COVER SHEET

TRANSCRIPTION NUMBER: 17 OF 17

Transcriber: Amanda Fickey, PhD, Independent Contractor Date of Interview: 2/8/2012 Duration: 1:59:07 Interviewees: Donna Lamb and Lewis Lamb Interviewer: Bob Gates Cinematographer: Sean Anderson Location: Shop, Berea, KY Sponsoring Organization: Kentucky Craft History and Education Association, Inc. Funding: LexArts, Kentucky Oral History Commission

Transcription Notes:

throughout this interview.

BG: Bob Gates
DL: Donna Lamb
LL: Lewis Lamb
SA: Sean Anderson
In some cases, words such as "um", "uh", "and", "so" and "yeah" have been excluded.
Time notations have been included at approximately 2-minute intervals.
... Indicates pause, delay in conversation, or, weak transition/no transition in themes.
The names of musical styles are capitalized throughout the transcript.
Attempts were made to verify the names of all musicians and geographical locations referenced

0:00

BG: So, we're at your house. Donna Lamb, Lewis Lamb, and this is your workshop?

DL: Yes, it is.

BG: You are daughter and father.

DL and LL: Mhm.

BG: Tell me about how you came to this area, your families; I saw the last name Lamb...

LL: Well, we were raised right here. That's the reason they named us, "Lambs," the road that goes right through there.

DL: My dad's mother came from Virginia, years and years ago. She came into this area, they did, and bought a farm, which was down on Back Creek.

LL: That's about ten miles from here down there.

DL: Yeah. So they had a little farm there, and then she had two boys, Jim and Ebb, and Ebb was his father. So he got the farm and he married a lady by the name Mary Elizabeth Miller. She was from the Lancaster area. So they had ten children. They had five boys and they had five girls. The oldest boy is still living, and the youngest, and dad is the youngest, and he has one brother living. All the rest of them are gone. So I was born and raised here, where I'm at.

BG: Right on the hill here?

DL: Yep.

BG: Were there other Lambs back farther?

DL: No. My uncle, my great uncle, dad's father's brother, he moved to Indiana, up around Madison, Indiana. Most of all the kinfolks are in that area. The ones that are down here are just dad's brother's children and nieces, nephews and that's...

LL: They bought the land that...

DL: And they bought the land that's around here because... My granddad used to live just over the hill, here at the next farm out.

BG: Ok.

DL: So my aunt and uncle, they bought the farm and they own this one across the road. It's stayed in the family.

BG: This has been a tobacco farming area?

2:37

DL: Yes.

LL: Yeah. All of them raised tobacco and things.

DL: Most all of them were tobacco farmers. Now my uncle, he's more cattle. My aunt and uncle now are more cattle than they were tobacco.

BG: Ok, and they lived down the road?

DL: Yeah.

BG: I always thought of you as living in Paint Lick, but your address says Lancaster.

DL: Right.

LL: Well, we could have gotten our mail either way. There was just about a day's difference between it.

BG: All right.

DL: Yeah, it used to be at the little creek down here. Used to be if you were on the other side of the creek you were in the Lancaster vicinity, which gave you a Lancaster phone number. But since we are over here, it gives us a Lancaster address, but a Paint Lick phone number.

BG: Ok.

DL: And there was an advantage to that because I could call Lancaster, and Richmond, and Berea and all those places and it wasn't long distance. Now if I go to the other side of the creek and call it's long distance.

LL: Yeah, it was long distance.

BG: What town is your allegiance to?

DL: Lancaster. Garrard County.

BG: That's where you think of yourself?

LL and DL: Mhm.

BG: Even though you go through Paint Lick to get here?

LL: Yeah.

BG: Ok.

DL: Yeah. It's funny because I'm eight miles from Lancaster, but only four miles from Paint Lick.

BG: Well when I talk about you I always say down in Paint Lick, as that's where you guys are from. It really doesn't matter...

LL: It doesn't matter.

DL: It doesn't matter.

BG: Ok.

DL: Most people around, everybody knows us anyway. They'll say, "Yeah, they live in that Paint Lick area down there."

BG: It's snowing outside, didn't take a whole tour of your place, but I saw you've got tractors out there that you've refurbished.

DL: Yes.

LL: Yeah.

BG: And you're working on your house?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Sounds like you guys are good with your hands.

DL: Yeah.

LL: Well, we do a lot with our hands, we sure do.

DL: Well, we learned to do a lot because we couldn't afford to have it done. So when you can't afford to have a lot of things done, you learn to do it.

LL: And this house, tell him about...

DL: And the house that we are redoing out here, that house was eventually down in a holler and so when I was small, dad took two bulldozers and him and his brother took some logs and they jacked it up and they put it on those logs and those dozers and tied the cables around it and they moved it. They moved it for a good mile and a half and put it where it is now.

5:07

BG: You mean you kept putting rollers underneath of it?

DL: No, the logs...

LL: It was made like a sled around it; we put cables around it.

DL: They kept putting logs in front of it.

BG: Just like the Egyptians?

DL and LL: Yeah.

DL: And kept pulling it and moved it.

LL: Moved it right here. Sure did. It's long ways across that holler there, I guarantee it.

DL: It's a good mile and a half to get it here.

BG: Ok, so you were used to doing things by hand?

LL: Yeah.

DL: Used to doing it the hard way.

LL: Sure did.

BG: I remember years ago interviewing you, Lewis, about being a turtle hunter too.

LL: Yep. Yeah, we've caught a million. Sure have.

BG: Why would you do that, just for recreation or ...?

DL: No, eh...

LL: We eat them.

DL: Yeah, we eat them.

LL: That's some of the best meat you'll ever eat in your life. It sure is.

DL: He says it's better than chicken. I never could get the hang of it.

BG: Really?

DL: Yeah.

BG: So you fry it up, right?

LL: Yeah. It's fixed up and...

DL: You put it on in the skillet and take you a half a Coke and pour in it. Let that boil out and the sweetness goes through. Once it goes all the way cooking you pour your barbeque sauce over it and...

LL: It's good. It sure is.

BG: Huh, making me hungry. Have you caught any lately?

LL: No, not lately I haven't. Now I've been, for the last, well this makes two years that I haven't been because I had sick spell and things.

DL: So he's got to get straightened up over that...

LL: I need to get straightened up a bit. I'll get back out and hunt them.

BG: So was two years ago when you had...

DL: A stroke.

BG: ...a small stroke?

LL: A stroke. Yeah.

BG: I remember seeing you in the hospital.

LL: I've got rest, and I'm back on my feet again. They say it's a slow goal, but it's one of the things that happens.

BG: Besides instrument makers you guys play instruments.

DL: Mhm.

7:01

BG: You've been musicians for a long time, right?

DL: Yeah. Dad started playing back, basically professionally, in 1963, and he played different things around, but then he started working with Berea College with Ethel Capps through their recreation extension office. They had a dance troop there so he got to traveling with them. Then I started with them in 1968. So in the summer time when I wasn't in school I would travel with them during the summer and then on the weekends and that sort of thing. But he would travel with them all year long to different places. Then we kept up with that until I guess in the early '90s and I sort of had a sick spell and had to quit for a while. So I decided then in '99 that I wanted to learn to build instruments because I love them so that's kind of what got me started.

BG: In 1999?

DL: Mhm.

BG: How'd you get started on it?

DL: Well, what it was, I've still got the guitar, I had a D-35 Martin which was a '68 model and I'd always wanted what they called the "Tree of Life" that went up the neck. At that time it was, very few people around that really did that work.

BG: You mean inlaying work?

DL: Yes. Inlay work.

LL: Do you want to show him?

DL: What I did was, I went down and talked with Homer Ledford and it was very expensive, very expensive, and it was money that I did not have. So anyway I kind of got to talking with him.

BG: Very expensive to do what?

DL: To do the inlay.

BG: To get him to do it?

DL: To get it hand done, yes, and to get him somebody to do it, and he was such an expert at it that I wanted him to do it, but three thousand dollars was money at that time that I did not have being in school. So anyway, I told dad there's got to be a way of doing it. I came back and went to the local library and got books on inlay. They have several books on gun stock inlays. They had it on furniture inlays and in the back they had references and one sort of stuck out more than others which was Stu Mac in Ohio and I figured maybe they've got a catalogue or could tell me where to get one and what to do. So they did. I contacted them and they told me exactly what I needed and they said they had a beginners kit that would help me get started with the book and everything, so I got the little book and read it and so I took one day and took my Martin guitar and took all the frets out of it, sat down and cut her out and put her in. So that started that part of the work. Then I decided, well there's got to be a way of building and so once you get kind of into it you find out about other companies. There is a company out in California that had the, I got the side bender from them, so I lead from one to the other of where you could get the different woods, the types of woods to use, and as you can see I've got books on all kinds of woods, the best tone woods to use, what does better for inlay, what doesn't, and so I just kept reading and reading until I got to the point that I said well, I can do it. That was my first one.

BG: What was?

DL: The guitar.

BG: That's your Martin?

DL: Yep.

BG: That's your first one you made?

DL: Yep. This is my first guitar I built.

BG: Ok.

DL: Right here.

BG: Can you hold it down a little bit further?

DL: Yeah. Anyway, that's the first one that I built. I've played it a lot and play it now. I love the sound of it. I like a guitar that doesn't have a whole lot of finish because you go back and you read and you look at all the older guitars, the older mandolins, they very seldom had much of a finish, but they have a tone that's out of this world. The more finish you put on one, the more tone you are going to kill.

LL: That works the same way with a fiddle.

DL: The same way with a fiddle. The less finish that you can put on, and a lot of them talk about using finish with epoxy glue and just hand rubbing it in enough that it covers up all of the seams and things keeps it from cracking and that's all they did.

12:25

BG: Ok, what does epoxy glue do to it?

DL: It just seals.

LL: Seals...

DL: Seals the grains of the wood to keep it from splitting.

BG: But I've heard people talk about instruments breathing, does that cut off your wood from breathing?

DL: Nope, it doesn't. All it does is it holds it a little bit to keep the top from cracking is all it does and it will let it breathe. The wood will give and they sound great.

BG: So the first thing, is that the Tree of Life that you were talking about?

DL: Yes.

BG: What is that? What do you mean the Tree of Life?

DL: The Tree of Life means, I wish I had my other one up here I could show you more, which I did this one a little different than the original, and the original starts with just a round dot and that starts the beginning of life. It goes, the way you look at it, it starts at the bottom, it goes through when you are a baby, it goes through adolescence, through your childhood, young adult, I mean it's more thick through here and as it comes up through the neck it sort of thins out as life goes along. Then it stops right here, and that's the end of life. So you read the life by the tree and the vine as it goes up and that's the reason they call it the Tree of Life.

BG: Where did you find out about that, in books?

DL: I've got, like I say there are books that explain what each thing is...

BG: You said you were connected to the Tree of Life early on, right, before you started reading the books?

DL: Right. I like it because it had a lot of delicate inlay. It was, you know, what it did, down in this part where you play, even up here, your hand is on it yet this is all open so you can see the inlay real good and that's what the Tree of Life does, it's filled in down here, but then it thins out up here so you don't pay as much attention to it because of the hand, but it gives it a full view in here.

BG: Ok. So are other guitarists using that on their guitars?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Ok, so you'd seen that on other guitars and you wanted to do that. You said you wanted to do that to your D what?

DL: D-35.

BG: D-35, is that the same one you, your first guitar that you got?

DL: Yes.

BG: Can you tell the story real quick about how you...?

DL: How I got the guitar?

BG: Yeah.

DL: Well when I first wanted to start to play music, you know, dad played in different groups around and they would always come here to practice because most of them lived in town. Living in a neighborhood and playing music and kids running and playing late at night doesn't work. So, not to upset anybody because they've got jobs and they have to be in early, so we would always practice, they would here, and so he'd always tell us now girls run outside and play you've got plenty to do. So while they'd be playing I'd be in the center of the circle because if you always notice a group of musicians they stand in a circle when they are singing around a mic or whatever. So I told them, I'd always get in that center of that circle and I'd always aggravate daddy and he'd say, "What do you want?" I like that. I want one of those. Well, you are too little, run along. So anyway, as time went on...

BG: How old were you when you were in the center of the circle?

16:08

DL: I guess I was eight...

BG: Ok.

DL: ...at the time. Eight or nine years old.

LL: Just about eight years old I'd say.

DL: Yeah, so anyway he told me, well, maybe someday. He kept saying that for a long time. So one day I went to him and I told him, I said, "I'd like to learn to play something." And he told me, "Well, you're old enough to know what you want to do." I told him I wanted to learn to play guitar. And he told me, "Well," he said, "I'll make a deal with you." I said, "Well, what's that?" He said, "If you will help me strip my tobacco crop and get it on the market, I will take the money and we will get you a guitar." Well, the guitar was supposed to have been my Christmas present, but the object is that around Thanksgiving when the weather got right like it is out today that we could get it booked down...

BG: When it's nice and moist?

LL: Yeah, it will make it supple.

DL: Yeah, it's got to be real soft.

BG: Makes the tobacco soft...

DL: Yeah, so you can handle it, work with it, because then we didn't bail tobacco, we had to hand tie it. So what we did was, we put twelve or fourteen hands to the stick and that's the way we would do, and press it. So anyway, when we got done we got it took off and to the market.

BG: Were you good at tying hands?

DL: Yeah, yeah, I could do that.

BG: That's pretty artistic too, isn't it?

DL: You hold your hand here and you start with a leaf here and you pull it tight and you roll it all the way around until you get it around, separate the leaf and pull it through. Then you turn it opposite of where you pulled it through, split it, and put it on the stick. So we did that, we got it to the market and the guy told us, "I won't know what the next sale is until the sale today." So it came back, when we got home, we had taken it to Lexington. At that time it was on Virginia Avenue, Tobacco Warehouse is where it was, and they said it wasn't going to sell until after the first of the year, so that meant I didn't get the guitar. Anyway, dad said, "Don't worry about it. When it comes in we'll go." So it sold that morning. We came back through by the bank and he put the check in, and went to Curriers...

BG: After Christmas?

DL: Yeah. So we went to Curriers Music World.

BG: In Richmond?

DL: In Richmond, and Mr. Currier had gotten in three Martin guitars. He had gotten in an 18, a 28, and a 35 is what he got.

BG: Those are model numbers?

DL: Yeah, they were the model numbers. So I liked the 35. Anyway, dad bought that guitar for me that day. So we brought it back and he told me, "Back there lays my whole years work. There's one thing I'm going to tell you. I want you going to school to get your education that's the most important thing you can do. When you come in I want your homework done, your chores done, then we'll have guitar practice till bedtime." And he said another thing, "If you don't learn to play that guitar," he said, "I'll make you a necktie out of it and you'll wear it." So that's the story of the guitar, and I've had it around my neck ever since.

LL: And the first day she played for us...

DL: The first dance I played for was the Spring Festival at Berea College. That was on May 8th, 1968.

BG: And you played that guitar?

DL: I played that guitar.

BG: And you were ready for it? I mean, he was teaching you pretty well every day?

DL: Yeah.

BG: So you would actually take lessons from your dad?

DL: Yeah, because he played guitar before he started fiddle is what he did.

LL: I could play the note up to the fourth...

DL: What he did was, the first song I ever learned to really follow on the guitar was an old Pat Boone number called "Writing Love Letters In the Sand."

BG: Oh yeah.

DL: And what he'd do, he'd take the fiddle and he'd play it, "On a day like today we would pass," and then he'd make me hunt that next chord and he would hold that one note until I heard if it sounded like it went to C or if it went to D, or was it G, or whatever it was. That's how he taught me to hear the tune and to hear how the note changed.

BG: So he didn't give you a set of notes to play, you had to figure them out?

DL: I had to figure them out.

BG: You knew how to play the chords, but you didn't know how they went in the song?

DL: I didn't know how they went in the song. So he would hold that one chord until he would make me hear whether it sounded like that chord. He'd say, "Now honey, until you hear it sound exactly the same way this sounds," and that's how he taught me to play.

LL: Tell him about the...

DL: So he told me, he said, he always had this little thing that he always did and it was called, I'll get this up here and show you what I did, he said there were a few little things, he said, "If we ever get outside somewhere, and you really don't know the chord that it's in, here's what I'll do," he said, "It's plow handle G, it's catty corned C, eagle claw D, flat foot E, and long handle A" [demonstrates on guitar]. So if he ever said, "plow handle, catty corned, eagle claw," I knew it was C, D, and G. So if he only said, "Long handle, flat foot"...

LL: And the first dance we played for at Berea College we used them up there...

DL: And the first dance that we played for them up there, we were there that night and it was "Old Joe Clark" is what it was. He said, "This is going to be in long handle." Then I knew where it went. He said it would be long handle, eagle claw, flat foot, and I knew, so the musicians behind me said, "What did he just say?" The other said, "I don't know, he said long handle, eagle claw, and flat foot." He said, "I guess that's what they are going to do out there on the floor.

LL: That's been a long time ago...

DL: So that's the way that we communicated until I learned how so he didn't have to tell me, "Now this is in the key of A, D, and E."

BG: Why was that easier to remember a lot, those different words?

LL: It was more about making what I was telling her...

DL: But it was always so much easier for me catch on that way.

BG: Can you still do that that way?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Nobody else knows what you are talking about.

DL: No. Nobody knows exactly what we are talking about.

BG: So that first Martin guitar, what did you say you paid for it?

23:10

DL: Um, what was it daddy, you gave eight hundred, was it eight hundred dollars?

LL: I believe it was something like that.

DL: I think it was **[eight hundred dollars]** that he gave for that guitar.

BG: Eight hundred. That was pretty high then, wasn't it?

DL: It was.

BG: What was a lot of your money.

DL: It was all of it. Because really he got sixteen hundred dollars out of his tobacco crop and by the time that he paid for the guitar and he paid for the case and all that stuff it came out to something over twelve hundred dollars so he had about three hundred dollars left. Is what he had left, and by the time that he paid his taxes he did haven't anything left.

BG: Was that a good investment, Lewis?

DL: Yeah.

LL: Yeah. She wanted it and that's the way it went.

DL: It was a good investment.

BG: Were you married? Did you have a wife then?

LL: Did you still have a wife at that time?

DL: No.

LL: No.

BG: You were kind of raising your daughter?

DL and LL: Yeah.

BG: I don't know if I'd do that for my daughter. Just trying to keep her happy, huh?

DL: Yeah.

LL: Well, just whatever is here belongs to her and that's it.

DL: We try to pass it on and you know I enjoy music a lot. I enjoy fooling with the instruments and stuff.

BG: I brought that guitar up because I like the story, but the idea that you would take a guitar, because you told me it was worth like forty thousand now?

DL: Yeah, well the second one that he bought me was a '59 D-41, my second guitar.

BG: Ok.

DL: Anyway, he bought that from a second or third cousin of his and his daughter bought it for him for his birthday is how he got it and I had saw that guitar way before I even started playing and I told daddy, "Someday I'd like to have that." And it just so happened it wasn't, I know it wasn't what, two years after I bought the one he got me, the D-35 in '68 until this one came available and he was asking the same

price for it that I paid for the D-35 and dad said, "We're going to take it." So we went and bought it that night and I just put my, I've played the D-35 very little since.

BG: What's the different between the two?

DL: The D-41 is basically a fancy D-28, the difference in them is, I can show you with this one... The D-28 is like this one that has the V in the back of the neck here. The D-35 does not. It's just smooth. The D-35 has a three piece back, where the D-28 only has a two-piece. So you've got three different kinds of wood that's in the back of the D-35 and that's what sets it different from any of the other guitars.

BG: So it's an improvement to have two rather than three, and everything you've mentioned is a step-up I guess in quality.

DL: Mhm, in quality.

BG: Does it help the sound any?

DL: Yeah, I think the D-41 has got more of a bolder sound, more of a bass-y tone sound than the D-35 does. The D-35 has more of the tin-y sound; it doesn't really have a deep bass tone.

BG: So you didn't trade in the D-31, or D-35, you kept it?

DL: I kept them. Yes.

BG: Which one did you put the...?

DL: The D-35.

BG: That's the one you put the thing on.

DL: Yes. The D-41 has the block inlays that are original, so that guitar is totally original. I mean, nothings been changed to it.

LL: These came out and then they changed them later on, the blocks there...

DL: Yeah, they started making the D-41 later on. The original D-41 that came out started with the block that started here with the octagons was at the third fret. Now they've started making them and putting them at the first.

BG: Ok.

DL: So the older they, they start from here down, but not here. The newer ones start here. But yeah, they've got, to me they've got a bolder, deeper bass tone. I've noticed in using the one I've got on a lot of our recordings that they want to put a towel on the inside of it because the bass is so deep that their machines go off of... one guy said, "My machine won't take it because the bass is too deep on it." And we did, one album we did was a sixteen-track album in Lexington and he told us over there, he said, "My machine just won't let the bass go as deep as that bass is going to go."

BG: So you have to put a towel inside of it?

DL: He wanted to and I said, "Well, instead of doing that I will just change guitars." So I had my D-35, so I changed it and when I did it set the machine more normal.

BG: I guess what I was getting at is you took a guitar that meant a lot to you and did your first inlay on it. Was that pretty scary?

DL: It was, but you know I wanted to get into doing some of this and I figured if I can't do it on my own instrument, can I do it on somebody else's? And so I figured I would just take my own Martin guitar and do it. I figured well, if anything happens to it all I have to do is pull the finger board off and put a new one on, so it's no problem. But it turned out great. I re-fretted it back. I had no problem with it, re-set it back, and it's good.

BG: I guess I have a little problem understanding how you can learn all this from books and experiment with it just from reading about it. Did anybody kind of take you aside and show you any of this? Homer?

DL: No.

LL: There's nobody. She did it herself.

DL: Nobody would show you.

30:02

BG: And you didn't really have videos to look at, right?

DL: No.

BG: So you are just reading a book trying to figure out. Did the books all say the same things?

DL: Yes. I've got the little book right there if you'd like to, it's a very thin little book. It's put out by, I think his name is James Patterson, and it's very simple. It tells you how to make your jigs, everything that you'd need. It just lines it out step by step by step exactly how it does. Exactly how to measure for the depth of the pearl. Everything.

LL: Did you show him that on there, on the book?

DL: No, right up there it is. See that green book right there?

LL: Which one is that?

DL: Right there. It's in that plastic bag of books, dad. See that plastic bag right there?

LL: Here?

DL: No, see the plastic bag, right beside that, in the plastic bag.

LL: Right here.

DL: Yeah. Just give me that.

BG: Why do you keep it in a plastic bag, because it's important to you?

DL: No, it just, when it came it was in the bag and I just...

LL: She's always kept it, that right there, that's what she's done see...

DL: It's a little beginner book and it just lays everything out. Shows you how to cut it. What you need to use. It's very simple.

BG: Would you say that was your started and then you learned from experimentation because it sounds like, from what we talked about earlier you kind of see images of what you want to do and you practice with different things.

DL: You do.

BG: Did you find things that you would have changed in the book from what they said?

DL: I saw a few things I would have changed. Not many. There's you know, if you're beginning, they don't need to put in there that you can take and cut down different blades to make your own pearl inlay that goes around the edge of that because you know, if you are a beginner you're not to that step yet. That should be in the next step. All they need to say is, "Well, you know, there are different companies that supplies this already cut," and list it out like that, that you can contact, but I noticed in here he did an excellent job with the first part until it comes to the end and then he's saying you take a washer and you grind it down and you put a point on it and set this at so much to cut this pearl inlay around the edge, well see, you're not ready for that point yet. To me that's jumping the fence before you are ready to do it.

BG: And he did that at the end of the book?

DL: Yeah.

BG: So it was kind of like he was finishing the book and wanted to tell you a little bit more...

DL: A little bit more than you needed.

BG: Than you needed, but you figured it out by trial and error that's it's different.

DL: It's different.

BG: So if you were teaching somebody you would do it differently.

DL: If I were teaching somebody I would go the easy route. I'd say, "Here's how we are going to start. Now what we need to do is, if you want to put a line around we need to order it already pre-cut until you learn to cut, until we get to that point." And what I'm saying is to hand cut the design, but not this around the edge because if you aren't used to using machines, you can lose a finger mighty quick and one little slip and your done.

LL: And you cut into that...

DL: And I noticed with that that you would have had to have been very careful with the way that he had that set-up. If you weren't used to using a lot of different saws.

BG: Ok. So that was part of learning the different skills that you needed to learn more.

DL: You needed to learn more.

BG: What did you learn from your dad?

DL: My dad, he taught, the way he told me, he said, "When you build your instrument, build it for the tone." He said, "The thinner that you get an instrument, the better the tone you've got," and that's true because you take, he's got a couple or three fiddles, this one plus two more, and you barely touch that top at all and top will give right now. You could run your thumb all the way through it. It's amazing that you've got that much pressure on the body of that that it don't cave in. But, we've always, and he's always done, he told, he said, the way he picks a fiddle, and tells whether it is a good one or not, he says, "Put it under your chin. Put a little bit of space between your teeth. You pull across the bass of that, and if that jars your lower chaw until your teeth come together, you've got a good fiddle." But, he said if you don't, and it pulls it across and it doesn't do anything, walk away from it.

BG: Did you say that?

LL: Yeah.

BG: Ok.

LL: Yes sir.

BG: Where'd you learn that?

LL: Fooling with those fiddles. Yeah.

DL: You learn as you go along...

LL: You learn as you go along with it.

DL: ...and listening to the tones. You can take a lot of fiddles or guitars and you can tell just as soon as you put them in front of the mic exactly what they are. You could cover the peg heads up, see nothing but the body, take pick guards off until they all looked the same, break down across them and I guarantee you could pick a Martin from anything else. You could do the same thing with fiddles because a good fiddle will have a bright tone that you can stand three, four, five feet away from that mic and it will pick it up. It will come right over the rest of it and it will pick it up. Ok, there are some you could take the fiddle and put it in the mic and you still can't hear it because the wood is too thick.

BG: That's the main variable that the wood is too thick?

DL: That's the main variable point.

LL: Yeah.

BG: Doesn't matter what kind of wood it is...?

DL: Doesn't matter. As long as it's, because you are getting your sound out of the top and it is the same way with the guitar, you don't get out of the side, you don't get it out of the back, it comes out of the top.

BG: It's a vibration of the top?

DL: It's the vibration of the top.

LL: Right.

BG: So Lewis, you were making instruments before she was around then I guess, right? Will you tell us a little bit...?

LL: Yeah, I made a few of them.

BG: How'd you get started on it? How'd you get started making instruments?

LL: Well, I just, I got to fool with the fiddles and things like that and that's how I kind of got started, with the fiddles and things like that, the sound of them and that.

BG: Did somebody show you?

DL: He made a plywood bass one time. Wasn't it?

LL: Yeah, I made the bass.

BG: A plywood bass guitar?

LL: Yeah.

DL: No, it was an upright.

LL: An upright.

DL: It was a regular stand-up, upright bass and he and his brother made it out of plywood.

LL: Well, the chicken house out there didn't have much room, but that's what we built the base out of. We sure did. Yep.

BG: What made you do that?

LL: Well, we needed one. We were all of us kind of playing a little bit of music together and we needed a bass player... Tussy Boy could play a little bit on one. He would play it and his brother would play the guitar and I would play the fiddle and my brother would play the banjo. Made us a little band together and we needed a bass to go in it and that's what we built.

BG: So what did a plywood bass sound like?

LL: Well, it was just enough to say you were playing a bass and that was about it.

BG: I mean, was it like quarter inch plywood?

LL: Yeah. Regular plywood is what it was.

BG: And you had to sand it down?

LL: No, we just made the whole thing around out of the quarter inch plywood, say like something like this right here, right around and put it together.

BG: Where is it together.

DL: I don't know. I wish I had it.

LL: I couldn't tell you where it went to this day and time.

DL: My uncle said when they made the sides that come down on it, he said they put strips in there and kind of blocked, well, kind of blocked it like they did my mold areas, and then took it and sanded it, took a sander and sanded it off and made it that way.

BG: And you could see the blocks in it?

DL: Yeah.

LL: You could see the blocks in it. Yeah.

DL: Yeah, he talked about that quite a bit before he passed away, about building that.

BG: How old were you when you built that?

LL: Well, I'd say I was about forty, I was forty years old.

DL: No, you wouldn't have been that old, because I wasn't even born then. I'd say you were in your late twenties, early thirties. That would be about it I'd say.

BG: So you made instruments out of necessity because you needed them?

LL: Yeah.

BG: Did you make anymore like that?

LL: No. Well, I made the fiddle and I never could get any sound out of it.

BG: Out of plywood?

DL: Yeah.

LL: Yeah plywood, yeah.

DL: And then there was one time he had started a guitar. He had the body of it done and he liked the back and he had to, I can remember when I was little, we had a little house that sat down at the back and he used that as a little workshop, and he made a guitar and he had a wood burner tool and he burned scenes in it, Western scenes. I wish I had that today, but I don't know whatever happened to it.

BG: Did you build that fiddle there?

DL: No.

LL: No, not this one.

DL: That fiddle was owned by a gentleman in Harrodsburg and he gave it to, he got a hold of it and he told dad, "I've got something I want to give you," and so he gave dad that fiddle and he's played it ever since. And like they say, I like to decorate everything, so I decorated it too.

BG: Oh yeah, you've got, what's the symbol on the fret board?

DL: The fret board?

BG: Yeah.

DL: Kind of like a wheat pattern.

BG: A wheat pattern.

DL: Yeah. Seems like everything that I see I kind of like to decorate it a little bit. I don't know why, but I've always, I just, the fancier I like it.

BG: Ok. So are you more of the instrument maker, or does he help you?

DL: He helps me.

LL: I help her out.

DL: Inlay is what I do, but in the guitar and stuff like that it usually takes two by bending the sides and getting the molds in...

LL: Things like that.

DL: ...and getting clamps on, as you put the glue in to keep the glue from drying too quick, so it takes two people to get it, one on one end, one on the other to get them lined up. So, that's kind of what we do. We work together at it. Everything we build we both have a hand in it. Like the mandolin here that we finished, while I was doing some work on the outside of this guitar he put the bindings and glued the fret board down.

BG: Can you hold that up for us?

DL: Sure. This one.

BG: That's one you recently finished?

DL: Yes.

BG: And you said the guy who bought it...

DL: Yeah, he gets it Monday. His name is Mr. Bart Davidson. He and his wife, Debbie, I give them her guitar lessons.

LL: He's from over at...

DL: And I give him mandolin lessons. Anyway, she works in the Madison County Library and he's geology, works in the office at UK. So, he had been wanting a hand made mandolin for a long time and I told him I had this one so he wanted this one and I finished it.

BG: And you said that's about the fifth one you've done?

DL: Yeah. I've done, let's see, one of my mandolins when to North Carolina. I've sent one to Atlanta. I've got one that went to, was it Arkansas, and then this one here. It is staying here because the guy lives in Richmond that gets this one. Then I want to finish that one there and that one goes for a young lady in Pennsylvania who is buying if for her fiancé. They are getting married in June and that is going to be his wedding gift.

BG: Oh, so you've got to get that one looking like that. Can we show that one real quick?

DL: Sure.

BG: Lewis can you hold that up? Why don't you hold that one too just to see the comparison between the two... Hold it up next to her.

DL: Here, let me have it. Yeah, here...

BG: So that's what that one looked like a year ago, or a couple of years ago?

DL: Yeah.

LL: See...

DL: So you can see...

LL: This will all have to be cut out of here [points to section of mandolin].

44:58

DL: As you notice, if you look at them, see you gotta bring them down; see how much thinner, so see, quite a bit of work that I'm saying has to come down in order to thin it out.

BG: Now what are those white pieces on the...

DL: The edge?

BG: I see you have it on the bottom there too...

DL: These are what they call corner blocks and what they are is, see, when you joint these sides together, there is a wood block in here, but they only come up so far, so what they do is, this is made out of bone, these corner blocks are made out of bone, and so what it does, all it does is it finishes it out. If you didn't you'd have to cut these points all the way back.

LL: Yeah.

DL: Is basically what it would be.

BG: Would it be too thin?

DL: Yeah. And a lot of people... I usually put bone in mine. Some like to put Rosewood. You can use different kinds of woods to do this. Some use Ebony; it just depends on what you would like to put in the corners. This mandolin here will have tortoise binding on it where this has the white, this one will have a tortoise, which is a brown binging color on it.

BG: So, when you work on these instruments with somebody, you have an idea of how it should look, but you also take into consideration what they want. Tell me about that.

DL: Basically, when they want inlay done, I get them and we go through like I say, I've got all kinds of different pattern books and different things, and so what I do is, I lay them out and they choose. They say, "Well, I would like to have part of this and this. Can you put them together to make what I need."? And I tell them yeah, because it's no problem to mix and to match.

LL: That was that guitar you fixed for that [inaudible] over there.

DL: Yeah, so, you know, it's no problem to do that so what I do is, I take it and whatever they want, if they pick it out, that's exactly what I put in. If they say, "I want it out of nothing but strictly pearl, I don't want any abalone on it," that's what I go with. Ok, they'll say, I want all abalone, but I don't want any pearl," that's what I go with. And they'll say, "Well, I'd like a mixture of both," so it depends on what they want.

BG: Do you do a drawing so they can see what it will look like on it?

DL: I do the drawing and set it down and just like this here, this fret board is a fret board, the pattern in this is one that was made up because all he wanted was a vine with a very little bit of leaves. So I told him I said, "Well, we can do that," but I said, "When we get to the top, we need to turn it off or it's going to continue on up the peg head in order to make it look right." So what I did was, I sat down, I made the drawing, I made, what I usually do is make the fret board is what I do, I make a picture of the fret board. Then I make the pattern they want, I sit down, take my time, and I draw that pattern in. Then I say, "I've got the pattern ready if you want to come and look at it or I can meet you somewhere and you look at it, this is what you want, this is what we'll go with, if not we can change it." So they'll come and they'll say, "That's exactly what I want," or, "No, that's not quite, I'd like to have it more this way." So we keep working until we get what they want and then they finalize it and it goes in.

[Interruption – battery replacement]

49:00

BG: If you could bring that mandolin back out I still want to ask you a few more questions.

DL: Ok.

BG: As an artist, do you feel like you're an artist?

DL: No, not really.

LL: [Because you can always learn it different. – uncertain of transcription]

DL: You know, in dealing with things, in art work, you see a vision and you kind of get an idea of what you want that to look like, and I find in doing inlay work that anytime I go somewhere and you look at any old building you'll see all these same fancy curves and curls that have been put in concrete that you are going to find that's in the patterns of these inlays so, you know, I don't take myself as an artist, but I guess I've got the vision of an artist even though my canvas is the instrument I guess you might say, and my brush is the saw. So I guess in that aspect I guess I could say probably.

BG: I see an artist as someone who communicates something inside through what they do. It seems like that's what you are doing, right?

DL: Yes.

BG: You see a vision of what you want to do. You see it from around you, right?

DL: Yes.

LL: It's like this fiddle here that she drew up see. It would be the same thing as that right there. Vision.

BG: Yeah, and we are going to get to that a little later. We will talk about that whole story that you are putting on there. So you, does that come in conflict like with this guy you are working with to build this,

when he asks for something and you don't feel like you like it, do you have to compromise with him or fight with him about it?

DL: No, really what I do, it's what they like. I go with the person. If it suits them, it suits me.

BG: But do you stop and say sometimes, "Well, if you do that," well, you already gave me an example of how you said... **[unable to discern over LL]**

LL: It would be like this here, Donna.

DL: No, we're talking about the inlay.

LL: Oh, sorry.

DL: You know, like here, I told him, you know, he wanted to come down into here, and you know I told him, "It's no problem, but you don't have a whole lot of room between those frets that you can really work with," and it really gets, I told him to really make it look better is to let it come up because it's the same way we were talking before, you're going to be playing here.

BG: Yeah.

DL: So, the more you play here and that pick hits that it's gonna dig that out. So you want to stop it at a certain point so like I say you are getting the full view of it in the center of the instrument and that's kind of how we do.

BG: That's kind of the beauty of it is how it looks when you are playing it too.

DL: Absolutely.

BG: it's not just how it looks sitting there.

DL: No, it's how it looks while you are up there and your hands are on it, you know, to where they can see almost to where it starts to where it ends and it's going to be, see, right in here where you play you can see where it starts, but of course part of it is going to be up here, but then when you take your hand away, and you are standing there with it around your neck and you are doing this they can see the rest of it.

BG: And do you feel like the audience is looking at that?

DL: I think they do. I know a lot of times playing my guitars I've had people come up and say, "You know, I love that guitar, what you've got on the neck of that, did you do that? Who did this?" I love that. It just, it's an eye catcher to me.

BG: Yeah, sure, so it's not, you don't just say, "I'm going to fill this neck up with stuff, you figure out how it's going to look...

LL: How it's going to look. That's exactly right.

DL: What you want to do is, you want to put enough on it that it looks neat, but not over do it until we say it looks gaudy. You know what I mean?

BG: How do you know the difference?

53:33

DL: Well, it gets too full until you can't make heads or tails out of what's going on.

BG: And you as the artist figures out where that is.

DL: Right.

BG: And so, you have to council these people when you are working with them gently...

LL: Gently... Up and down this here, see [points to inlay on fret board].

DL: See like in here, because see I told him I said, you know, he wanted it to come on and I told him I said "Well **[skip in tape]** it looked like it ran under the truss rod cover and came up here and bloomed out." So, that kind of adds to it. It doesn't really take away from down in here. All this does is show that what is at the end of this vine.

BG: Ok. That's the cosmetic beauty of that. Did he also pick out the color of it or did you...?

DL: Yeah. Yes, he picked the color. He picked everything. He picked the color, whether he wanted Rosewood, Ebony, he picked down to the keys, the color of the keys, everything.

BG: What if he told you he wanted a thicker top and you knew it wouldn't sound good with a thicker top? Would you talk him out of that?

DL: Well, what it was, within this mandolin itself I already had it that partially...

BG: Ok, so you had it under control.

DL: Yes, I already had that under control.

BG: You knew what the tone was going to sound like.

DL: Yes.

BG: Ok.

DL: And when you get ready, before you put any of this stuff on, you take and hold it up and you hit the tone of the wood and it's going to tell you whether it's going to have a deep tone or if it's going to have a tin-y tone.

BG: That's with the strings on it you have to do that?

DL: Mhm. Well, it's with the strings off. That's what they call "toning it."

BG: You can't do it to that right now can you?

DL: Not right now, no.

BG: You gotta...

DL: When you thin it down you do that and it will have, you'll hear it, as you take wood off you'll hear the tone change.

BG: And you must have learned that from your dad, right?

DL: Yes.

BG: Because, you can't learn that from a book.

DL: No. That's the reason he said when picking a fiddle, you know, leave the teeth partially just close enough that when that fiddle vibrates your teeth will chatter. That's the reason he always picks a fiddle like that.

BG: What if you've got dental work? Still works?

DL: Still works. Especially if you've got dentures. Still works.

LL: You'll learn. You learn how.

DL: But now, that's how he's always he's picked his fiddle is that way.

BG: Yeah. So, you know, you've got your name on there, "The Lamb" right? Is that what you are putting on your instruments now?

DL: Yep.

BG: The Lamb, or Lamb?

DL: Yeah, it is kind of what we go by. This is what the gentleman wanted on this one, but usually I put the L and D.

BG: L and D?

DL: Lewis and Donna.

BG: Oh ok, you do? L with an "and" and a D?

DL: Mhm, just initials.

BG: So **he** wanted that. Either way, it's got your name on it, right?

LL and DL: Mhm.

BG: So does that factor into, would you ever put an instrument out there that you didn't feel good about because it's got your name on it?

57:07

DL: No. Everything I do I want it to be right or it's not going. It's going to stay here, and when you go into as much work as you do on instruments or inlay you want everything to be perfect because one slip-up and it's not good and so I always try to make it, every instrument that I've done, that we've tried to do that and follow that pattern because I don't want it out there if it's not right.

BG: It's gonna sound good to you.

DL: Yes. It's got to sound good to me.

BG: Have you ever had an instrument where you had it almost done and it didn't sound right?

DL: Yeah.

BG: What'd you do with it?

DL: I would take it and pull everything back off it, strip it back down and...

LL: Redo it.

DL: Take the top back off, I've done it, and go back in and redo the braces and everything in the inside.

BG: Can you tell me a particular time you actually did that?

DL: Yeah, I had a, it was my third guitar that I had built and, what had happened was, I went in and the guy that wanted the guitar was rushing me about it you know, and it usually takes, I usually like to take up to three months, three to six months in order to build one, because he wanted all the fancy work on it. I mean, every inch of that neck he didn't want no fret board showing. Everything had to be inlay, and I mean it was. Every piece of it was.

BG: He liked it though?

DL: He loved it, that's what he picked and for me I would not have.

BG: But you kind of lost that battle with him.

DL: Yeah, so anyway, he wanted it all in pearl. I told him, I said, "That will be fine." He wanted a steer's head up here, you know, the Texas long horn, so I did that. Everything he asked for he wanted it black and white. So he wanted black binding. He wanted the white mother pearl of trim like I've got the abalone on this one all over, I mean we did it all and he kept rushing and rushing so he was over here that day and I was setting the neck in and, "When is my guitar going to be ready? I want my guitar." I

told him I said, "Well it's taking time." The fret board was done, everything was done and the neck got crooked, so when I went to set the fret board on it wouldn't work it just, you know, after I got it all ready set-up and everything and it ready to go into the finish everything, it wasn't right. And I though you know, this isn't right. So what I did was, dad and I sat down, we pulled the fret board back out, heated it up, pulled the neck and everything back out, redid all the bracings and joints and everything and set it back in and redid it that way and when he came and got it, it was perfect. So I saw him here a while back and I asked him, "Have you still got the guitar?" He said, "I wouldn't take nothing for that guitar." So he plays it all the time.

LL: A lot of times that heat...

DL: Yeah, another thing he did do is, he had fixed a case in his house and he had a stand that he could hang it in and he locked it and he would keep a light on. Well the heat built up and you know what happen it pulled and...

LL: It warped it.

DL: It warped the top.

LL: One reason we had to go back and take it apart.

DL: So he came back and he said, "I did a bad thing," and when I looked at it I said, "What'd you do, put it under heat didn't you?" He said, "Yep." So, I had to go in and pull it all back and take the neck back out, pull the top back off, everything I had done, finish, the whole nine yards, put a whole new top, reset everything back, and put it back.

1:01:34 – End Track 1

0:00 – Begin Track 2

BG: Ok, so I was trying to get at kind of the aesthetics of what makes a good instrument for you and it sounds like a thin top, very good sound that you can test different ways...

DL: Right, different ways of...

LL: Finishing it out too...

DL: Really, putting the finish on it is making sure you don't get too much of a finish on them. Also, because, if you look at a lot of your older instruments they had very little finish on them. Very little.

BG: Does the finish wear off after a while? So you have to redo it?

DL: No, most of the time you don't because you've got enough of a, where you've handled it and stuff like that over the years that a finish wouldn't even go back on it unless you really sanded it all the way down.

BG: It's got grease from your hands and stuff?

LL: Yeah.

DL: Grease and stuff from your hands you know where you've handled it where it's down to the bare wood so a lot of people don't even refinish them anymore.

BG: I was looking at Lewis' fiddle there. There is a worn spot there it looks like.

DL: Yeah.

BG: So, people who own instruments don't worry about that after a while, right?

LL and DL: No.

DL: No they don't. Basically, as long as it doesn't get busted or anything like that they really don't do a whole lot about the finish because a lot of the varnishes and the different finishes they used years ago they don't even use today. You can't even get them. So even trying to match the colors, you can't because they have aged over the years and you go in and you try to match that and you're not going to because it's just not going to do it, so you are better off just to leave it and let it go and play it like it is.

BG: And be proud of it?

DL: And be proud of it because all it does is it shows it's got battle scars and that it's been used, it's not just been laid around and kept in excellent condition and that's basically what you do.

BG: There is a guy, a company in Winchester that makes electric guitars, new ones, but they have a whole line of them they take out in the back yard and hit against trees to make them look old and do things like that with it so people are into that too aren't they?

DL and LL: Yeah.

LL: A lot of them in that.

DL: See to give it that, they want to give it that antique look.

BG: You as a musician, don't you see through that when you see a musician who would have bought something like that versus one that he has actually worn in?

DL: Yeah, because you can tell. You know, where you fool with instruments and stuff like that all the time, you can tell whether that instrument is old or whether that instrument is new just by looking at the finish on it and you can take any of them, you could take any of the say, the mandolins today. Ok, you got back and you look at one that was made back in 1924 versus 2012 model. There's as big a different as daylight and dark. They've got hardly no finish on them because they didn't use it and I mean they're rough. They are just rough.

BG: The older ones?

DL: Yes. So, that's what to me gives them their tone.

BG: I was going to ask you that. Is it true that playing something more and more gives it an age or are those two different things?

DL: Yeah. It's different things. Playing it, its different weather conditions, different atmospheres where it is, it does, you know, here at home our instruments kept in my house. I don't have air conditioning in the summertime, so they go through the heat as I do. They go through the cold and the heat as I do, so basically they change when I change. You know, it's not like they are in air conditioning all day and then you are going to play a show tonight outside. That guitar is, or fiddle or whatever you are playing, you cannot keep it in tune because the wood is set to that cold nature and then it hits that hot all at once and everything just drops. It just gives. So it's better that you don't have them in basically where it's air conditioned all the time. It's better that if you have them in a room, proper humidity is good, and basically to me that's all that needs to be done.

BG: Proper humidity, but the temperature going up and down is...

DL: Is harder on them than leaving them in just one strict temperature all the time.

BG: Ok, but you're saying that, just like you, your instruments go through different temperature changes. Is that making those instruments more flexible?

DL: Yes.

BG: Is that what you are saying?

DL: It's letting that wood breathe. It's letting it do what it needs to do.

BG: Slowly, just like nature.

DL: Absolutely because I don't know if you've noticed a lot, sometimes you pick up a guitar and any instrument and it looks like the finish on it has cracked like it shattered. Ok, now what causes that is when you've got that guitar and it's cold, very cold, say in air conditioned, say you keep it at fifty to sixty degrees during the day in the summer in the house. Ok. Say you are going to go outside and sit on the porch and take your guitar and play. That guitar does not have time to change. That guitar is still cold. So that finish on that guitar has shrunk, then when it hits that heat, it's got to expand real quick.

LL: It will crack it.

DL: That's what cracks that finish, just like it's glass breaking is basically what it does.

BG: It's the quick change...

DL: It's the quick change of the temperature.

BG: So if it was just normal changes...

DL: If you took it out, left it in the case and gradually let it warm up, just don't open it, just let the case and all warm up it won't do that, but if you just take it right out of a cold car into a hot house open it up, it will do, it will just shatter. It's almost like glass breaking, that's basically what it does.

7:02

BG: So musicians who had their guitars in the back of their car driving for a couple of hours on a cold day like this and it's cold and they get to a place where they are going to play, they should let their instruments warm up slowly?

LL: Exactly right. Yes.

DL: They should let their instruments gradually warm up and that way when they take them out, that guitar or fiddle or whatever...

BG: So say they went to the Center for the Arts in Louisville where they are going to play a concert and they are going into a really warm environment, how would they control that?

DL: Just get it out of the car as soon as they walk in. Take it with them as soon as they walk in ok?

LL: Yeah.

DL: Say, with an instrument it doesn't take long for that case to start warming when it gets in there and you know, most of the time you'll have them come in, they'll bring instruments in or they are going to change clothes or whatever ok, bring it in when you come. Take it to where you are going to be.

BG: Keep it in the case?

DL: Keep it in the case.

BG: With it closed.

DL: With the case closed.

BG: And let the case warm up.

DL: The case will... it won't take long.

LL: It will all warm together.

DL: It just takes a few minutes for it to do that. Thirty minutes at the most.

BG: Taking it out of the case and going in front of the lights would really hurt it.

DL: When you go in front of these lights, like you are getting the heat from these, and it hits all at once it will be like shhheeeww **[demonstrates damage to instrument]** and you'll see that finish just start cracking.

BG: So besides building instruments from scratch for people, you also repair don't you?

8:35

DL: Yes.

BG: That's an important part of your art too?

DL: Yes, I don't do really what we'd say were big, major repairs like neck resets and that sort of thing. Basically, what I do is I fix tops, bridges, re-fret, finger boards is basically what I do. I don't have the equipment to do the neck resets that need to be done.

BG: You need more than what you need for making instruments?

DL: Yeah, you've got to have a, you know, a steamer, that sort of thing. You've got to go in and drill down and go on each side of that and steam that and there's a device that clamps on to that guitar that as it heats you unscrew it at the back and that neck just keeps sliding until it comes out, and you've got to know which neck is dovetailed and which is not so you know, so I just, I have taken them out but it's very litigious work and I just do basically minor stuff is what I do. Most of mine is I enjoy the inlay work.

BG: Mostly that's what you like ...

DL: That's what I like to do and build.

BG: ... That's your niche area, right?

DL: Yeah.

BG: You know, when we had the luthier exhibit touring the state for four years, "Made to Be Played," I wanted to say that "Made to Be Played," came from you because you said that earlier in the interview, it's not just made to be looked at.

LL: That's right.

DL: Yeah.

BG: So we based that exhibit on your words.

DL: Well, I appreciate that, thank you.

BG: And that guitar went on the guitar, but Brian England is known for his inlays too, he was on that tour too. What is the difference between you and him?

DL: Well, you know, I haven't ever been to his shop, but I understand that he has a like a CNC machine and I don't know if he has the laser cut machine or not, but I know he does do some things by hand, but I don't think with the amount that he puts out all the time that everything he does is done by hand. I think he does use a CNC machine a lot.

BG: What's a CNC machine?

DL: It's a computer router is basically what it is. It's set-up to where you sit down and you scan the pattern in, then it's put onto a disc, the disc goes into a certain computer program on this machine and

it automatically will cut it out of the pearl and also cut it out of the finger board and you just take it off of that and set it in, glue it in and then go. With mine, I don't have that and I do most of my work is with just a saw and my hands. But, I like the name, The Lamb. I ordered that from Brian England's shop.

BG: Oh, you did?

DL: They told me they would get it out as soon as they could because they had to set the machine up, so I'm saying that probably as large as quantities as he does that he uses that type of machine and he does excellent work.

LL: He does great work.

DL: He does fantastic work.

BG: I think he does a lot of that for musicians from Nashville...

LL: He does.

DL: Yeah.

BG: He's got a good reputation. Does that diminish in your feeling the craft of it by using a CNC machine?

DL: Well, it does. It does because you know, in doing inlay when you say you are hand doing this, using that machine, is that really hand done? No. Hand done is using this and going at it the hard way for hours at a time. To me that's being hand done. Same way with you know, building a guitar. Of course you have sanders, I can see that by you know running them through to thin the wood and that sort of stuff, but like the necks and things dad, this guitar here, dad made that neck from scratch by using a spoke shave.

BG: Oh really?

DL: Yeah.

BG: You shaved it out?

DL: Mhm. So he basically did the neck and all that and basically we did do the whole thing by hand. We cut the neck block by hand, the tail block, everything we did by hand. So, I think you need to say, when it's hand made it's hand made, that's what you are saying, it's hand made. But, I think in using a machine you can't very well say that this instrument is hand made.

BG: Sure. Well is there something that's special about being hand made versus machine made?

DL: I think it does because you are putting as we say, your blood, sweat, and tears into it. It becomes part of you.

BG: Every inch of that cut out is you doing that.

DL: That's me.

BG: So you can never do it the same way.

DL: No. You know, you can do hundred of different inlays and you're never going to get them exactly the same each time. There will be some difference. There will be some variation. It won't be the same and that's what you get when you get hand made because you know, you take an artist that's doing painting. He may take and make, somebody wants two pictures of the same thing, they may look the same, but there is something in there that's going to look a little different. So that's basically the same way with doing the guitars. They're not; the inlay is never going to be the same.

BG: And if the difference reflects the artists feelings and thoughts of that day because maybe you were off a little bit that day and you felt this way that is reflecting you a little bit more.

DL: Right.

LL: That's right.

DL: You may not be, you may not really feel good that day.

BG: So if they want a Donna Lamb they're going get you on that day it was made.

DL: That's going to be what it's going to be. And when I do my inlay, I do my very best that I can do. If I'm tired or if I feel bad that day, I never start an inlay until I get to the point that I feel better and I'll say, "Well, now I can start my inlay today." That's basically the way I do. Ok, you set for, like I've got, I'd say in the inlay that's in this neck, I probably got six weeks, because I work maybe an hour, two hours a day because you have to sit up straight doing this and after a while you get tired and with abalone, mother of pearl, and this it's very expensive. So one little mistake is very costly. So you want to be careful. That's basically what you do. You work until you get tired and you quit. Then you leave it alone for a while and then go back to it. Now you take me, most of my inlay I do at night. I feel better doing my inlay late at night because I get in here and I don't have any distractions and I can sit right here and I see exactly where it goes, exactly the way it is going to be. But, during the day I have people that come in. I give lessons and I help people with repair work at different times coming in, so you don't have as much distraction.

BG: So what do you have to feel like to feel good? When are you feeling good?

17:36

DL: You know, maybe I went to bed late the night before and you are tired or you may have a headache or a cold. With me I have Rheumatoid Arthritis so there are days where I ache and so, on the days I do do that I don't try to do any of that until I get my aches and pains under control, but other than that usually I have those early in the morning, up until noon or 1 o'clock, then everything smoothes off after taking medicine and then I do my work in the afternoons.

BG: So you can kind of feel how you are going to be because of the medicines and whatever you are doing. You can say, well, in the morning you've got a feeling for when you are going to do it, or if you can do it that day?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Well it's interesting because yeah, I was trying to tie flies one time and I was just learning and I had a beer before I did that, I'm from a German family and we drink beer, and I went out there and I couldn't do it. I shouldn't have been doing that. I should be healthy when I'm doing something.

LL: That's like being in the mood for music. That's exactly the way it is.

BG: Do you do any kind of meditation or any kind of prayer or anything like that before you do it?

DL: No, I just, basically you know, if I've got some kind of repair work to do, say to put a bridge on or a fret board or something like that, and say I've got inlay to do, I just go ahead and I'll do the repair work that needs to be done, then by that time I've moved and relaxed and I can come over here and sit down and you lay it all out until it's like a puzzle and you cut each piece and you lay that piece out and each piece goes together exactly like the puzzle so you lay it up here and you look at it. So I placed it on the fret board, so I make a copy of my fret board and I lay it the way it is going to fit and the way it is going to look, if I have to make that piece a little longer to come up, and so that's basically how I do my time in cutting any thing out. It may take me several days to cut one piece, but I want to get it the way that I think it should look and what's going to add to and not take away because you can add one little thing and it will take away from the whole thing.

BG: But you've already got that planned out don't you?

DL: Mhm.

BG: Are you changing your ideas as you are putting the inlay in?

DL: Sometimes. Sometimes you'll look at it and you'll think, you know, it's a lot here, but it's thin here. You know what I mean? You've got a lot more inlay in one point than you do in the other. But, at the time you are drawing it out and putting it on paper it doesn't look that way until you actually cut it out and place it and then you can see where it is going to be thin. So you'll say, maybe I need to add a little extra leaf here or a little curl here to kind of balance it out so that it doesn't all be in one spot here and nothing here so that's basically what you do.

BG: So that's kind of changing and adapting. Improvising in a way I guess.

DL: Yes.

BG: And you've done all this by experimenting yourself and doing this. You've never really sat down with anybody else and they kind of helped you?

LL: She's done it herself. Every bit of it.

DL: I had asked different people about helping and they'd say, "No."

BG: Well we've been after you to try to get an apprentice so we could get you through the Folk Arts Apprenticeship Grant. Is that part of why you don't want to teach anybody? Not that you don't want to, but is it because you didn't learn that way?

22:00

DL: Well, it's, the only thing is, you know, I don't know exactly how it would fall insurance wise.

BG: Oh ok.

DL: That sort of thing. If I have to take out insurance on them in case they get cut or they get hurt, and see that's basically what I have to go by, is part of it, and finding the right person that's going to stay with it, that's not going to say when we get started, I'll put it this way... I had one young gentleman that he wanted to learn to do it and I knew the kid for a long time and so we were working over here and as a matter of fact I was cutting out some inlay for a dulcimer of dads, and it wasn't anything elaborate, it was roses is all it was, just had a short stem and different flowers and I had them all laid out. So he told me, he said, "I'd like to learn to do it." I said, "Well, if you'd like to I'd be more than happy to help show you how." So he made a couple of trips over here, and I showed him, set him down, got him ready, he worked ten minutes and said, "This ain't for me," and left. So you know, it's trying to find the right one that's going to stay and say, "I'm going to follow it through. This is what I want to do."

BG: With our grants, it's about not trying to teach somebody from scratch, but trying to get somebody who is up there already and you are adding on to make them a master like you.

DL: Yeah.

BG: So maybe one day we'll find somebody who would fit that, because it seems like the insurance, you do use power tools a bit?

DL: Yeah, and see, that's kind of what's made me hesitant because having to get insurance to cover them in case they do get hurt.

LL: You just never know with something like that.

DL: You just never know, so that kind of holds me back a little bit.

BG: And then I think there is an investment in, a lot of our apprenticeships have been with family so you could keep the legacy of this thing going, or at least in the community so you could see that person, and I don't see that here, right? You don't have anybody in your family...

DL: Not right in my family.

BG: I mean if you are going to invest all of this time, you want to have somebody that is...

LL: Well that's it. Right.

DL: Yeah. I have cousins and stuff like that and they'd say, "Oh, I'd love to learn how to do that." I'd say, "Well, come and I'll show you." "I don't have time."

BG: Then on top of that the way that you have to structure your day to get your stuff in...

LL: See, that's it.

DL: Yeah.

BG: Yeah. I'll quit bugging you about it.

DL: No that's fine. You keep on.

LL: It's all right.

DL: You keep on because we may...

BG: Turn up somebody.

DL: Yeah.

BG: I wanted to ask you about organizations. Do you belong to any organizations of guitar makers or ...?

DL: No, I don't, just me and my dad, we're the two in our organization. We're it.

BG: You know, some people join those organizations so they get peer people saying, "You're great." "You're doing well." "You fit our standards." Things like that. Is that important to you or not?

DL: It doesn't... not really. To me, I just enjoy building and that sort of thing.

BG: Have you gotten awards or anything like that?

DL: Well, not on my instrument building I've not, no more than, we won the Folk Heritage Award in '06.

BG: Yes, you did.

DL: You know, we did that and we're very proud of that. Very proud.

BG: That was for playing and for making wasn't it?

DL: Yeah, but that's the only one that I've gotten, but yeah, I just enjoy it. I can come in and you can have something that's bothered you, or you've been worried about something, and you come in and the first thing you do, you can pick up one of these guitars rake across it, and it's gone. Might as well forget about it. And you can sit and play, or you can sit and start building, and adding to and whatever worried you before you've done forgot about. So to me, yeah, it's a stress reliever.

BG: Is it? Really?

DL: Yeah.

BG: It would be a stress inducer for me.

27:09

DL: But you know it's just something that we enjoy doing. Just you know, building and seeing what you can do with a piece of wood and what it turns out to be and I mean, everything around you that you look at you can make a musical instrument out of, like the can-tars that we did.

BG: That's made out of a piece of wood and string and a tin can.

DL: Yeah, you can make it out of a pork and beans can, or pea cans...

BG: And you did that at the History Center one day, at the luthier exhibit, you were making those for all those kids.

DL: Yeah. So...

LL: It gets them interested in things like that.

DL: And it's an instrument that you can play. It's playable. You can play any song; tune it to about any key.

BG: It's tuned like a dulcimer isn't it?

DL: It's just a shorter version scale of the dulcimer is what it is.

BG: Yeah I've got three at my house. I don't sound very good on it...

DL: They're fun.

BG: I remember one time, weren't we going to put electric pick-ups on them?

DL: Yeah, to see what they did.

BG: There was a woman, Minnie Black. Do you remember her?

DL: Yeah I do.

BG: She used to make instruments out of gourds.

DL: Yeah. As a matter of fact I think there's one right there.

BG: This one here?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Did you make that?

DL: No, I didn't make that.

BG: Where did that come from?

DL: There was a gentleman in Berea that gave me that. He said, "I've got something," and he said, "I want you to take it home and put it in your shop."

BG: That doesn't look very playable.

DL: Well it don't, does it?

BG: The strings are so high.

DL: Yeah.

BG: But it's a conversation piece.

DL: It's a conversation... yeah, that's basically what it is. Also, if you kind of look behind that guitar that I've got built there, there is a vacuum cleaner pipe fiddle.

BG: A vacuum cleaner pipe fiddle?

DL: Uh huh, see it hanging there? Right there.

BG: Oh, this one?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Oh, that's a vacuum cleaner pipe?

DL: Yeah.

BG: I see that, yeah. Like one of those shop vacs, right?

LL: That's what it is right there.

DL: Yeah. It's just a vacuum cleaner, shop vac, that went bad. So I had this hose and dad sat down and made the neck for it.

LL: So what made you want to do that?

DL: We were going to make us an electric fiddle and it works!

BG: It works?

DL: Yeah, I've got a fiddle pick-up that I can put on it and I have a little amp there, a kid knocked it over here the other day, a little boy, and broke my bottom string, but you can put it on here, plug it into there and you've got an electric fiddle and it will tune up and sound just, it sounds perfect.

BG: Really?

DL: Yeah.

BG: Are you going to put those on the market?

DL: I don't know, but it was just something I had. See, this is where I had my pick-up mounted, so I can just mount it here and plug it up there and use your bow on it and you've got...

BG: That kind of reminds me of Homer Ledfords' fiddlefones.

LL and DL: Yeah.

BG: Is that something in you that wants to create new things?

DL: Yeah. You know, it's just seeing that the different ideas that you can get from different things, like dad here made what we call a broom dobro, he took a broom, Clorox bottle, and put a guitar key at the top, ran one string across it and he uses it as a slide guitar.

BG: So other people have seen this?

DL: Yeah.

LL: It's been around the world.

BG: Has it?

LL: It's been around the world. It sure has.

DL: So there are just so many different things that are just laying around that could be made into musical instruments that would have never been thought of.

BG: Yeah. That's pretty cool.

DL: You know, a lot of times if you can't afford a lot of them, electric instruments or one electric fiddle, this is the cheapest way to go.

BG: Why did you use a plastic broom thing, a sweeper, that's what you had?

DL: Well, it was just, I hated to throw it away. I figured it might come in handy for something.

LL: Well it did.

DL: Dad said, "You know, that might make a body of something." So we laid it out over here and just happened to have an old fiddle neck laying over there and he said, "We'll make us a fiddle out of it." So we drilled some holes in here for the sound holes, and took some different woods and made a shoulder rest.

LL: See, it's got that round right there...

DL: It's got a round piece in the back that's just a plug [**DL and LL speaking simultaneously about the same piece**] we but in there.

LL: A plug in there, yeah, you see.

DL: Then we put just a plug in up here and bolted an old neck onto it.

BG: You could have kept it in tact and cleaned your house and played fiddle at the same time.

LL: That's exactly right. Clean the house and play the fiddle at the same time.

DL: There you go.

LL: That's right. Yes sir.

DL: Or let the vacuum cleaner blow through and make some noise.

BG: Well that's pretty neat.

DL: It's just something different. I mean there are many different things that you can use.

BG: You guys said it went all over the world. Do you mean, did you travel with it?

LL: Yeah, with Berea College Country Dancers. Yeah.

DL: When we went overseas dad made the broom dobro, so when we went overseas we would take that and he had a set of dancing dolls that he did, and so while they were changing costumes and getting ready for their next dance, we would do something in between to keep the show going. So he'd do his broom one time, next time we'd do the dolls and then they'd go back and do something else and I'd sing a song or something so we would always fill in-between while they changed costumes.

BG: How long did you tour with them?

DL: We toured from '63 to '91.

BG: '63 to '91, all those years?

DL: He did. I started in '68 to '91.

BG: And where did you guys go?

LL: We went overseas seven times.

DL: Seven times.

LL: Seven times.

DL: We've been to Germany, we've been to Czechoslovakia, we've been to Belgium, we've been to Denmark, we've been to England several times, let's see, we've been to Ireland, we have been to Czechoslovakia...

BG: Not Japan?

DL: No, we didn't get to go to Japan.

BG: I remember Homer going there once.

DL: Yeah.

LL: Yeah, they wanted us to go, but we didn't go on that trip.

DL: No.

LL: They asked us too [inaudible].

DL: Yeah they have asked us since then wanting us to, but, like I say, my health is not what it should be, and I can't travel in those countries anymore because my immune system, I don't have one, so. I'd love to go again, I'd love to.

BG: Do you have Lupus?

DL: No, they...

BG: Arthritis.

DL: Yeah.

BG: Well, so were you influenced by those travels in your instrument making at all you think?

DL: Yeah, that's, I think that's, doing a lot of traveling and being in the different countries over there and seeing their different instruments, like their fancy guitars. We saw what they call the Hungarian Fiddle or the Hardanger, you know, the one I'm talking about with the eight strings? Looking at those and the inlay work that they had on those just made me want to do it even more and I thought well, I could do that when I get back, that's basically, over the years that's what we've wanted to do.

BG: You kept getting these ideas and then you finally, in '99 is when you started making these things.

DL: I figured if I was going to do it, now's the time. I'm glad I did and I've really enjoyed it.

BG: And that moment you decided to do it was when you... why did you decide to start doing that? You had more time?

DL: Well, I had more time.

BG: Ok.

DL: Yeah, and I'm a person that likes to be, dad and myself, we are people that want to be doing something all the time. We are not ones to go in and turn into couch potatoes and that sort of thing, we are just all the time doing something. So, by looking at our tractors that we've done and different things, so that's what we've done. You know, building the instruments and I guess you could say by redoing the tractors is basically the same thing. You're getting them...

BG: You took them completely apart and put them back together.

DL: Put them all back together.

LL: That there. We sure have.

36:56

BG: It's a beautiful tractor.

DL: Yeah, so I mean, that's basically the same thing.

BG: That's kind of your art in your everyday life there.

LL: The reason that we kept this eight hundred out here, we can get parts to fix it and we don't have to take it here and yonder to get it. We know what to do and who and that's the reason we fixed that one right there up.

BG: The tractor?

DL and LL: Yeah.

LL: Yeah, that's the reason we fixed it.

37:29

[Skip in tape]

BG: ... Homer Ledfords?

LL: No.

BG: I think we were working on it for the next festival and we were going to get it, but then we didn't have the festival **[Kentucky Folklife Festival].** Maybe I'll talk to her about that. Ok, but she wanted to give that to you. But you got the Folk and Heritage Award in 2006.

DL: Yes.

BG: That's a Governor's Award. How'd you feel about that?

DL: Oh, couldn't believe it when we got it. You know, we had talked about, over the years dad and myself playing and we've done a lot of traveling and we've traveled, we've went and played to where, we didn't make hardly enough money to buy gas to get home on, but that wasn't what it was about. It was about sharing our music with other communities and other people for them to enjoy. That's what we've always based our music and everything on. God gave us a talent, and he does everybody, so if you don't use it, it will be taken away from you. We started playing our music and we've played for all groups and a lot of times we've traveled and never changed, just go for different organizations. They'd say well, we don't have anything, but we'd love for you to come. We can feed you. Hey, that's fine, and we would go, and I mean we'd travel all night long, all hours of the night, just him and I going to these different places just to pass our music on for people to enjoy.

BG: That's what you were honored for.

DL: Yeah. When we won that award that was just, we still, we just can't get over it. Such a beautiful award.

BG: What was the actual piece?

DL: It's a, like a flame...

BG: Yeah, every year they have a different one.

DL: A different one.

LL: It's different, yeah.

BG: Homer did dulcimers one year I think.

DL: Yeah.

BG: I was going to ask you about the piece you are working on now. I think we're going to maybe watch you a little bit. Can you show that to us?

DL: Sure.

[Instructions from videographer]

40:15

BG: So the Tree of Life starts at the bottom?

DL: It starts at the bottom. I tell you what I could do it get the other one...

[Description starts over]

40:28

DL: You can see, it starts basically if you look at it, it's more heavier down in here, and really, as the vine goes up, they say you are going through your life span is what it's about. It's from birth up until death is what it is. The flower at the top is supposed to be at the end. That's when death comes. So you can see, as it works up it gets more lively and sort of thins out as it goes, you slow down as you get old, you slow more, and that's basically what it's talking about is your life span.

BG: What's that big burst or leaf in the middle there?

DL: Where, here?

BG: Yeah, there.

DL: This is like at the, I guess like middle aged, you know what I'm talking about, you're at middle age, right at the peak of your life, and then as everything blooms, everything is going well, and then as you go over the hill it goes down. I always say it goes down hill from there.

BG: I'm trying to picture where I am on there.

DL: Can you find it?

BG: Probably over the hill.

42:04-43:03

[Room tone]

43:04

[DL demonstrates working in shop]

SA: Ok, can you say that again?

DL: This is what we call hand cut pearl. Doing it by hand. I'm using what they use a jewelry saw blade jewelry saw. You use several different kinds of fine blades. Depends on what you are using. That's basically what I do. I have two that I have set-up because sometimes after they get worn a little bit they break. So you just start following your pattern.

43:40

[Begins demonstrating]

DL: Back it back and make a turn... Come on now. I'm going to have to turn my little fan on and get that off so I can see what I'm doing. There we go.

46:57

DL: There you go. So it kind of gives you an idea that we're cutting out a wing and so it does, it takes a while, it's something you can't rush.

47:45

DL: So when you have to turn your saw you work it until you can get it, until it angles the way you want it to go.

49:17

DL: So that puts your first part of your wing, you you've made part of your wing for your Eagle. Then as you get farther along you go in and you engrave the lines in for the wings. Then what we do is always make extra copies, always make extra copies of your pattern because you are going to lay them out as though it was a puzzle. So you see where each, you are going to see where each piece fits on the picture is the way you do. So, you keep working each part and you can tell by hand exactly how long it takes to do one piece at a time. Oh yeah, I forget about this, because you always have to wear a mask. That's the most important thing. When you are using pearl or abalone because it is very toxic and it's poison when it gets into the lungs, so you have to be very careful with that. So always use you a mask of any kind, just as long as it protects your face. Usually, to do an Eagle like this, usually it takes a couple of hours because you can see with every stroke you have to be careful. My arms give out pretty quick, but anyway that's basically how you do your inlay.

BG: What are you working on here?

DL: Ok, as a matter of fact I'm working on a fiddle that I'm making. This fiddle is going to be donated to Berea Fire Department. I'm giving it to the city to their fire department to sale to make up money for equipment that they need. They can always use extra equipment, life saving equipment, and this is something that I've had in mind since we had the bad tragedy in New York and as a matter of fact this is going to be my 9/11 fiddle is what it is. I've kind of got it drawn out on the back of how it's going to be. As you can see, you can see the towers, you kind of get an image of what's going on here, you've got the two planes going in, the two hands at the top represent Jesus Christ's hands, because all their lives were in his hands that day and so anyway, I'm putting all of this on. Down here will be the 343 Firefight emblems from New York. As I say, I'm going to put the eagle, the American eagle here. On the front of it, which I just got this set-up, down here will have the firefighter helmet with the poker, the axe, the horn, which will go on the chin rest. This part here will have the hose on here, and on the fret board up to here will have the fire truck with the ladder extended out, it will also have the American flag draped on it. Down here it's going to say "Courageous" and "Brave." It will have the date of 9/11/01 on it. Here will also be a plane with a star over the top of it and it's going to say "Brave" under it and "Honor," because of the Pentagon. Over here it will have another plane, it will say, "Let's Roll," that's for them at Shawshank [Shanksville], Pennsylvania. On each key will be a fire hydrant. It will have a fire hydrant on the front and the back and this is going to be something that I am donating to them. There will only be one of these made and so, that's going to be my thanks to them for all the hard work that they do.

But, that's kind of a project that I've got going. I've got most of it that's here that's already been cut out. I can show you a little bit of it. That's almost ready to go in. So you can see all the towers, everything is done and ready to go. I've still got a few more pieces to cut out, my lettering to do. It shouldn't take me too long and I should have it done. A couple more months at the most.

BG: Is that the actual ivory there?

DL: Mhm.

BG: Is that abalone?

54:10

DL: That's what it is. What you do is, on this you take and you've got, you know, you make your pattern, you glue your pattern on, wherever a line crosses in a pattern, right here, I can kind of show you and we can get a close-up, it's wherever that a line crosses in any particular area, will be a separate piece of pearl or abalone depending on what you want. This one will have the white wings. This one will have gold. It's going to have abalone. It's going to have white. That's basically the colors into this. I do have one that is a little bigger that I have done and I can kind of give you an idea of how it looks. I can show you that. I've got it up here. I can get it out... This is one I've done sometime back, but I kind of glue it on boards, but anyway, it will look similar to this except a smaller version that will go on. So that's basically what I'm doing now. It will go in the bottom right hand corner on the fiddle on the back.

BG: What gave you the idea of doing this for the fire department?

DL: Well, you know, at anytime during, you have crises like what we had, you know, you have a car wreck or anything. Nine times out of ten the fire department is the first ones that are going to respond as they did that day, of that terrible day. So, you know, they really to me they don't get the credit that they deserve. They put their life on the line for us every day. So, this is something after that happened that I thought of for a long time and I thought well, this is something that I can give to them to say thank you for all the times that you've had to leave your family and them not know if you are coming back or if you are going to make it back. So this is just something that dad and I wanted to do for them. This is my way of saying thank you. I've talked to them about it and they're very excited about getting it and so it will have a plaque that is going to be made. I will have a plaque made that will say "9/11 Fiddle." It will have the twin towers on each side that's going to go on the case. So, that will go for them to do what they want to. If they want to keep it, or if they want to sell it, or whatever they want to do it's theirs to do with.

BG: Is it going to sound as good as it looks?

DL: I hope so. It's about as thin as we can get it. So I'm hoping. We'll see what happens. So far I mean, even though it doesn't have a sound post it's **[demonstrates with strings]** going to have a pretty thin top.

57:33 – End Track 2

End of Interview