

**ASBURY PARK AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC HISTORY PROJECT****INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**Interviewees:** Dolores "Dee" Holland [DH]  
Paulette Malunga [PH]

**Interviewers:** Jennifer Souder [JS]  
Yvonne Clayton [YC]  
Melissa Keeling [MK]

**Date:** December 12, 2017

**Time:** 11:00 A.M.

**Place:** 1403 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Asbury Park, NJ

Paulette Malunga, Dolores Holland's daughter, accompanied her during this interview. Paulette would occasionally write a note to the interviewers during the interview to help prompt questions and answers. Dolores and Paulette reviewed the interview transcript and at that time, some follow-up questions were posed and the questions and responses are included below, within brackets and not italicized.

JS: So we want to thank you again for coming to join us today to talk about some of your memories and your story.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

JS: Can you just say for us your name, and where and when you were born?

DH: Dolores Holland. I was born in Neptune, New Jersey. My residence was 27 Division Street. [Born: September 18, 1923]

JS: Thank you. And do you have a few memories from your neighborhood where you were born, you wanted to talk about?

DH: Hmm . . . I was kind of sickly. All I had was music, you know. That was the gift. My father played. My mother sang. And it's just, beautiful musicians.

JS: So from very early on, you got to hear some beautiful music?

DH: Mmm-hmm. My father played . . .

JS: . . . the piano?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Did he play for church? Or did he play clubs?

DH: No, he didn't play for church.

YC: He played for clubs, or just for his own entertainment?

DH: I don't remember whether he played in clubs or not. But he had a knowledge that he should give to me, you know. He and my mother both. They did. They'd take me wherever I played, and sit there with me, and bring me back home.

YC: How old . . . what age did you start actually going out to sing?

DH: I don't know. I think . . . I can . . . All I can remember is playing, you know. Playing.

JS: From a very young age?

DH: From a *very* young age

MK: And your dad, he was your first teacher? Did he teach you?

DH: No, he didn't teach me. He let me go my own way, you know. He really did.

YC: So, when do you remember starting to play?

DH: Hmm . . . I don't really know. It was just that I "had" it.

MK: So you could hear a song, and you could play it, right?

DH: Right.

MK: You could just hear it and, "boom." It's easy for you.

DH: Right, right.

YC: So you had the gift. You were blessed.

DH: Yes, mmm-hmm.

YC: Did you go to school here, in Neptune or in Asbury?

DH: Mmm-hmm, Neptune. I went to Ridge Avenue School.

YC: I remember Ridge Avenue.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: And did you ever play there? Did you participate in music?

DH: Mm-hmm, I played, yeah.

YC: After school, or after you graduated or left school, did you continue to play?

DH: Yeah.

YC: Locally, or did you leave the area?

DH: Locally. Sometimes I would leave the area.

JS: And you had a big family, a lot of brothers and sisters?

DH: Yeah, there were eleven of us.

JS: And where did you fall in there?

DH: I'm like, ten.

JS: Ten, out of eleven. Almost the baby.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Wow. Did they also play instruments, your brothers and sisters?

DH: My sisters played, and my brother played. The brother younger than me.

YC: So when you were a child, you played in different performances?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Did you play with your brothers and sisters, as a group?

DH: No, it was mostly me.

JS: We had read about a time you played with a trio, with a violin, and a dancer, and yourself? Do you remember that, when you were a child?

DH: I can't remember it. I know I did it. [*laughter*]

JS: You were very young at the time.

DH: Yeah, *very* young. [Approximately 10 years of age]

YC: So what places did you play locally?

DH: The Berkeley, the radio . . . I broadcast with a guy, his name was George Hudson.

YC: Oh yeah, that's another name I remember.

DH: Yeah.

MK: You also played at church, right?

DH: Yeah.

MK: You were playing at Saint Stephens, and the Second Baptist Church too, right?

DH: Yes. Right, right.

MK: You were the organist there, is that right?

DH: Mmm-hmm. [Organist at West Farms Road church- Reverend Caleb Oates, pastor, Bethel AME Church. In Asbury Park, St. Stephens AME Zion Church, Second Baptist Church]

MK: How old were you when you first started playing at church? Or always? Very young?

DH: I was about sixteen or seventeen.

MK: Wow. That was my first job as a musician, was playing at church. My momma was the music director at the church, so I know how that is. [St Stephens AME Zion Church]

DH: Yeah, yeah, mm-hmm.

MK: Is that where you started, at the church?

DH: Yeah.

MK: You were out at the Berkeley before?

DH: Yeah. [Before WWII would make her a teenager]

YC: When did you move to D.C.?

DH: 1943. I stayed with my sister. She was . . . I worked for the Treasury Department. I'm not sure what she did, but she had quite a career.

JS: In D.C. as well?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

JS: Did you play at all when you were down in D.C.?

DH: Yeah. She lived in Langston Terrace, and it's like the music all over the place. Somebody else would come, and you know, different people, you know. It was nice. Really nice.

YC: So you had an opportunity to play in and around Washington, D.C. in different clubs? Or just for your own entertainment?

DH: No, I didn't play any clubs. It was acquaintances I met at the time, and we all were like a musical kind of thing. [Do you remember any musicians in particular you played with in D.C.? Mom does not remember.]

YC: So you had your own jam sessions where you would get together?

DH: Mmm-hmm. Mmm-hmm.

JS: When you came back up here, did you then live in Asbury Park?

DH: Yeah. [Lived in Neptune at 5 Harrison Street in parents' home]

JS: You moved to Asbury Park?

DH: Yeah. I worked for the Treasury Department, that's Fourteenth and D Street.

YC: What did you do for the Treasury Department?

DH: Handled transactions from all over the world, really.

JS: When you came back here, do you remember coming back to Springwood Avenue and playing then? After the war?

DH: Yeah. We had a group we called "The Squires of Rhythm." We played most of the dances. There was a Tommy McCloud, and Eddy Watt, and Clifford Johnson. We just liked to do it. Quite popular.

JS: I imagine. [laughter]

YC: During the war, the Second World War, you were living in Washington, or were you living back in Asbury or Neptune?

DH: No, I moved to Washington. My sister had married, and she and her family [inaudible] so I went and stayed with them. That was an experience. Nice.

YC: So where did you . . . you played at the NCO club?

DH: Yep. Played NCOs in the areas surrounding Asbury Park.

YC: At Fort Monmouth?

DH: Mmm-hmm. I worked at Fort Monmouth.

YC: You did?

DH: Yeah.

YC: So what was that like?

DH: It was interesting. [*laughter*] Never a dull . . .

YC: When you were at Fort Monmouth, you were still working for the Treasury Department, or for the Signal Corp?

DH: I was working for the Signal Corp. So did my sister.

YC: Did you play at the Officers Club?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Both the NCO, non-commission officers and the officers?

DH: . . . and the officers.

YC: And was that for . . . did you have a band at that time?

DH: No, I didn't have a band. I played with a band.

YC: Okay. Was this when you were playing with Clifford Johnson?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: And after that, you were working at the Elks Club? Or, *played*? [Were you part of the house band at the Elks Club and do you know what years? Yes, mom was part of the house band at the Elks Club they played from approximately 1963 until the 1970 riots in Asbury Park]

DH: Off and on.

YC: What song would send the crowd wild when you were playing?

DH: I don't know.

YC: You didn't have a favorite song, or something that would really get them going? Does "Sister Sadie" sound familiar?

DH: Yes! [*laughter*]

JS: That was it, huh?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: How did it go? Can you hum a little bit?

[*DH sings melody*]

YC: Sounds like that would be a good dance. A good thing to dance to.

JS: Yeah, I can picture it.

YC: So tell us a little about Springwood Avenue, and what that was like when you were around playing.

DH: I was always being protected. I wasn't, you know, allowed . . . I was allowed to *play*, that was my purpose for being there, and that alone. My father would take me . . . he'd bring me back home.

YC: So you weren't hanging out?

DH: No, I wasn't hanging out. [*laughter*]

JS: Did you have a favorite place you liked to play on Springwood?

DH: See . . . I didn't have a favorite place to play on Springwood.

JS: Anywhere else?

DH: There was a place – Richard's Lounge – and I forget where it was.

MK: It was in Lakewood, right?

DH: Yeah, yeah. I played there for a long time. I enjoyed every minute.

YC: Did you ever play, like, The Redwood?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Turf Club, or Cuba's?

DH: Cuba's. [Do you remember what approximate years you played at Cubas and do have any particular memory or story of playing at Cuba's? Off and on between the end of WWII and 1955.]

YC: Orchid Lounge?

DH: Orchid Lounge. [Do you remember what approximate years you played at the Orchid Lounge and do you have any particular memory or story of playing at the Orchid Lounge? Off and on from the 1960's until it closed.]

YC: Saturn?

DH: No, I wasn't at Saturn. Did I?

PM: On Main Street. That was in the 80s.

JS: Did you continue playing at churches, during this time, during all those years?

DH: Mmm-hmm, all of them.

JS: At Saint Stephen's still, or at different churches? Second Baptist?

DH: Second Baptist, Saint Stephen's, Allen Chapel.

YC: Bethel?

DH: Bethel.

YC: So you played all around . . .

DH: All of them, all around.

YC: So how was it for you? How did the church people feel about you playing in church, and also playing in clubs?

DH: Oh wow. [*laughter*] I don't know how they really felt, I really don't. I felt that if there's a need to be heard in those places, I played. And that was it.

JS: Makes sense.

YC: But they received you warmly.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Because you had a gift, and you were giving– you were sharing that gift with them.

DH: Sharing it with them.

JS: We heard about a nickname – “Queen Dee.” Do you remember when that started?

DH: I don’t know. I wasn’t aware of it. [*smile*]

JS: You weren’t aware of it? We’ve heard you referred to as Queen Dee. Seems like a fitting name.

MK: What was it like to be a woman out there? Were there very many women performing?

DH: No.

MK: No. That’s why you were Queen Dee?

DH: There was a Marion Gray. She performed, and think she was about the only one that was around at that time.

YC: Who were some of the younger local musicians you remember playing with around town?

DH: Tommy McCloud. I played with a lot from . . . Jimmy Shank, bass player, fantastic. Danny Walsh. Played with most of them. Yeah, Desi Norman.

YC: Jessye Norman?

DH: Desi Norman. Bryant (sp?) Maxwell, and he had a brother too, I played with both of them.

YC: Did you ever play with Al Griffin?

DH: Yeah.

JS: We’re hoping to speak with Al too, and Clifford.

DH: Yeah, definitely.

YC: Is it true that you helped Gladstone Trott, you introduced him to the music scene?

DH: Yeah, I did.

MK: Were you his teacher? Did you have any students?

DH: No, I didn't teach.

JS: I had a question for you. Did you mind if we did a little video? If we had the camera on?

DH: I don't mind.

JS: You don't mind? Okay. We had read about Mary Lou Williams. Who was she?

DH: She was a pianist.

YC: Did you play with her?

DH: I don't remember.

MK: She was a famous orchestrator, right? She was writing music for Benny Goodman, and Duke Ellington?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Did you ever play in New York?

DH: Yeah.

YC: Where? Do you remember?

DH: I played at the Apollo. My brother, my oldest brother, lived in New York, and I had a gig up there.

YC: Who were you playing with? Do you remember?

DH: It was me!

YC: Solo?

DH: Yeah!

YC: All right! At the Apollo? Wonderful!

DH: Yeah.

YC: Do you remember when that was? Around how old you were, or what year, somewhere in there?

DH: Let's see . . . I can't remember, [*inaudible*] . . . played. [*laughter*] That's a long time ago. I don't remember. Nothing's coming back. (*I am trying to remember what I played - added by JS*) [Do you remember when you played at the Apollo and what you played Does not remember.]

MK: Did you write your own music? Any originals?

DH: No.

MK: No.

JS: You said when you were playing in the clubs on Springwood that you were protected because your father would bring you.

DH: Yeah, yeah.

JS: Do you remember it being different at different, changing over time? If you were there before you went to D.C., then you came home from D.C., . . . did it feel different, or had the same vibe for you?

DH: It was kind of the same vibe, you know.

YC: So is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your life as a musician, or something you'd like the younger generations to know about what it was like for you to perform in and around Asbury Park?

DH: Half of the time, I'm playing. You know, I'm playing, I'm playing, I'm doing what I like to do most.

JS: So you enjoyed it.

DH: And . . . it was very, very, very enjoyable times. I appreciate them.

YC: Do you play at all now?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: So you're still playing.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Glad to hear that.

DH: Not as much as I used to. I had a beautiful life. I had a beautiful life.

- JS: Sounds like a lot of people got to benefit from your gift.
- YC: What changes have you seen in the music scene over the span of your long career?
- DH: Hmm, that's a funny question.
- JS: You were just playing, right?
- YC: Now more women are playing and getting out, and getting in front . . .
- DH: Mmm-hmm.
- YC: And you were like a pioneer.
- DH: Yep.
- JS: Do you remember going back to, when you were playing at the Berkeley as a child, do you remember what it felt like? I can't imagine being able to be up there and able to perform at that age. Do you remember what it felt like to be playing at those hotels?
- DH: I can't even. *[laughter]* Can't even.
- YC: When you were playing at the Berkeley, you were playing for all white audiences? [Do you remember being aware of the de-facto segregation at that young age when playing at the Berkeley? They asked me to smile and I would not smile, it was business.]
- DH: Mmm-hmm.
- YC: Because of de-facto segregation?
- DH: I had a . . . I used to have a fantastic memory. I could hear it once, and just copy it, really. People would just be in awe, you know, really.
- YC: Tell us a little about Vera Aura? You played . . . a vibraphone player? A Holocaust survivor?
- DH: I don't remember that.
- YC: So you could always just sit down and play?
- DH: Mmm-hmm.
- YC: Did you ever have any formal lessons, other than what your father was able to teach you?

DH: Yeah, I had teachers. Let me see, I think the first one was Madeline Harris. And then... oh boy. I can't remember her name, but she was an excellent teacher. (Do you remember the other teacher's name?)

YC: So not only you played by ear, but you can also read music.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Wow, that's a real talent.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

MK: That's like one in a million. You can do classical? Jazz?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

MK: Any kind. Debussy. You name it, you could do it.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

MK: I'm just so jealous of that, I wish I had that.

YC: What about the time you spent with your godparents in Philadelphia?

DH: Oh . . . My parents, my godparents. Ernestine was the contralto voice, and she was very popular at that time. And King Cook, their names was Cook. They produced many, many things in Philadelphia. That's where my mother was born. They were terrific, terrific musicians.

YC: You were surrounded by musicians –

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Your parents, your godparents. Very fortunate. So did you play with them, or did they teach you music while you were staying with them?

DH: Yeah, you know, it was never a formal lesson, but it was an influence, they influenced me.

YC: About how old were you at that time you were staying with them?

DH: Oh, I guess I was about . . . I'd say between . . . maybe like between seven and ten.

YC: So you were very young.

DH: Very young.

YC: And surrounded by this wonderful music.

DH: Mmm-hmm. And they had a daughter, which, who passed, and I became their daughter for a long time.

YC: How sweet. About how long did you stay with them?

DH: A long time.

YC: Is there anything that we haven't asked you that you would like to share with us? Because I for one am very grateful to you for coming out and spending this time with us.

DH: Hmm . . . I had a beautiful life. A beautiful life. Sometimes it feels like a fairy tale, you know? It's just . . . because . . . little *me*, you know, but I met some beautiful, big people. And the memories are, they'll always be with me.

JS: I'm quite sure there's quite a few people who feel that way about *you*, getting to meet *you*.

DH: Hmm? Don't know about that. [*laughter*]

JS: Well everybody in this room feels that way.

YC: I do have one more question, and that's: tell us about your family. Your daughter. Do you have other children?

DH: No, my daughter, is my only.

JS: Paulette is here with you today.

DH: Mmm-hmm. She is . . . I kind of lean on her.

PM: I've got broad shoulders. [*laughter*]

DH: Yeah. Yep.

JS: And Paulette, you've lived here your whole life?

PM: I've lived here . . . yeah, born and raised here. Where I went to school, went to Newark State College. It's now Kean University, okay? And then I came back, I'll say in the 80s. In 80s. I worked the state, for the Department of Children and Families for 29 years, and I retired in 2014. It's fabulous. It's mom and I. It's mom and I. It was amazing to see mom

as a working woman during a time when, you know, most of my other friends, their moms were stay-at-home moms, you know what I mean. And the drive and ambition that my mother has always exhibited made me just want to do the same thing, you know. Made me want to do the same thing. And know that I *could*. It's been a wonderful thing to see mom's evolution in music. She has been "Mama Dee" by so many of the younger musicians, so many of them. Ah, let's see. The most recent one is Karen Lee. She's a relatively newcomer to the area, and she, mom played with her until she.. until you were about what? About 86? 87?

DH: Yeah.

PM: Yeah. And that's about when you stopped playing. You stopped playing about 86 or 87; when she was 86 or 87 years old.

YC: Oh I didn't realize that she played with Karen.

PM: Oh yeah, yeah. They played a lot in the downtown area, when it was *just* beginning to boom. Just beginning. Couple of the places are no longer there, because everything is changing, everything is changing down there. To go backwards, you played in Long Branch, right? What was that, Off-Broadway?

DH: Yeah.

PM: What's the other one? Was it the Belmont?

YC: Oh, the hotel?

PM: No, no, no.

YC: In Long Branch?

PM: No, it's not . . . it's another one. Another club.

YC: 45?

PM: No . . . it's . . . it was near a parking lot? I can't think of it.

DH: Richard's Lounge?

PM: Well, that was Lakewood. That was Lakewood.

DH: Yeah.

PM: You played there for how many years, mom?

DH: Yeah, I don't remember.

PM: A *lot* of years. A lot of years there.

DH: A lot of them.

PM: I'm trying to think . . . There were . . . gosh, there was this other place in Long Branch. It was the Off-Broadway, that was one, and that was in the late 80s. And the other place, prior to that, when I was in college, you played in Long Branch, it wasn't the Off-Broadway, it was another club. I can't think of the name of it. The Redwood, of course.

DH: Yeah.

PM: That was a, you know, that was like a home base, right?

DH: Yeah.

YC: What was the musician that used to play there?

PM: Sammy Pugh. Sammy Pugh.

YC: Right, Sammy Pugh.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: So you played with Sammy Pugh, too? Did you ever play together?

PM: No he was a keyboard player, too. [*laughter*] They both played . . . yeah, yeah. But there was no competition type, was it mom?

DH: No, no.

PM: Who was your drummer for a while?

DH: Andrew . . .

PM: Andrew?

DH: Yeah, can't think of his last name.

PM: What about Mr. Clarence? Mr. Clarence Pickney? Wasn't he your drummer for a while too?

DH: No.

PM: Clarence Pickney didn't play the drums?

DH: I don't think so.

PM: You sure? I know he sang, right?

DH: Yeah, he sang.

PM: He didn't play the drums?

DH: No.

PM: He just sang?

DH: Yeah.

PM: Okay, okay. And Al Wright.

DH: Al Wright?

PM: Yeah, he's from . . . where's he from?

DH: Red Bank.

PM: Yep, yep, that's right.

DH: And his wife . . .

PM: Yes! Yes! Ruth!

DH: Ruth.

PM: Yeah, yeah.

YC: Did she sing too, or did they both played together?

PM: What did Ruth do, mom?

DH: She sang.

PM: That's right. That's right. And they were kind of like, almost like hippies, huh?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: They would've been considered . . . who was it they played with, later, after they, after you all stopped playing for a while? What was that musician?

DH: Who?

PM: That Al and Ruthie played with?

DH: I don't know.

PM: Was it Sun Ra?

DH: Sun Ra!

PM: Yep, that's right. They played with Sun Ra. *[laughter]* That's right, that's who that was. Oh wow, I'm trying to think.

YC: They were from Red Bank?

PM: Yeah, they *are*. I think they're still there. Trying to think . . . Did he play at the NCO Club with you?

DH: Yeah, he did.

PM: Okay, okay, okay. Because I remember you used to take me there, and I could have a Shirley Temple. *[laughter]* Remember?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: Wait a minute, there's another club you guys played at that's gone. The Blue Note! [Do you remember you played at the Blue Note? Late 1950s to early 1960s.]

DH: Yeah.

JS: Where was that?

PM: That was on Bangs.

YC: That was in Asbury.

PM: On Bangs Avenue, in Asbury, right across Main Street. You remember that?

DH: Mmm-hmm. Yeah.

PM: Did you play with Al there too?

DH: Yeah.

PM: I thought so.

YC : There was there for a *long* time!

PM: Yeah. You had the Blue Note... I'm trying to think of, was there any place . . . That was really the only place across town that you played that – and when I say “across town,” I mean on the east side of town – that you played with the group, right?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: And then, where's that other place, you remember? Oh darn it . . . Har--, Harbor . . . The Harbor Island Spa!

DH: Yeah.

YC: Oh god, what was that like?

PM: Do you remember about that, my mama?

DH: Yeah.

PM: What you remember about that?

DH: Not too much.

PM: No? Did you enjoy it?

DH: Yeah.

PM: Did you often smile a lot while you were playing.

DH: Never! [*laughter*]

PM: How come?

DH: I don't know. Stoic.

JS: Stoic?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: Serious. You were serious.

PM: A serious musician, yeah.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: I never knew the Harbor Island Spa had a club, or anything inside of it, other than, I knew it was a spa . . .

PM: Yeah, mom played there for years.

MK: Get your nails done, here's some piano music, that's where I would want to go.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: They had a ballroom, right? Was it a ballroom there?

DH: Yeah.

PM: I'm trying to think of where else . . . I know you like Richard's Lounge, right? You liked that.

DH: Yeah, yeah.

PM: Richard was a nice man, wasn't he?

DH: He was.

PM: He was very nice, a very nice man.

DH: Very nice.

PM: I don't know if he's still alive, or what. I don't know. Do you remember his last name? Because I don't.

DH: Uh-uh.

YC: Did you ever play Green Briar? I think it was in Pine Brook?

PM: The Green Briar Inn?

YC: Yeah, the Green Briar Inn.

PM: Did you ever play there?

YC: It was owned by a man, the man's last name was Barry.

DH: I think I did.

YC: Yeah. Okay.

PM: You know what else we forgot? Didn't you play at Melba's place?

DH: Yep.

PM: What was the name of that place?

DH: Mel Hood.

PM: Yeah, what was the name of his bar?

YC: Oh, Mel Hood!

PM: What was the name of his bar? In Belmar?

DH: I don't know.

YC: On Main Street.

PM: ON Main Street, like South Belmar. South Belmar.

YC: Yes, yes.

PM: Do you remember the name of it.

DH: No.

PM: I can't think of the name of it either.

YC: Jason's!

PM: Jason's, Jason's! Jason's! That was it, Jason's!

DH: Mmm-hmm.

YC: You played at Jason's? I used to go there a lot!

PM: You played there a long time, didn't you?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: Yeah. A long time. Off and on, right?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: Many years.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: That was in the 80s.

YC: In my youth. [*laughter*]

PM: I'm trying to think of where else, you played so many places, mom.

DH: Yep.

PM: And then there was, okay. I know you played at Richard's Lounge in Lakewood. Didn't you play somewhere else in Lakewood? Was it a hotel or something like that?

DH: I don't know.

PM: I don't remember. Yeah, I thought there was someplace else that you played there. You've been playing all my life. [*laughter*] All mine.

MK: You said it was really cool to see the evolution of her music change? How did it, what did you mean by that?

PM: Well, you know, remember when you went to the electronic keyboards? You switched from the organ, from the organ, from piano and organ, because you played that Hammond B3 and the acoustic piano forever –

DH: Yeah, yeah.

PM: -- and then all the sudden, the electric pianos came out. What did you think about that? How did you like playing on the electric pianos?

DH: Okay.

PM: Okay? Which did you prefer?

DH: I don't know. I prefer, I guess, an ordinary keyboard.

PM: A piano?

DH: Yeah, a piano. One that I could manipulate and do things that I wanted to do with it.

- PM: Okay, now. As far as the electric pianos, or the keyboards, you had fun with that too, didn't you?
- DH: Mmm-hmm.
- PM: What did you like about that?
- DH: It had a certain sound quality to them, that made it more comfortable to work with.
- PM: You were known for your serious left hand. Because you could run that bass line on that electric piano, couldn't you?
- DM: Mmm-hmm.
- PM: Mmm-hmm. You were known for your left hand, people would kill for your left hand, huh?
- DM: Mmm-hmm.
- PM: Mmm-hmm. And what would you do? How would you manage that? What would you do with the keyboard so you could get your left hand going with the bass line? What would you do?
- DH: I don't know.
- PM: Would you split the keyboard?
- DH: It was sort of like . . . something that I had, that just made it come out harmonically correct. Now, I can't tell you how I got it, but I had it.
- PM: What about with that Hammond B3? Because you were known for your "kick," running that bass line on the Hammond.
- DH: Yeah.
- PM: Because you did that with your feet, right?
- DH: Right.
- PM: Yeah. How was that different, running the bass line with your feet on the Hammond, than running the bass line with your left on the electronic keyboard? How was that different? Or was it?
- DH: It was just making the transition.

PM: From foot to hand?

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: What made it similar?

DH: Hmm. Don't know.

PM: Was it the hearing, that you could still . . . that is was all about what you heard?

DH: You could hear it. / could hear it. I could hear it. And it just came out perfect. [laughter]

YC: Are there any recordings? Were you ever recorded?

PM: Not professionally so. I'll have to look and see if I have any CDs. I think there's one I may have of you, some recordings . . . I'll going to see if I can find that.

MK: I think I saw one of you on YouTube? At a church?

PM: There is one, there is one. There is. Yeah, at Saint Augustine.

MK: It wasn't a very good angle, but I could hear you.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: She did one of the Duke Ellington things, right?

MK: I think so.

PM: There is one on YouTube.

YC: But if you had a CD, or something . . .

PM: I'll see if I can locate it.

YC: That would be awesome. I'd love to be able to hear.

JS: I have to say, hearing Paulette speak about you as an inspiration as a mom, and I'm just listening to all this and thinking about managing having this amazing gift, and managing your business side, and going all over these places, and it just seems as a woman, it's an inspiration to me. To be able to manage your talent – have this amazing talent, and manage it from a business-sense, too. And these, when you were going from clubs to places, did those different clubs, were there just relationships that you had? Were you taking care of all that yourself? Where you would play, when? Was it just something that you had relationships, from a business side?

YC: Did you have a manager?

PM: No manager, no manager.

DH: No.

JS It's just a lot to manage for a long time, it's just amazing.

YC: And you had a family, and you managed that too.

DH: Mmm-hmm.

PM: It's possible. It *is* possible.

YC: It is possible.

PM: It is possible, and that's one thing I learned. That it is definitely possible: to be a woman, to have a career, and to do something that you enjoy and love.

YC: It takes work, but it also takes learning how to manage your time.

PM: Absolutely. Absolutely.

JS: Well, we've taken – speaking of time, a lot your time. We would love to get a picture or two of you two, if that's okay? And maybe we should just, before we wrap up... make sure that it sounds okay and everything. Do you think everything's okay?

MK: Oh, on this? Well . . . it's over now. It should be okay. I hope you're working, microphone! [*laughter*]

JS: Well, we really just want to thank you so much.

YC: Thank you. Thank both of you.

MK: Yes, thank you.

DH: Thank *you*, for having me.

JS: It's truly an honor. You'll be hearing more from us, and more about the project.

YC: We're going to be reaching out to some of the names that you mentioned that we did not have on our list. And that's what so great about this, because from what you tell us, we're learning more, and we have more of a concept of what we can do with this project.

PM: There's quite a bit of information. There's quite a bit of history. There's more history than there is information, you know. A lot more.

[End of Interview]

Transcribed by: Melissa Keeling, December 18, 2017  
Edited by: Jennifer Souder, December 27, 2017  
Reviewed by: Dolores Holland and Paulette Malunga, December 27, 2017  
Edited by: Jennifer Souder, January 2, 2018  
Final edited by:

Follow up question:

JS What is something that you would like someone walking down Springwood Avenue today to know about the music and history of Springwood Ave.?

DH It was a business area. Even though I wasn't allowed to do anything but play music there it was alive. There was every business you would see in a city, a big city. People lived there it was a community.