somebody else would have recorded that song I'm sure, but would they have hit with it? Maybe? Maybe not? Who knows? So, you know, and if you go through the pictures here, you'll find that Dad was a promoter. He would promote stuff. You know. One of the things he promoted was the station he'd be on at the time. He bought a 1960 Oldsmobile station wagon. It was white with a red stripe right down the middle, and that thing would haul like a bat out of you knew where. And he painted it gold—took the red stripe off, of course. And he'd have signage on the sides of the car: "Cousin Ray and his Country Cousins on WSHB," or whatever station it was and the frequency and all that. And there would be a—there was a big set of steer horns sitting on top of the roof, and they'd stick out, you know, and curve like, you know, cowboy type of stuff—like you'd see on—what was it—"The Dukes of Hazzard?" Remember they had the car with the horns on it, and the same thing cause it was my job to shellac that sucker. And so, the bugs wouldn't damage it. You know. And every once in a while, some kid would decide that they would—they had to have those things. And they'd try to get them off, and of course they would break off on either side because the center was welded to the roof. And so, we'd come out one day, and there'd just be a stub. So, after Dad had a few words to say, you know, he'd take it somewhere and get a new set put on and off we go again. But that was also our family car. So, you know, we'd go somewhere, and that's what we'd be in. You know. So, everybody is looking at you the whole time, and there was a couple of times my senior year in high school I had to drive that car cause mine wasn't running or something.

MP: [Laughs] Oh no.

RW: I still hear it from the guys at reunions about that car. They still bring it up. I send pictures to them on Facebook from time to time when I find a good picture of it. But I've never forgotten because I drove to school one day in that stupid car, you know, with the steer horns on the roof.

MP: Yeah.

RW: So, like I said, I grew up different than most people.

MP: Did the car have a name? Now I'm curious?

RW: No. It did not. That old Ford—I gave that—after I bought my first new car, I gave that to my sister, and Casmere did name that Ford. And oh man. What a weird name that was, but, you know, you could always tell she was coming cause by then she'd burnt the rings out on it. So, there was a big cloud of smoke coming down the road.

MP: [Laughs] Uh-huh.

RW: And she would buy that used motor oil from Bonn Foods.

MP: [Laughs] Oh no!

RW: And pour into that thing cause it was going through—

MP: Oh, poor car.
RW: —oil like crazy now.

MP: Yeah.

RW: So why buy—pay for expensive—

MP: That's true, yeah.

RW: —you know, Quaker State or Castrol Oil—something when you could get the used stuff and just put it back in there. Cause it would be all burnt out anyway, but there was a big white cloud of smoke. And that would be her and her friend Terry, and they'd be coming down the road in that car. She said, "It was great cause I had a free car." And I said, "Yeah. Cause nobody wanted it. I couldn't trade it in." [Laughs]

MP: So, do you know why your dad had the name—or nickname "Cousin Ray"?

RW: Yes. The families in this area—back in the time period when Dad was born here, there was probably no more than 14,000 people in this county—if that. And so, you know, it was a farming community where everybody was related to everybody else. And so, everybody was a cousin to somebody. His grandparents were—my great-grandparents, Maurice and Mae Abel, they were cousins. Dad and his first wife were fifth cousins. So, you know, that was normal in those days. And so, everybody always called him "Cousin Ray" because his name was Raymond Woolfenden. And so, when he started going out on a radio, he just kept the name because he was used to being called that anyway. And it worked out really well for him.

MP: Yeah. So, what was your favorite story—if you could pick one that your dad told you?

RW: That my dad told me—oh wow. There was one story. I'm not sure. In 1944 probably Thanksgiving, he was working in a little store called "The Groveton Market" up on Route 1. It's across the street from where the Lowe's is now up near Alexandria. And he had built the building—it was a little two-story brick building. It's still there, but it's been remodeled and so it doesn't look like it's a brick building anymore. But it's still there. Anyway, he was working at the

store cause it was his. And he also had a Texaco station next door, and he was playing in a band, of course, at a nightclub called "Happy Pavilion"—I think it was. It's over in Fairfax. But anyway, always multiple things going on. And some colonel came in and wanted to buy a bunch of stuff for Thanksgiving. He didn't have the ration stamps he needed. You know. In World War II you got to have those stamps or you're not getting it. Well Dad said the colonel told him, "I'm Colonel so and so, and you're gonna sell it to me." And Dad said, "It's against the law. I can't do that." And Dad stuck by his guns, and he said the colonel cussed him out and said, "You're gonna pay for this," and left. Two weeks later Dad's draft status was changed, and he was going in the Army. And by February of 1945 he was in the Army in Richmond. You know.

MP: Wow.

RW: So, the colonel got him.

MP: Yeah.

RW: So, but Dad, you know, Dad stuck by his guns, and was honest and did what he was supposed to do. So, I respect that because he could have just said, you know, wimped out and gone, you know, "Okay fine. We'll do it under the table." You know. It would have been easy enough to do the wrong thing, but he stood up and did the right thing. And I think that legacy has stuck with me for years. So, I think that's a favorite story. You know. And really the colonel did him a favor because not only did Dad get in the Army and end up in Japan as part of the occupation forces, and he still was playing music. Of course, we have a picture over here of him in Japan playing a big old bass fiddle. And, you know, after the war, you know, and after he got out of the Army, he had VA benefits. So, you know, he could go GI Bill. He could have—VA to buy a house. He had health—he had benefits going through the VA. So, the guy did him a favor in the end, although at the time I'm sure Dad had no idea that it was a favor. He didn't look at it that way. But Dad had a lot of health issues, and so I can remember him being in and out of the VA hospital quite a lot. And I wonder where we would have been if he hadn't had that health benefit.

MP: Yeah.

RW: So, the colonel did him a favor. You know. God turned it into lemonade for him.

MP: What do you know about the history of radio in the county? And how did your father contribute to that history?

RW: Dad came here to go on the radio in 1961 at WXRA, and WXRA was an FM station. That doesn't sound like anything special today, but in 1961, there were fewer than 1,000 FM stations in the entire country.

MP: Wow.

RW: And most of those were not on the air. Most of them were CPs, which is a construction permit. Excuse me. The few that were on the air were probably on for an hour or two a day—just

enough to keep the license active then they turned it back off. They didn't have any advertisers, so, you know, most stations in those days that's how you survived. You had advertisers. AM was king. That's what people listened to. If you bought a new car in 1961, it didn't have an FM radio in it. That cost extra money, and why would you get one when there was no stations to turn on anyway? And so, this little station had been put on the air back in the late 1950s, and it's changed callers two or three times. Hadn't done anything, of course, until Marshall Pack and Dad and Bob Taliaferro and a bunch of other guys got together and decided they're gonna turn it country and make it 24 hours a day. Of course, they had to go out and convince people to go out and buy FM radios so they could hear it, but it worked. It became very popular very quickly. And during one of those morning shifts, Dad worked the 6 to 9 a.m. shift. This car pulled in the parking lot, and a lady and her husband got out. And the lady was Loretta Lynn, and she was still a nobody trying to get her records played on the radio. And so, they were touring the country stopping at stations. And you could hear this story on the PBS special on country music that was put out a few years ago. They went in there, and he decided that he'd interview her on the radio. I was in there one time, so I remember the floor plan. There was a big room for the transmitting equipment cause in those days everything was tubes, and so it was big. Took up a lot of space and produced a lot of heat. And there was a bathroom over to the side on the right-hand side. On the left-hand side, there was a little room where they had the console microphone, the turntables, and all that stuff. And that was all they had. There were no office space. There was no interview tables. None of the stuff that you would expect at a radio station today. And so, there was no place for Loretta to sit, but she's got to get close the mic. You know these mics—they were close in. You know. And so, she sat on his knee, and they did the interview.

MP: [Laughs] Oh wow!

RW: You know. And they became fast friends, and she later would give Dad a lifetime pass to be backstage of any concert anywhere in the country that she was at.

MP: [Laughs] Oh wow!

RW: So, he could get in whenever he wanted to. Cause Dad never went in through—got a ticket went up front with everybody else. He was backstage cause that's where the stage was. You know. Dad never met a stage he didn't like. So, but when Dad got into the DJ Hall of Fame in Nashville in 1999, they sent up a limo service for him. The limo was Loretta Lynn's old tour bus. She sent a bus driver over there to pick Dad up. We've had pictures of it here, and he said Loretta told him that he was to take Dad wherever he wanted to go. And anybody who came with him. Wherever he wanted to go in the state of Tennessee that weekend, he was at his—Dad's disposal. And that really impressed Dad that Loretta had remembered after all those years from 1961 to 1999.

MP: Yeah.

RW: You know. And still honored Dad that way.

MP: Yeah. That's impressive.

RW: It was.

MP: So, are there any other stories or comments about your dad that you would like to share?

RW: I think that—I do a lot of charity work through my church, and a lot of that is because of the example that my dad set. There are books here full of certificates of appreciation from so many organizations: The Knights of Columbus, the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program, the Town of Dumfries, The Salvation Army, and just tons of them. Where he would work with these organizations and help people who were less fortunate. We used to give out toys every year through the Toys for Tots Program here in Prince William County. We'd give out food for Thanksgiving. There was always some charity he was working with—sometimes three or four at the same time. And that legacy of reaching out and helping other people is something that my whole family saw and still works with today. I mean my church gets together every November, and we pack meals that go over—freeze dried meals that go overseas. And I'm there packing food just like Dad would do if he were here. You know. And that's because of the legacy that he, you know, left for me. My brother used to go out, you know, he's passed since. But he used to collect canes, and wheelchairs, and things like that and take them out to places and to people who needed them. Again, that was Dad's legacy that he passed on to us. So that's something that I've not forgotten. You know. All those years and all the things. Dad was on the Board of Directors for the Salvation Army for years, along with Jack Clay—the one who ran Jack Clay One Chevrolet and a bunch of other people that were on it. And he was always there in the county doing things like that. And, you know, today you don't see as much volunteerism as you used to see in those days. That World War II generation was very service minded, and I think we've lost a little bit of that.

MP: Are there any other stories or comments in general that you would like to share about anything?

RW: I'm sure there are, but—

MP: Go ahead.

RW: —I've already rambled on so long at this point. I'm not sure what I missed, but I'm sure after you're gone, I'll think of something.

MP: Of course.

RW: And so, I'll have to say no at this time.

MP: Okay. So fun final question [phone rings]—

RW: Think we should wait for the phone to quit ringing. Good, that was—no that wasn't [inaudible 1:04:29.4].

MP: [Laughs]

RW: Here. Hang on a minute. I'll get rid of it. It's probably a crank call for Mom.

MP: Do you get those a lot?

RW: Yeah. She gets these calls all the time. She got it.

MP: Okay.

RW: Okay. You can cut that piece out, obviously.

MP: Yes. [Laughs] Okay. Resetting.

RW: What was the question again?

MP: Fun final question—what is your favorite musician/group?
RW: Oh. I remember that question from the—okay. There are a lot of ones. We took Mom to see Marty Stuart and the Superlatives up at The Birchmere recently. Marty is a member of the Hall of the Fame in Nashville, and a member of the Grand Ole Opry. And Mom and Dad it turns out, I didn't know this until afterwards, had gone to a recording session that Marty was doing for his TV program. It's syndicated, and it's on RFD-TV, I think. But anyway, his band is amazing. All of them are members of the Musicians Hall of Fame in Nashville. Nashville has got lots of hall of fames.

MP: Of course.

RW: But the band is just amazing. And Mom was just thrilled to get to see them. You know. Especially the bass guy because Dad played bass. You know. And this guy is playing a big standup bass like he did. And so, they're extremely good. Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder—oh my gosh, they are amazing. One group I would have loved to have seen, I never got to see—probably one of the greatest bands in the history of country music was Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys. I would have loved to have had a chance to hear them. I've seen some of the videos—just an amazing group. Those are three that I think of right off the top of my head.

MP: Thank you.

RW: You're welcome.

MP: And thank you so much for taking your time to do this.

RW: Glad to do it.

MP: I really appreciate it. I am going to turn it off. Let's do—

RW: Sorry about the phone, but—

MP: It's fine.

RW: I forgot all about it. I guess we can just—

MP: We can just cut it off

RW: —[inaudible 1:06:30.9] that thing, but.

[End of Interview] [1:06:32.9]
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