

**Branden McEuen:** This is Branden McEuen interviewing Pat Lewis. It is Wednesday, November 30, 2016 and we are at Pat Lewis' home in Parkview Towers

**Pat Lewis:** Correct

**BM:** Alright, so let's get this started. You and your sister [Diane Lewis] are both singers.

**PL:** Yes.

**BM:** And I want to start off with asking where you got your voices from.

**PL:** My mother—um—my father, they were both musically inclined. Yeah, my mother sang, not professionally of course she was in choirs and around the house [laughs]. And I don't know whether she—her family—her first cousins they all sang because she didn't have any sisters or brothers. But yeah, it is in the genes [laughs]

**BM:** You just grew up in a musical household?

**PL:** Yeah.

**BM:** You first were born in Pennsylvania and then you moved to Detroit.

**PL:** Mmhm

**BM:** And what sort of influences from your childhood led you to become a musician?

**PL:** Well my mother said I was singing all my life. She said "You used to just (humming noise) at the dinner table." Or, "Whatever you were eating you would chew and hum." So, you know, after I got where there were songs that I really loved—they had records—16 inch. The McGuire Sisters and all of them, [Patti Page] used to sing "Cross Over the Bridge" and I love that music and I used to sing all along—Diane and I—we used to harmonize with that. So, I mean they were before my time, but yeah they used to play all of that stuff, you know all of those records and of course we came up with Ruth Brown and the Shirelles no doubt. All of these groups and we just liked to harmonize.

**BM:** And then you were in choir and you did a lot of performances growing up.

**PL:** Of course. Talent shows. I know my oldest sister and I, I went to Durfee [Middle School] and I went to Central during the time they started sending 9<sup>th</sup> graders to Durfee—I mean to Central—and I left Durfee and went to Central then she and two of her friends, they had, they were getting ready for this talent show and they're like, "Wow well Pat is over here well she could be our lead singer." So I had gotten into talent shows and we had known Rose [Williams] from school and once I got to Central we just—we had, you know we were in Glee Club, choir, all of that stuff—and once we got to Central and got a little fast and I had already been to—my

brother had already taken me to Thelma Gordy's—and where I was auditioned by Richard Street and Norman Woodfield.

[00:03:35]

And that was the beginning of like, 'I'm going to be in this business.' [laughs] you know once we got the group together and we had, the three of us always remained together but there was this one girl that we used to let her do the lead all the time because she wasn't—she was god awful in the background—we were like, "Ok Brenda you sing lead" [laughs] so that we could harmonize. Then we also had a group, I can't even think of what our name was, but there was a male group also and we all used to rehearse around the same time and then we'll all sing together and during that time you was singing up and down the streets singing under the streetlight just whenever you were together you were singing. Skipping school and singing on the bleachers you know. So that was, that was my—I had this love for music where I would eat, breathe, and, you know music. [laughs] I just didn't want to put it on there but you know what I mean [laughs].

**BM:** And you were part of multiple groups, right?

**PL:** Yeah, yeah. I used to fill in for this group called The Sonnettes at um, they were at Thelma Gordy's. That was where I had my audition at. But they had a record called "I've Gotten Over You" very nice, very nice young ladies you know. But I got—and then I was older—I was younger than I appeared, you know, everybody right today when they find out how old I am they are like "I thought you were older than that. Not that you look it, but you've just been around forever." Yeah I'm the baby [laughs]. But yeah that group and then the Adorables, which Jackie and Diane and I, Jackie Winston, we all went to school together. And her sister Betty [Winston], she was older than we were, maybe about 3 or you know 3 or 4 years older. Even when you're still a teenager and you're small and you're a child and you're still a teenager that 3 years just seems to mean a lot, and you're like, you're not really that old.

But anyway, we all got together because Diane and Jackie and I would sing on the way home and she said "My sister sings." And they were, they were, I think they were dealing with Bob Hamilton, [Richard] Popcorn Wylie, Herm Wheems, Freddie Gorman and they were the ones that decided to—that we you know— 'Ok this would be a nice group here.' And they were like working for Mr. Wingate. Out of Joanne Jackson's basement and they also had the Reflections. And the Tramangos [Domingos]? I think that was the name was before they were the Shades of Blue. And we used to record over to Wilma Golden's, did a lot of background work over there. But then, this was his great, his first great big session, so we went to Chicago and recorded at RCA a song that Bob Hamilton—I don't know who was, I don't know who the other writers were—but I know for a fact it was him. And that was just like "Romeo and Juliet" and they took us to do the background. And the other group went too because they were recording something, we didn't—I, I just don't remember what—and we did "Romeo and Juliet" because I remember the other group doing the handclaps with us.

[00:08:18]

And it was, that's the beginning of everything. They soon put up the studio, Golden World, which was on Davison and, um, between Dexter and Wildemere. And then we started recording. Well they had to get that thing in order because you know, I mean, flushed the toilet it would be on the track and I, What in the world? You know, so it had a lot of glitches [laughs]. And so, they had to get that together, and once they got it together we had a beautiful school

but there will never be another school like that, you know? A lot of artists came through there too. They recorded The Adorables “Deep Freeze.” Martha and the Vandella’s had “Heat Wave” and we had “Deep Freeze.” They also recorded during that time Barbara Mercer, George McGregor was there. He was, he was a fantastic drummer and producer, writer and producer. Had Barbara Mercer. We had another—there were quite a few female artists over there. Juanita, I think her name was Juanita Moore [Williams]. Um, Theresa Lindsey. I think Rose Batiste was over there but they never recorded her. And did I say Edwin Starr? Anyway, I remember when they brought Edwin Starr in. Bill Dahl brought in Edwin Starr and Sonny Stitt and I knew the Andantes used to be over a lot doing background. I was working there during the—after I would get out of school I would like, be the receptionist. I would do all the little paperwork, the mechanical license and made sure everybody’s copyrights were together in the beginning until they got a secretary. And yeah that one day that Louvain [Demps] couldn’t make it [to the studio] that was a great opportunity for me. You know, Mr. Wingate said “Oh, Pat is here.”

**BM:** And you are talking about when you were joining the Andantes correct?

**PL:** For Edwin Starr, yeah that, Edwin Starr. I didn’t actually, um, well I guess you could say I joined them because after they found out I was a perfect blend then they started calling me. You know and eventually called me to Motown. You know, so I used to work every Monday. Then I would work Mondays and Wednesdays. Yeah, and I was doing that and they recorded a few more songs on the Adorables because I think we had “Ooh Boy” and “Be” we had about 3 or 4 singles before the group disbanded because Mr. Wingate says this—you know just like there was no interest there. Jackie, she had something that she was doing, and Betty she was busy doing something else and he’s—he was like—“And I don’t know what Diane wants to do so I’m going to go with Pat.” You know so, he got George Clinton and Sidney Burns to write a song for me which he wanted to do—he wanted to do something for Martha Jean the Queen—we used to say “I’m into something and can’t shake it loose I’ll bet you.” So, they split the titles up, I got “Can’t Shake It Loose” Theresa Lindsey got “I’ll Bet You.” So, that was the beginning of my career.

By the time I had another release the company was sold but I did record other songs there. But they also went along, they came along with—I guess Don took them, Don Davis—I don’t know I guess once they, they gave me—let me make my own decision about going to Motown—or you know, “Do you want to go with Solid Hit Bound?” And Solid Hit Bound was best choice for me because Motown, my god look at all the acts they had you know? Female acts. You know they still—Tammi [Terrell] was there. Kim Weston. I think Mary was gone, Mary Wells was gone. But they had a lot of female acts. Candace—Chris Clark she was probably still there. Can’t recall them all but they had a lot. So, I went along with Solid Hit Bound but some of those songs followed me because I don’t, I don’t recall recording “Look at What I Almost Missed” anywhere else but Golden World. And Andre Williams did a song called “No Baby No” and I think the other side, I think that’s the B-Side of “Almost Missed.”

So between the Motown thing and “Can’t Shake It Loose” actually being a turntable hit, but it got me to working you know so I traveled, I traveled with that song. And I did a lot of work at home. 20 Grand, the Kelly’s—Mr. Kelly’s—which was a fabulous club over on Chene. He

had a lot of acts, a lot of big acts over there. And Chit Chat Lounge of course. Where Martha Jean she was the DJ on—I can't think of what night it was—but she would have us to come in as special guests and Frantic Ernie Durham he had the 20 Grand, the Gold Room, where you would come down those spiral stairs you know. And he said “Ooh, looked like she is—did they spray that outfit on you?” [laughs] he said “You *wearing* that outfit.” While Mr. Wingate had me, they had me super sharp, Joanne [Bratton] made sure I had all of the etiquette that you know, all of the Adorables she made sure we had all of that we needed. We didn't um, I didn't get with Maxine [Powell] until later on. But you know by the time I got with her I got, I had all I needed to know, because Joanne was a very etiquette queen. She was beautiful, she was a very pretty lady. She, well she is, because she is still here you know. But I guess later on she was joy and beautiful, inside and out. And anyway I went to working.

[00:16:45] And between that and doing this background work I survived very well. You know even with the \$5 that they start paying that we used to make for a song. And then I raised to \$7.50. well then when we got to \$15 wow, you know, I mean because you might do two or three songs a day. You may make, you may work 5 days a week, so when you pick your check up at Motown on Wednesday's you had a pretty decent check for that time. And that's not including our outside work. Because they didn't want the Andantes, nor did they want the musicians, playing for anybody else. But these guys had families, you know they had to do work at Motown, they had to do they did their outside work and then they were doing their nightclub work. And when you have families and you have bills you have to pay, and, hell you want to be able to like, “Let's go out to dinner.” You know? “Let's have a drink or something.” And they had to have strong mates to even deal with a musician or entertainer you know. And most of them did, most of them had very strong mates. Yup, but even the Andantes, like Sonny Sanders who arranged my first two songs, and he did a lot around here in Detroit. And he was also my musical director when the Riviera Theater, on Grand River and Joy Road, they used to have shows like the Apollo. And I remember I was there with Eddie Floyd, Ruby Andrews, [Dewey] Pigmeat Markham, let me see who else was on that show, god it was a couple of groups on that show. But it was ran just like the Apollo and-which I guess Detroit just didn't have that—that audience like New York. And so, that didn't last too long but I did, from there I did quite a few shows with Pigmeat Markham, do you know who he is?

**BM:** I'm not personally, I've heard the name but

[00:19:42] **PL:** He was a comedian, yeah oh what a comedian. Yeah he and Moms Mabley you familiar with her?

**BM:** No, that one I am not

**PL:** Oh! You need to check them out! Yeah they were two of the great black comedians, you know? And I did quite a few shows with them and that was historic [laughs]. That was historic. Anyway I—we eventually—getting back to Sonny Sanders. He eventually left Detroit and went to Brunswick Records who was owned by Carl Davis. And that's where Jackie Wilson was signed. And he called, he said, “Oh well I got to have my Detroit musicians. I got to have my singers,” you know. So that's how we came by, first time we went we did two songs. And that was “The

[00:21:24] Whispers Getting Louder” and “Sweetest Feeling” which they also released “Sweetest Feeling” on Erma Franklin because they used the same background. And then we went back to finish the album and that’s when we did, “Your Love Keeps Lifting Me Higher” and that record, man, they are still playing that to death today. Yup, because I had to, I had to call Sonny Sanders who just passed, maybe a little over a month ago. I had to call him so we could get paid! You know, because they have this thing called the ARoyalties.org and they pay all of our overseas royalties that they make sure we get paid. And the United States hadn’t come on board yet to pay us with our back royalties. But they pay them and by our name—they didn’t put our name on the record—so do you know, they said “We see Sonny Sanders.” I’m like “Well, that’s all you need.” So, they called him, and they, you know, he filled out a paper and everything and faxed it out to them so that we could get paid for the album we did on Jackie Wilson because all the songs, most of the songs took off but “Higher and Higher” was huge so we could get paid for our movie rights and all of that. Yeah, so um, Jackie Wilson yeah.

[00:22:47] So, after all of that, one night I was working at Casino Royale with the Drifters and uh—matter of fact we did a weekend Thursday through Sunday and that’s when Aretha [Franklin], one of her singers hadn’t shown up for two weeks to rehearsal and everything. And she was like “I got to have a singer.” And she knew that—let me, let me rewind. Don Davis, after Solid Hit Bound folded, Lebaron Taylor, he moved to New York and became the Vice President of Columbia Records. Don Davis bought United Sound and he was also um, he was affiliated with Stax Records. And, any of the artists that needed background, he would bring the tracks here. And we would put the background on, and I was arranging backgrounds. I wasn’t getting any credit but I was doing it. and so that’s, that’s how Isaac’s stuff got up in the batch. But at any rate, I was singing at the Casino Royale and I had done Johnnie Taylor’s “Who’s Making Love” and Aretha and Johnnie were in there and they were just like that. And she was like “Who was that? Who was singing ‘Who’s Making Love?’” And he was like, “That’s Pat Lewis and that’s her group.” And she wanted me, she said, “You got two weeks.” She said “I just needed you for two weeks to come out”—because she said—“I don’t have a first soprano.” I thought, Okay, so I went out. I learned the show, on the bus, overnight. I just learned the show, the choreography and everything and so I think we played in Cleveland. And she said, “Just sing off stage.” You know so long as I have that note so I did and the next night we played in Pittsburgh. And she said, “You can work the middle you know.” So, I was like, “Yeah I work the center, so whatever I do it won’t be wrong.” [laughs] She said, “Just don’t stop moving and god knows don’t stop singing.” [laughs] But I just stayed out there with her for so long you know. And between her and my commitments that I had to her ex-husband Ted White, and Ben Cosby who used to own Ben’s High Chaparral, I had, you know, I was busy.

[00:26:00] So Isaac [Hayes] at the time, his record from all that stuff from Stax, his album had his songs came up in the—in the mix. Because Stax needed another album to I guess to complete their—whatever they were getting ready to release at the time. And, that album *Hot Buttered Soul* album took off. Yeah, it took off. Then he wanted to know if “You think they would go on the road with me?” When Don asked me about I’m like, “Oh yeah.” This is what we wanted you know, we wanted to our group you know because we were known as The Group because we sang all of George Clinton’s stuff from “I Wanna Testify” all the way up to “Maggot Brain” all of that stuff and we did not have a name. Because we were individual artists. Diane, after the Adorables she went with Herman Griffith to Scepter One. George Clinton cut a song on Rose

and let me see, “Whatever Makes My Baby Feel Good” he recorded that on her. And Diane had on Scepter One “I Thank You Kindly.” And so we knew we’d always get together and do background work but to actually be a group? You know and that record took off like it did and I was like “A name a name a name.” Well hell, Hot Buttered Soul [laughs]. Why not?

**BM:** Just made sense.

**PL:** Mhm. Yup, made a lot of sense. Have I covered every—a lot—there?

**BM:** Oh, you definitely covered a lot there [laughs]. I want to go back a little bit

**PL:** Sure

**BM:** Um, so what was the atmosphere like at Golden World? I’ve just—

**PL:** At Golden World?

**BM:** —I have heard that it was crazy.

[00:28:27]

**PL:** It was, I loved it. I just loved it because there was something going on in every room. Something being—you know, just creative juices—just flowing all through that building. Even upstairs that hadn’t totally been completed but there was a room up there. I thought the atmosphere was great, like I said there will never be another. I learned so much at Golden World. I could have been an engineer. That’s not what I wanted to do. I was impatient, you know, I mean it was boring to me. I would push buttons you know, they uh, maybe late at night someone is recording and they’re like “Pat, I’m going to go out here and do this part and all you got to do is push this button.” So I mean, I knew all of that. But, I did not like for them to call me and if I had to sing I did not like for them to call me in while they were laying the track. Because sometimes things were done from the floor where all of us had to be out there. We had to sing at that time. But later on, it got where they could just cut the track, and then we could sing later. So, I didn’t like being around when they were doing that because my adrenaline would go. Especially if you want me to sing that night.

But fortunately, we were fortunate enough to have the Funk Brothers playing on so many things. It didn’t take them long, didn’t take them long because they were good readers and for them to read and to play with the feel that they had? It was wonderful and I mean you could get everything out of them as long as you got them some Kentucky Fried Chicken and a drink. Shoot, they’d play all night [laughs]. Yeah, that, but, other than that I think Golden World had a wonderful, wonderful atmosphere. And you know I was just in the midst of it all. A lot of people weren’t in the midst of it all like I was.

And I never called Mr. Wingate, Mr. Wingate, I called him Uncle Ed. Because he would, that’s how he acted towards me, he was just like my—my uncle or when he was just like dragging his feet in the beginning and we were in school but we’re at the studio late at night. Then my father, he was kind of giving my mother a little hell you know. “Well what are they going to do? You know they’re up all night it’s hard to get Pat up in the morning,” because I

hated to get up. But my sister she would get right up but I was hard to get up in the morning, I just didn't want to. So my mother had to go up there and have a few words with him and after that no more problems [laughs]. Yup, that's to me Golden World was a wonderful, wonderful avenue for a lot of us. Debonaires, you know, Thelma Hopkins, she had a little group up in there. And Joyce Vincent was one of the Debonaires so you know they ended up being Dawn, that sang with Tony Orlando. So, I trained a lot of girls up there. Yeah.

**BM:** And at this time, you were like...

**PL:** I was young

**BM:** Yeah. What was that like?

**PL:** I was—so nobody knew how old I was.

**BM:** [laughs] Well was it like, did it add any pressure or anything? Was it a different dynamic for you than possibly other people?

**PL:** Oh, it just seemed to come so natural for me. You know, that's why I say that the Lord blessed me with many gifts. Many.

**BM:** And then, well Golden World is not really that—it's not as well-known sadly as most Motown. Because Motown has kind of consumed every other aspect of Detroit music.

[00:33:05] **PL:** Yeah. Yeah they did, they did. They just, was like um, I tell you one thing. Golden World was some great competition. Wonderful competition and yeah, they wanted to just suck them all up. So by then, that was the only company that really was worth getting because a lot of the other companies that were, you know the record labels that were around and record companies that had to go to, maybe United Sound, and record. A lot of folks went to United Sound and recorded. And some of those labels came up along with Motown. Motown just happened to be, um, I don't know something that Barry was—had that drive for, he just happened to be the one.

But having said that, I just think Detroit should not just say "Motown" when there was so many other contributors here. You know, and if you weren't signed with Motown then that, does that mean you were nothing? You know, never existed? That's bull crap. You know, stop, Motown, and let's deal—let's deal with the history of the, the music history of Detroit. You know. That's what I would love. Motown yeah they—some of those people happened to make it because of the machine that they had behind them. It was not because they were any better than you, a better singer than you, because hell some of them couldn't you know? Some of them didn't even do their own backgrounds. So it's a lot—I, you know that's the thing that really upsets me—that they deny the Detroit music history. And I'm always going to fight for them to do something about it. Yup.

**BM:** Yeah Motown has become sort of the genre of 60's Detroit music and that sound even though it's just, specifically, it's just that company.

**PL:** Yeah but you know if you go, if you go overseas, if you go to, if you deal with the Northern Soul. They love Detroit Music, and it's not too much Motown in there. Not at all. You don't find too much Motown in there. Aretha Franklin is not in there. When they came over here to buy records they want the other artists. And they know so well—they know these people so well—their very knowledgeable about their music. About our music [laughs]. So, and it's you know, its rare music and they're collectors and we have music, we have records that are so expensive. That if they can find one in mint condition, its, that record of mine of "One to Love" if they find that in mint condition that's 2000 pounds. That's almost 4000 dollars you know?

So, I just, I'm just hoping that Detroit wakes up and—like this Motown Museum. They should have, to me, next door could have been something, that Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame that they're trying to—Lamont Robinson is trying so hard—to make the home Detroit. And it's more than Detroit artists in there, it's artists from all over. You know, and Detroit would have been perfect home for that since Detroit is a music capital.

**BM:** Yeah Detroit definitely is.

**PL:** Oh yeah

**BM:** [laughs] So, next thing I kind of want to go over is that Northern Soul. I don't know if you would call it a movement. But...

[00:37:52] **PL:** It's been a great movement. that picture right there [picture supplied at the bottom of the transcript] of that building is—let me tell you the name of this building—The Twisted Wheel. That was the original home of Northern Soul and it's called, it's the legendary Twisted Wheel. And Northern Soul has been around, oh, a long time. A long time, even their kids come up in it, and now their kids, and you know it's getting younger. But a movement would be something that has moved and stopped, right? This is some historical, this is an historical thing that's just here to stay. This is the type of music that these people love and that's pretty much what they all listen to.

**BM:** And how did you get involved with that?

**PL:** Edwin Starr [laughs]. Edwin in '82, Edwin called myself, JJ Barnes, Al Kent, and another singer, Lou Ragland. Lou Ragland was out at Cleveland because Edwin's home was at Cleveland. And he called us over there for the Ric-Tic Review. Which was, it was quite an experience because we had no idea that these people knew us as well—and how they'd love us. They literally love us. You know, you could go over there—like I was over there in September. You could go over there and if you don't have your head on right, you can come back wrong. Because these people here in the States, you know I mean we have Northern Soul pockets but the majority of these people don't know. So, if you have any type—excuse me—of ego, you better leave it over there. [laughs] Instead of coming back here like so many people do with this



great big head. Because they don't know what you had just experienced. And I think anytime any artist gets the opportunity to go they should. It is, what an experience.

**BM:** And through this Northern Soul, that's where you met Ian Levine correct?

**PL:** Yeah, Ian Levine. Well actually, I met him but didn't—I met him as a DJ. I met him in the eighties for real when he came here and wanted to record everybody that had been affiliated with Motown. And he wanted me to coordinate this because he knew that I was an arranger. He, you know like, they know your history. They tell you what time you went to the bathroom. They know, "Oh she was recording but she left out. She took a break, a bathroom break. This is how—" [laughs] They are so up on your stuff. They know more about you than you. And he asked me to, "Would I coordinate?" And which I did, to pull everybody together and, but I'm like "I can't arrange everybody's songs. I can't do that because that's just..." The first stay was a short stay. But it was just wonderful, it was a big reunion. And I think that a lot of artists thought that "Here's my second chance." That's what I think that they thought, especially once he came back, because the first one was at United Sound. The second time was at Sylvia Moy's Masterpiece and we really worked a long time. That time he was here for a long time. And because I ended up, everything, then I had to go to, California to do the LA family. And everything I didn't finish up I had to go to England to finish up.

But yeah Ian was like, oh my god he was so excited and even the groups. Some groups were still together but had other members. And as maybe the ex-lead singer of something would show up then he wanted to record them. And what Ian did was, he ended up spreading himself kind of too thin. You know, that's where a lot of the money problems came in. You know and everybody just "I hate Ian. He didn't pay me and he did this." Yeah but what they didn't know is that a lot of those records didn't do anything. The compilation albums, there was a song I did on Frances Nero called "Footsteps [Following Me]." It did well for her you know, but, it was not like—it was not like having a huge record here in the States. It did well for her in the Northern Soul scene. So she was thinking that she should have all of this money and it just wasn't working like that and so, and as far as a lot of them he gave money up front. Never saw them again you know, so, I mean, Ian in his case he was "Well I'm damned if I do and I'm damned if I don't." But I continued to work for him and he and I are very good friends to this day. Mhm..

**BM:** Ok so we are going to backtrack a little bit here. And, kind of want to go over your relationship with George Clinton because you've done a lot of work with him

**PL:** Oh yeah still working with him.

**BM** [laughs] So if you kind of just want to go over, like how you met, what kind of stuff you've done, just the dynamic you two have. Whatever you want to talk about.

[00:45:34]

**PL:** We met at, we met at Golden World. Then we did a lot of, we were doing the Parliament, I remember first meeting the Parliament. They were coming down Davison, you know in the loud lime-green, orange, blue, those loud-colored suits because they're east coast. Hair up here,

pompadours, fried to the gill. And see all of them were, all of them were barbers. Matter of fact I went to Plainfield to the shop and everything because they were all from Plainfield, New Jersey. I mean that's where they lived. A lot of them were born, you know, in the south somewhere, but home was Plainfield. And we got to recording the Parliament, which we did a lot of recording on uh, Dexter and Waverly upstairs over the Dexter and Davidson supermarket. It was [unclear]? I can't think of those brother's names. Anyway, they had that studio then they had another studio that was on Livernois off Fenkell and it was upstairs I think that was Tera Shirma. Because Thelma Hopkins used to answer the phone. "Tera Shirma. Sound of things to come." I said "Hey Thelma [laughs]" you know, oh my god I don't know who she was trying to be sexy for.

But we did, oh my god we stayed and did so much. So much recording there and the Parliament, like I said we did, I think we did two or three albums I did with George. And he would leave me like he would leave me now, leave me in the studio. He'd tell—he'd trust me to get his background work done you know. And he knows that I can harmonize with myself very well I've been doing it for years. Long before these other folks decided that, "Oh I can do it." And I mean we just—once I—once I went with Isaac though, I came back home because we, you know, would have like ten year intervals where we wouldn't see each other for ten years and then we would come back together and start working like we never left. But I came home and I went to the 20 Grand because we used to work the 20 Grand we used to perform with them. We had rings on our toes, and headbands and, chained belts, and just crazy. And I thought that was out far enough, but, the time when I came home and—and I'm like, "Well where's George?" He had cut these, I said, "Are you crazy?" He had cut stars and moons in his head and I'm like, "What is wrong with him?" Well, those were his LSD days. George Clinton is the only person that I know that, while I've never known him to shoot heroin, but the drugs that he would mess with? He's the only I know that sh- came right up out of them. You know, he survived all of these things and I tell him I said, "You know you are amazing." But anyway I've traveled with him, I toured with him. The last tour—the last one I did—was Germany. You can go on YouTube and see that. It was the Parliament—[Parliament-Funkadelic]—and Red Hot Chili Peppers. Because he had—you know I had recorded with them—and Prince and Tracy Ullman, Paul Simon. Yeah George had me doing, through him I'd done a lot of work with a lot of people. I was able to sing with other people through him. He um, what was I going to say? Eh [laughs] a senior moment [laughs].

**BM:** Oh its totally fine

**PL:** But yeah um, we did a video this year? Oh, my god what's the name? what is the name of that group?

[Pause in Recording]

**PL:** Anyway we did that video and it was great. We did it at Masonic Temple as a matter of fact.

**BM:** Oh?

**PL:** Yeah, the name is so easy. It, it escapes me. You know how simple things can escape you. Anyway, we did, we did it at Masonic Temple and it was great. They sent me the video too.

[Pause in Recording]

**PL:** Ok well, we did some work here recently um, Paul Hill, his album was just released and George went over and did a video with him. The one thing about George is he tries to help. You know if you call him and tell him, "I need you to do this and I need you to do that." "Ok. Well I'll be in to do it." And you know with high tech now you could just send him what you want him to sing and he would—he would send it right back just with the push of a button. Yeah but like, we will probably be doing something, maybe even over the Christmas holidays because if I go out there, I'm thinking maybe in January I'll probably go there and stay a couple of days and record. You know get with him and record. Because I know he'll be home around the holidays because he's in Japan now, they're touring over there now. So we never left each other we still doing it. anything else?

**BM:** Umm, so you mentioned before that you did a lot of arranging?

**PL:** Oh yeah

**BM:** And you didn't necessarily get credit for it

**PL:** Right. The name of that group was Slight Return.

[phone pause]

**BM:** Okay good to know [laughs].

**PL:** Check them out they're on YouTube.

**BM:** Alright. But uh, yeah so you were—

[00:53:40] **PL:** Oh I arranged, oh my god, I've been doing—actually the Andantes were arranging and I learned a lot from them. And we never thought about it. Um, Don Davis, I did all of that stuff I was doing for Stax and, and anybody else, you know, I was arranging that and I guess he said, Long as you don't say anything as you long as you don't mention it, you know. So I didn't, I—I really didn't and I guess he said, Well you see as sucker lick it. Because I sure didn't get paid for it. And after *Hot Buttered Soul* and I didn't get credit for that and the people who were, like, his road manager and, there's some people that were with him that—well I just don't want to say—but they came and they said, "Pat, you know you're not getting any credit, you should be getting credit for your arrangements." And I'm like, Yeah. And they said, "Well this will be the last album that you don't get credit for." You know, but I, I'm trying to think, did I get credit? I think Aretha Franklin gave me credit on her "This Girl's in Love" album. Yeah but most of them didn't. And at that time when I did start getting credit that's all it was, was credit. Because they

had not yet started the Grammy's giving you Grammy's for background vocal arrangements. That wasn't going on, you know. But when they started it, I wasn't even with anybody that I was arranging for at the time. Yeah so, they need to backtrack and give me my Grammy's [laughs]

**BM:** [laughs] We will get on that!

**PL:** Yeah [laughs]

[00:56:18] **BM:** And so last year you were inducted into the R&B Hall of Fame. We mentioned the hall of fame briefly

**PL:** Yeah see my gold record?

**BM:** That was for that?

**PL:** Yeah, yup officially. I'm like, Ok, somebody really, really paid attention and think I deserve—I'm deserving of something—you know? So yeah, I'm very happy about that it. Gives you a little platform to stand on, you know? Because George, he was supposed to take me into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which he did not. And he said, "Don't worry about it, don't worry about it. I'll make sure you get in there." And I'm like, Yeah, right. I'm not there yet. So I don't know, maybe one day. But it was a lot of people that he left out and I'm like "Certainly you should not have left me out." I was very upset about it, yup. It's not my first disappointment in life, and I'm sure it won't be my last.

But you know I—I really don't care because, What's the biz gonna be? And I have recognition. People—I have history—people know what I've done. You know, so if I don't have—I got a lot of stuff I don't have on these walls. I said I was going to go and dig it out and hang it up. So, maybe I'll do that. I've gotten a lot of awards from here and there that you know—appreciation. Mhm. Yeah, so lot of write-ups. But I'm not going to worry about it because like I said, "What's the b? It's the b." And I'm going to get a lot of my stuff before I leave here, you know [laughs]. A lot of people don't sell a million until they die, I'm going to get a lot of my stuff before I leave here. Lord willing [laughs]

**BM:** So do you have any, parting thoughts? On the music biz, on your illustrious career? What you're doing now?

[00:58:54] **PL:** What I'm doing right now is putting together the Northern Soul Detroit A Go-Go that will be here October 18-23 of October, yeah, next year. And you know, The British are coming! The British are coming! [laughs] So they will all be here and what I'm doing, I'm lining up the acts that are still here. Like, Phil Dick, it's his, it's his show. And I get out talking like, well let's pray that the people lined up will still be here because, nobody's getting any younger! And seeing a lot of people start, when they leave. Like Robert Bateman, Sonny Sanders, what else was there? You know like they go in three's and four's and it's just like a bunch of them leaving at one time. And so, we're just hoping and praying that... So, that's what I'm doing and I'm also—I'm also

recording on—I still do a lot of studio work. And, but right now my focus is on my son to get his music finished and out. Yeah, but between that and trying to hook groups back together that say like The [Fabulous] Peps. There's only one that's still living and that's Joe Harris from, he's also on Undisputed Truth. And so, got two guys, the Holloway Brothers, that are going to be singing with him. Don from the Capitals that had the record "Cool Jerk" he's the only one. And just trying to put—you know as long as you have an original you can kind of put a group back together again unless you do like Ralph Pruitt, of the Fantastic Four. All of them are deceased but before Ralph died he put a group together. Because he said he wanted the Fantastic Fours music to live on. And so on the new Fantastic Four they sound really good, you know I mean not as Sweet James [Epps] but they have a definite good sounding group and the object is to keep our music alive. So I'm busy. Busy, doing what it is I love.

And see, next year I will be 70 years old. And everybody's like, "What, ok what are we going to do for your birthday? What are we going to do for your birthday?" And I said, "I want to have an elegant evening with Pat Lewis." They said, What? I said, "Oh I'm going to entertain." "Why do you want to sing on your birthday?" I said, "That's what I do." I want to put, I haven't put on a fabulous show in a long time where I would just be doing my mixture of music. My Northern Soul and some of the things that I used to do with Isaac, that I used to when I would sing. When I was doing shows here you know. He had a couple songs said I really like, like "Stranger in Paradise." The dynamics of his arrangement and opening with that song, you know. I want to entertain so that's what I'm going to do. I'll let you know. [laughs]

**BM:** Alright sounds good. Well, I want to thank you for letting me interview you.

**PL:** Oh well thank you Branden, thank you so much. Did I run my mouth enough?

**BM:** Oh you gave plenty of information

**PL:** Ok [laughs]

End of interview

# Appendix



Picture of the Twisted Wheel Club as mentioned in the interview [00:37:52]



Picture of Pat Lewis' Gold Record received for being inducted in the R&B Hall of Fame as mentioned in the interview [00:56:18]