

Pat Day

By Dennis Carelli

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In our interview travels we continue to explore the many sides of the blues harmonica; players, associated blues musicians, educators, and now from the business side of the band stand we get precious insight and many stories from a long-standing artist booking agent. This month we talk with Pat Day who played some harmonica in his band, but now focuses on the business of booking great harmonica players such as Rod Piazza.

DC: Let's start at the beginning, when did you get started in the music business?

PAT: I started off as a harmonica player in a band. Being a little blues band, I was booking my band.

DC: After college?

PAT: After graduate school. Brilliant move.

DC: Going to graduate school was a brilliant move? Or starting the blues band?

PAT: Going to graduate school and then just not doing what I went to school for and going into music.

DC: What were the graduate studies?

PAT: A Masters Degree in Linguistics from Georgetown University.

DC: Nice school.

PAT: Well what happened was that I had a serious car accident and I got some insurance money. So I bought myself a two-year program that I did in a year and a half and I didn't have to work because I had that insurance settlement. That's when my strong interest for harp became a love.

DC: Like a passion?

PAT: Yes. I graduated and I was already dabbling with this little band and we went fulltime.

DC: And then a transition somewhere from your own band to what? Promoting concerts?

PAT: No. I own Day and Night Productions, which is a talent agency. We book about a dozen bands

DC: Rod [Piazza] is one of them. Sugar Ray [Norcia] another.

PAT: As far as harmonica players go it would be James Cotton, Rod Piazza, Sugar Ray and the Bluetones. I better look at my roster to be sure I don't forget.

DC: Yeah, cover them all.

PAT: Yeah, I don't want anyone [to say], 'I saw that article and...' Let me see, Billy Boy Arnold, Paul Oscher, Tad Robinson. I also book this guy named Johnny Nicholas, but he's one of those kinds of musicians that musicians hate. He can play guitar like Robert

Johnson. He plays piano like Otis Span. He can do a cappella like Sun House. He can play all these instruments. He is actually a very good harmonica player.

DC: It's tough enough to be good on one, then to have someone being able to play multiple instruments.

PAT: Yeah, I know. That's why I say musicians hate him. Hand him pretty much anything and he is really good at it.

DC: So when did that start. When did you starting booking and representing other bands and other performers?

PAT: I say this humbly, my band got really good and really popular. So we were the regional act who opened up for [expletive] almost everybody; Albert King, Paul Butterfield, Roomful of Blues, Son Seals; pretty much everybody who came through the area. One of the acts that we opened up for very frequently was James Cotton, who was being booked by his manager, who is now out of the business. And the girl who fronted my band was very good about putting our schedule on little sheets with little cartoonish things. Then the band members would put them out before the people were allowed in so if anyone liked us and wanted to see us somewhere else, they could. This was before driving and drinking laws. We used to play twenty, twenty-five, thirty days a month. I mean we worked a lot. And Gordon, [James] Cotton's original manager/booking agent/tour manger/pretty much anything kept saying, "Who books you?" I said, me. He said, "Man, if you ever want a job man, you call me." I always thought he was kidding. After saying it to me a couple of times he pulled me to the side and said, "Let me buy you a beer kid. You're a really good harp player, but if you ever get tired of it you obviously look like you could become a really good agent. You book your band very well." I'm looking at him thinking, but you are James Cotton's [agent]. He goes, "Pat there's a lot of agencies who claim to be agents, but they really don't know [expletive]. They just give themselves a title and they really don't know what they are doing." So this was back when only AT&T was long distance. So I call up after 11:00 p.m. when the rates would drop and he was training me. He gave me Maryland and Virginia as my area. I was the exclusive agent; these words were all so new to me and so appealing, I was the exclusive agent for James Cotton for Maryland and Virginia. So he would get a date like in New York and call me up and say, "OK see what you can do." At first the motivation was I could put my band opening in front of him, which was another job for us, in a big room in a place where we hadn't played. What a nice step-in and we're guaranteed to play for a packed house. And then what happened was that when I saw that my commission off a James Cotton date was more than what my band made, much less—1/5th of it, it got pretty appealing. And that was the same time I was getting burnt out on, I called them the econo-lodge tours. Basically you're on stage for like three hours and the other twenty-one hours of the day you're in a van, an econo-lodge or an IHOP. After awhile I met this lady who is now my wife, I slowly started booking James [Cotton] more and more and Gordon kept giving me more, "OK now you have Pennsylvania and New York. Now you have the Northeast." Then about eight months to a year I had James Cotton exclusive for the whole world. And then what happened was all of a sudden if you are good enough for a guy like James [Cotton], you are good enough for a lot of people. So I was getting a lot of phone calls. So I had a really easy chance developing a roster. And I've been doing it ever since, going on, I guess, twenty years. That's how it ALL got started.

DC: Sometimes the toughest one is the first one.

PAT: That is where I was really fortunate. My first one was a biggie. James Cotton. Granted he is not B.B. King, but Gordon always made sure he had an album out a year and he has been touring under his own name since 1966. And he is ALL through the history books; Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf. All that kind of stuff. So it's not like my first guy was a small regional band and I had to work up. I was QUITE fortunate that way.

DC: How did you get hooked up with Rod [Piazza] then? Was that soon after?

PAT: No, that was a few years later. That story goes like this. I don't want to say the person's name cause I'm not here to belittle him, but I was booking a guy named Ronnie Earl at the time; Ronnie Earl and The Broadcasters. They were doing a Mid-West run. And one of the clubs he was playing was in Columbus, Ohio. So I called up the guy to see how the night went. He said it was great; he made some points, extra, and everything was fine. And he said, "Man I really feel bad for the band that just supposed to play here tonight." I said, Supposed to? What happened? He said, "Well, I booked them and the agent never sent me anything. Not a contract, not a photograph, not a cassette and I had the local newspapers all ready to do interviews. As time got closer and closer and I didn't have anything to give them. So finally they just pulled up about an hour ago and I told them if you want to play you can play, but you are playing for the door. I'm not giving you a guarantee. Your agent really [expletive] up." So that band happened to be Rod Piazza and The Mighty Flyers. And they were doing, I can't remember this was like 1990, 1989 or something like that, a two week tour. And apparently about half of it was exactly what happened in Columbus. So at Columbus, they said this was like the fourth time it had already happened on this tour. This is our living. We got to do something. Who would you recommend? And that guy recommended me. So Honey [Piazza] and Rod called me and we had a talk over the phone and I explained how I run my shop, what I believe in and that kind of stuff. I said why don't you use one of my references. They said ok. I gave them about four references. The first one was Gordon, Cotton's manager. So Honey called Gordon and apparently Gordon said something to the extent of "You would be really lucky if you could have Pat as your manager. That guy fights for his acts 'big-time'. And he knows how to make extra percentage points." And he just raved about me. Honey called me right up and said when can we start. I said, did you call all my references? And she said, "Nope. First one was just enough." So I've been working with them ever since.

DC: After James Cotton and Rod Piazza I would think you would be in a position where you could choose who you wanted to represent. As a booking agent, what do you look for in adding other artists now?

PAT: The thing is I have a very small company and I have to make sure that I do my job right. Again I'm not going to point fingers but there are some agencies out there that have a few agents and WAY too many bands. And they are not doing them justice. Club owners tell me that all the time. Band X will pull up and they are all in a bad mood. Well, what happened? "My agent just had me drive ten hours from my last gig. And now after playing here I have to drive twelve hours to my next gig. He (the agent) didn't get deposits and when I pulled up to the club said, we don't have enough advance sales, if you want to play for the door..." Just rotten stuff because they are too busy. So when I do sign an act on I have to make sure I have enough time and energy to service them right. But to answer your initial question, what do I look for? I've always, and I say this humbly, believe that not only my work will speak for itself but my roster is always a cut above. Granted, they may not be a household name, but they are a cut above. I have accounts around the world where if I sign a new act on and I say, Hey Bill, I got Tad Robinson new on my roster.

(They say) “Never heard of him, send me the CD with the contract. If you signed him, I’ll take it.” So that’s what I look for, bands that are, needless to say drug-free, alcohol-free, nothing is falling off stage kind of stuff, a cut above and very professional. They got to have their sound, do their material. Bless their hearts, there are a hundred bands per state that do *Mojo Working* and *Sweet Home Chicago*. They’ve won the local contest so they think they are ready for the next step up. They’ve got two originals that happened to be similar to *Help Me* and something similar to *Shake Your Booty* or something.

DC: Playing covers real well is not enough.

PAT: Yeah, it’s not going to get them to the festivals.

DC: Do you represent anybody outside the United States?

PAT: No, all U.S. based. They travel the world. Rod did Norway a couple of months ago. He is going to Switzerland next month (November). Cotton’s going to Switzerland next month (November). I’ve booked Japan, Canada, well all of North America, Australia, Europe big time. I think the only continents that I haven’t booked are Africa and the South Pole.

DC: Do you have something I would call the “do’s and don’ts of playing clubs?” What suggestions would you give a band playing a new place and wants to improve their performance?

PAT: Outside of the musical aspects?

DC: Yes. You mentioned before the importance of doing your own material and developing your own sound.

PAT: That’s very important. Ask yourself this, if you heard some guy doing Elmore James, followed by Jimmy Rogers, followed by another. Granted you may stop and have a draft, but your not going racing out to buy his record. You own those records. You are not going racing to a festival and pay \$40 to get in cause an 18-year-old kid has discovered Elmore James. But that is a very good question, some advise. First and foremost I have to preface it by saying this is obviously an opinionated answer. I always believed that the band should always look professional. I’ve always believed that people don’t work forty hours a week to show up and see some guys on stage with tennis shoes, jeans and a T-shirt. I mean when they go to work they have to get dressed up. You know what I mean. I’ve always believed in presence, visually they have to look good. Two, bands should always be, don’t misconstrue this, enthusiastic about playing. I’ve seen some acts that are very noted and really disappointed me. About ten years ago, again I don’t want to say the name, but Ronnie Earl had told me what a great guitar player this guy was and I had never seen him. So finally I got a chance to go. We drove up to Baltimore and see him at the then blues club, which is now defunct. Turned out to be a really bad crowd. There were only about forty people in the place that holds about two hundred. And we were on this upper balcony and about when the fourth song ended he started looking at his watch. And then the fifth song, he’s looking at his watch. Finally, half way through the set, the singer leans over and goes, “How many more songs?” right into the mic. And the people in the audience are like, sorry bud. After the first set, half those forty people left and I’m probably right in my assessment that the band was bored and it just came off bored. That’s what I mean by enthusiasm. I’ve always respected bands that have great segways (sings a turnaround of a song), 2, 3 4 next song. I’ve always thought that was cool and I’ve always thought, and this is THE most obvious, drunked and drugged up musicians should never even be there. I saw one of my heroes, Walter Horton, at this club

in Georgetown. This was way back in the '70s. And he had this guy; I think his name was Johnny Long, on guitar. I think he lives in Denver. He played National Steel. And he had S. P. Leary on drums, and of course Horton. I didn't realize it but S.P. played great all night, but at the very end of the night, you couldn't tell, I guess he had drunk so much in his life he could play drums like nothing, but he stood up and he was so drunk that he fell back on a bay window. So he was leaning. So he stuck his hand out to Walter [Horton] and says, "Walter." He didn't fall but he was like a leaning Tower of Pisa. So Walter was kidding in front of the eight people left in the bar because it was the end of the night. He had gotten paid and he goes, "Hey Johnny, look one for him, one for you and one for me, how about we just split his? [expletive] can't stand up." He was kidding so finally that motivated S.P. enough to actually swing his body forward and he goes, "You [expletive], I'm gonna kick your [expletive] one day." That's how they talked. But if he done that during a set you just lose respect for that. You don't expect an electrician to show up to fix your outlet [to be] smashed. That's the obvious. I've always thought that bands should look like professionals; should act like professionals. Segwaying is very professional. You know when I was a kid I got turned on to blues. I lived outside on Chicago and a friend of mine, bless his heart he's now dead; his cousin was Jim Schwall of the Siegel Schwall band. And they used to sneak me in every Tuesday night into this bar. What I really liked about them was when they did a cover they would always say, "That was by the late great Jimmy Reed. Or this is a song by the great Little Walter." I think that's cool.

DC: The attribution of the original artist.

PAT: Yeah, yeah. Actually my first appearance on record was because I looked so young even at the age of fifteen. I looked like I was eleven. So the only reason I was able to sneak in was Craig's cousin. They would always stick me back in this dark corner where the waitresses would get their drinks and stuff. During one of their songs being recorded for a live record, it is a live record *Siegel Schwall Live* or something like that you hear a glass break because yours truly stood up when a waitress was coming by with one of those trays full of beers. I stood up and knocked the trays and she had good enough balance to catch all of them from falling except one. Somewhere on that record you hear the sound of a glass breaking.

DC: You're unaccredited though? Right?

PAT: I wasn't credited and I want my royalties. When I say first appearance on record, I mean my old band made some singles and stuff like that.

DC: Did you ever have occasion to meet and talk with Walter Horton?

PAT: Yes, but I got to admit you have to be a harp player to find the humor in it. When Walter came to town those years ago when I saw him with S.P. Leary, I was a rank beginner. Now he comes back a few years later and I'm already in a band and he's playing *The Bayou*. Wow, listen to me. All these clubs are gone. I forgot whom he was with. You look out in the audience and there were a hundred and fifty harmonica players from Richmond to Philadelphia. Baltimore and Washington. Everybody, cause he didn't make it out that often. He was my living idol. I'm just like you: Little Walter, George Smith, Sonny Boy and all that. But he was the only one alive. So I thought I was going to ask him a couple of questions about techniques but I walked over to the bar and here is this poor guy with a shot in one hand and a beer in the other. And he is surrounded by all the little white harp players tugging on his shirt asking, "What was it like to play with Little Walter? Is it true "Walking By Myself" is one verse him and one verse you? Did you ever know Sonny Boy? Muddy this and Muddy that." The look on his face was, Jesus kids I

have a half hour break leave me alone. So I said [expletive] it. I'm going to be dignified and I'll leave this guy alone. About three minutes later I have to go to the bathroom. So I go upstairs to the bathroom and who is in the [expletive] bathroom taking a [expletive]. Walter Horton. There's nobody in the bathroom but Walter Horton. One of the things that always fascinated me, one of his many great techniques was, you know how he went bup bup bup bup bup. I couldn't figure it out how he did that. So I walked up to this guy, standing there with his [expletive] in his hand. So what happens is he's standing there and I go Walter how do you do this. I did the intro lick. Then this is where he gets hysterical. He goes, "NO. NO. Not like that (yelling). He shakes his thing. Zips it up. Like it was some national security secret, remember this was a big bathroom but totally empty, he grabs me by my arm, walks me to the furthest stall and locks it. And then grabs my harp, he sticks it in his face and his does this real big snapping, Whap bup bup bup bup bow. Whap bup bup bup bup bow. Like about ten times, right in my face. I said Walter I got it in my head how do you do it? He goes, "Wait a minute. You got it in your head? Cause you got to hear it in your head and your heart." I said yeah. So he sticks out his tongue and he goes, "You slap the [expletive] as hard as you can. That's how you do it. You slap it. You slap. Whap bup bup bup bup bow, like that. Anyway I got to go to work. Bye." He left. I couldn't believe it. Big Walter pulls me into the back and gives me one of his secrets even though I found this out years later.

DC: Great story. To change subjects a little bit, how would you summarize the change in the blues music scene over the years? Not only from the time playing with your band, but from the start of your booking agency.

PAT: Well, with the passing of the greats a lot of the younger people don't do their homework. Quite a few do, don't get me wrong. But quite a few don't. And you can't go forward unless you know what went behind you. So music as an art form has to continually change, so what I am seeing is less and less blues because less and less people are doing their homework. For instance, Cotton and Rod have identical stories about their mentors; Rod's was George Smith and Cotton's was Sonny Boy II [Rice Miller]. He lived with Sonny Boy for six years. I asked Rod and I asked Cotton and they said the same thing. They actually never really sat down and said, here's how you play 1st position. Here's how you do this in 3rd position. Here's a trill. Here's a throat vibrato as opposed to a stomach vibrato. What they did was, Cotton said it like this, "I would do a set and Sonny Boy would be the doorman." I said, the doorman? He goes, "You didn't know Sonny Boy. Nobody touches Sonny Boy's money but Sonny Boy. And then when Sonny Boy would go up [and play] I would be the doorman." I said, really? So he never actually sat down and said this is this and how. [Cotton], "No, no, no. Just every night you looked and you heard and you listened. Every once and awhile he would walk up from say, 'Cup it like this. Or this song is better in 3rd position instead of first.'" But that was very infrequent. And Rod tells the same story that George just basically said, "Do it your way Rod. Do it your way." So that's what I mean that a lot of people did not study the craft well enough. Rod can play Little Walter like I almost think he didn't go to junior high. He locked himself in his room eight hours a day and played those records a hundred million times. Yeah, the blues scene is changing. I've seen it have ups and downs quite a few times. This is a more serious down. I'm sure it's going to catch back up; it is an American art form. I don't think it is going to die. But I don't see as many younger people playing it because that actually requires discipline. That actually requires a lot. If you are a guitar player you don't just buy two records. You got to get B.B., Freddy, and Albert King. You got to get Robert Lockwood. You got to get Eddie Taylor. You got to get others. It goes on and on and on. That's years of work. Again, you never thought you would say something like what your

parents said but their music seems pretty simple. There's a great comment Ringo Starr said on the Johnny Carson show once. Johnny Carson asked what's it like being in the world's greatest rock 'n roll band? Ringo said that's all generational. For instance, my father. It's ironic cause my father says the same thing. To him there will be no band ever, for the next two or three hundred years, that will match pound for pound the Glenn Miller Band. Every member of that band could have been a bandleader, yet they were sidemen to him. If you ever saw that band live you would know why. So it's all generational. And he's right. A couple of years after seeing that interview, People magazine had a survey of junior high school kids to show how society is changing. And one of the questions was, "Who were the Beatles?" And a bunch of kids wrote, "Paul McCartney's first back-up band." That's exactly what Ringo was saying.

DC: Someone told me you met Ringo sometime ago. Is that true?

PAT: I lived in Georgetown when I went to Georgetown University and I was learning to blow harp from a senior in high school. I had a couple of years under my belt and there was a really noted room that's no longer there called Desperados. It was THE spot for all these blues bands. Everybody would play there. The Thunderbirds, when they were all nobodies. I would always go down there and a lot of times there would be local bands and I could sit in. Or regional bands. One night I'm coming home, it's about 2:30 in the morning and I'm blowing the harp walking down the street in Georgetown going back to my little basement. And from behind me I hear (rough English accent), "Hey mate you know any Sonny Boy Williamson?" So I turn around and there is this figure. I couldn't see who it was because it's 2:30 at night and he's not in the light. I said one or two? He said, "Damn you're good. Two. I saw him, Rice Miller." I said wow you saw Rice Miller. So I started playing some Sonny Boy. So I walked closer to the guy and it's [expletive] Ringo Starr and his wife standing there. She goes and sits on the top step. Next thing I know I'm sitting on the bottom step and he's telling me how Little Walter's drummer, Fred Below, changed his world and that's why he is the world's best rock 'n roll drummer. Because as a kid he learned how to hit on the two and the four a little behind. He said, "I love that Fred Below guy. I saw all those other guys but he was the one, man." I'm like wow. You really know your stuff. He goes, "I love that Little Walter, but he you can also get him with Jimmy Rogers. You can also get him with Muddy." I was astonished how much this guy knew about blues. I'll never forget his wife, Barbara Bach. She was gorgeous. She said, "Richard, I'm tired I want to go in. Come on." So he said, "Mate got to go. The woman calls." I did ask him what he was doing in Georgetown. He said financial guys that worked for the Beatles had advised to buy properties around the world and in Georgetown the property [value] only goes up, it never goes down. Every two to four years new politicians come in. As I was walking away the first thing that hit my mind was, who the [expletive] is going to believe I had a fifteen-minute conversation with Ringo Starr. That's the very first thing I thought of.

PAT: Oh, back to what musicians shouldn't do at a gig. My band was opening up for The Paul Butterfield Band at this place called The Wax Museum, it's now defunct. It was called The Wax Museum because at one times it was a wax museum. They gutted it and made it a 1,600-seat club. The owners had this great concept, bring in big name acts and charge like 3 to 5 bucks. Because if you get 1,600 people paying \$5, do the math. Then they're drinking and eating galore. So we are opening up for Paul Butterfield. We had to do two sets and he had to do one long one. After the second set I'm back stage, and he was a really nice guy I have to tell you that he was really nice, he hands me this plastic cup. And the key word is I thought it was beer. If you play twenty nights a month, after a while you

got your lead down, are you just going to keep it or are you going to challenge yourself. So what I would do is get in this mindset of thinking, what would Little Walter do to a Walter Horton Song? Or what would Horton do to a Jimmy Reed [song]? What would Jimmy Reed do to somebody else's song? So when I was back stage, he [Paul Butterfield] said, "That first verse was just off the record. And then that second version was all of a sudden Horton stepped in. You Hortonized it, didn't you?" And I looked at him and said good ears buddy. That's exactly what I did. He said, "Here's to you." And he hands me this drink. Again I thought it was draft beer because it was gold. Turned out it was gold tequila and I had no idea. So I take this big swallow and [expletive], I spit it out all over Paul Butterfield. Not a good thing. Meanwhile his band is calling, "Paul we go to get on stage. Got to go. Got to go." He goes, "Don't worry about it kid. Don't worry about it." So he takes mine, polishes it off, takes his and walks on stage. That was when I realized, uuh, that's not a good thing. It's not good to spit on the headliner.

DC: No, be it tequila, water or anything.

PAT: Laughs. Like I said it was dark backstage and here's to you kid. And I spit it out all over him.

DC: That idea about Hortonizing a song, was that the idea of copying Jimmy Rogers sound?

PAT: It wasn't copying. A club in Bethesda [Maryland] called me up and they said we got this blues legend named Jimmy Rogers coming in for the weekend and I'm really nervous. I'm not sure how well he's going to draw. Can your band open? Your band is always worth at least X amount of people. I said that would be great. The next thing I know his agent is calling me saying they are not making enough money. So would you be able to put Jimmy or a couple of the guys up at your house or something. The girl who fronted my band, her boyfriend and I had this house so we had the whole band stay there. One stayed on the couch upstairs. One stayed on the couch downstairs, that kind of thing. Except Jimmy got his own room. After the second night, Jimmy had me sit in the second night, we got home and I've got this legendary Chess [Records] guy Jimmy Rogers in my kitchen at 3:00 in the morning doing shots. Wildchild Butler doing shots. And innocent little me having a beer. All of a sudden Wildchild goes (strong southern accent), "I wants to hunt your sounds." I said pardon me. He goes, "I wants to hunt your sounds." I'm looking at Jimmy like are you going to help me here? You want to what my what? "I want to hunt your sounds." Jimmy looks at me and says, "He wants to hunt your sounds." I'm think to myself he want to hunt my sounds. What does that mean? He goes, "we can't do it here in the kitchen because you got roommates. Let's go downstairs. I'll play guitar and you blow harp. He wants to hear you acoustic. He wants to hear what you sound like." Oh, he wants to hunt my sounds. I guess that is a term I never heard. So the next thing I know I have the legend Jimmy Rogers playing guitar and I'm accompanying him. I got Wildchild squinting his eyes and looking, "How do you do that? How do you do that?" I said I'm tonguing. You block the reeds with your tongue. He goes, "That's how Sonny Boy did that." (vocalizes some licks) I said yeah. Wow, this guy is learning off me.

DC: Do you have any other stories about other great players that our readers would like to hear about?

PAT: OK. I was single and lived in Bethesda in this group house. There was a bar about two miles away that had Buddy Guy and Jr. Wells scheduled. However, there was a blizzard. This was a full blizzard. Not just a lot of snow, a blizzard. Like buses weren't running Subways weren't running. Nobody was out. It was a [expletive] blizzard. I called

up the club owner because, yes my band used to play there, and said Hey Joe is Buddy and Jr. there? He said, "Yep, not only are they here but they're insisting that because they're here they are going to play and they're going to get paid. If I ever plan on having these guys back, I have to do it. So I'm going to take it on the chin tonight but a club owner got to do what a club owner got to do." So I'm thinking to myself, [expletive] I'm going to go up. Now I had seen buddy and Jr. about ten times. A lot of times their show was less to be desired cause Buddy would do one tune and then the great Jr. Wells. And then would go up and do a James Brown impersonation type thing that he used to do. Then he would go, "And now the great Buddy Guy." They would trade back because neither of them wanted to work. So I go out to the street and that's when I wait for the bus. I can't drive the van because it's a blizzard. So I'm waiting for the bus, and the bus, and the bus. So I go back in my house and call and no bus is running. So I put on my long underwear, and extra pair of socks and all that kind of stuff. I proceed to walk two miles. After I'm half way there I realize this is really stupid. I'm really freezing and I will have to walk back. This is really dumb. As I'm getting closer and closer, I'm getting [expletive] at Jr. and Buddy. I'm wakin two miles through a blizzard to see them and am I going to see that James Brown [expletive]. So I walk into the club and there are about eight people there. Those eight people lived within a block of the place. There's Buddy and Jr. at the bar doing shots. And I don't know why, I guess I was all [expletive] because I had to walk two miles through the snow, I walked right up to Jr. Wells and I tapped him on the shoulder. I said, Jr. I just [expletive] walked two miles through a blizzard to see you. I'm not here to see you do that James Brown [expletive]. Buddy gets his elbow and pushes Jr. and goes, "Woo, woo." Jr. is like, "What? What?" I said man I want to hear all that [expletive] you did on that early Delmark stuff. I started naming off all these tunes. You know that one you did in 3rd position in D? [expletive] "Messing With The Kid." I've heard you do "Messing With The Kid." That's all you do. I want you to blow some HARP. I know you can do it. BLOW SOME HARP. And Buddy again hits him with elbow and goes, "Woo, woo." So Jr. and him when it's time for the show walk by me. Jr. stops and he says, "You sit your [expletive] down and you don't leave." And he walked up. Buddy did the first song and typically said, "Now the great Jr. Wells." Jr. finished the set. And he blew his face off. It was incredible. It was best time I've ever seen him. Ever. By miles. He walks off stage. He walks by me. Then all of a sudden he takes two steps back, leans his face into my face and he goes, "And..." I said that's why I'm here Jr. You [expletive] blow great. He said, "I ain't next set. Next set is Buddy's set." (Laughter) He taught me one of the coolest things. Jr. The next time they were at that other club I told you about, The Bayou. And I walked into the dressing room and said Hey Jr. He goes, "It's my little buddy Pat. It's my little buddy Pat. Are you gonna stick around?" I said yeah, yeah yeah. If he knew I was in the audience he would do more than "Messing With The Kid." So what happened was at the end of the night he brought me into the dressing room and he kicked his band out. He said, "All right. All right. I sing, you blow." I said, really cool. So he starts doing his material and I start imitating Jr. Wells as best you can. He had that really unique sound. I'm tapping my foot with my toes and he looks down and goes, "No, no, no." I'm like Jr. cause he was a real jive guy. I mean in a fun way. But he was a lot of jive. So I said what are you talking about. He goes, "No, no. You don't tap your foot like that." I'm like oh Jr. screw you. What the hell you talking about? I got good timing. He goes, "Listen. Now listen. I don't tell too many people this, but you don't tap with your toes. You tap with your heel." I said and why is that? He said, "Cause when you tap with your toes, look what moves. Nothing. Just your foot up to your knee. But if you tap with your heel; your whole body moves. And before you know it your timing is that much better." And he holds up his index finger and his thumb, indicating a quarter on an inch. He goes, "It's that

much better.” So the next time I was on the stage with my band I remembered. Oh that’s right, (tap with the heel). And within a week, [expletive] if he wasn’t right. He goes, “Your whole body gets into it man. Your whole heart and your whole body. It’s much better.”

DC: Now you will be sharing that secret with who knows how many people

PAT: Yeah, that’s cool. That’s how we pass down history.

DC: Speaking of history, what’s the story you heard about the history of “Juke”?

PAT: It’s another Jimmy Rogers story. I don’t know how the topic got started but it goes like this. All of a sudden Jimmy is telling me about Muddy’s band. Muddy had his band rehearsed to a point. Because to keep blues alive you don’t rehearse it to death so that people are playing rehearsed notes. There has got to be certain amount of spontaneity there. So Muddy always had his guys set so that when they went into the studio there wasn’t take three, four and five. It was pretty much always a take one. Because that was Muddy’s professionalism. The Chess brothers are recording Muddy and he’s doing a couple of tunes. Three tunes or something like that Jimmy said. They have a half hour, forty-five minutes left. ‘Well, we got the studio. Jimmy. You want to do a tune?’ “Sure,” so Jimmy did a tune. ‘Still got a half hour left, Walter you want to do a tune?’ Now I asked Jr. Wells this and he said yes, Jr. used to use “Juke” to end his sets every night. Not his sets, the last song of the night was “Juke.” I said to Jr. did you really write “Juke?” He goes, “Yeah. Walter taught me so much the least I could have done is give him a nice song.” What happened is according to Jimmy, they’re in a session and they start the tape rolling and Little Walter blows this twelve-minute version of “Juke.” And when he stopped the two Chess brothers are laughing at him. And he’s obviously insulted. He was a really ruffian type guy, according to Jimmy. And he (Walter) goes, “What the [expletive] you talking about? What the [expletive]?” And he (one of the Chess brothers) goes, “What the [expletive] is wrong with you? What part of two and a half minutes don’t you understand? This is a single stupid. Twelve minute song?” So Walter says, “I’ll do it again. I’ll do it again.” So he whittles it down to something like eight minutes. And they said, “We’ve got five minutes left. You gonna have one more chance to do it. Now follow my fingers. One minute. Two minutes. Three minute max. It’s usually best at two and a half minutes. That’s what DJ’s like. That’s what the jukeboxes like.” So Walter, according to Jimmy, was pissed as [expletive]. You could see smoke coming out of his ears. Biting his lip and mumbling to Muddy that he wants to kill those [expletive] [expletive]. So “Juke,” the world famous “Juke” that we know of was blown with Walter pissed as [expletive] at the Chess brothers because he had one last chance to do it under three minutes. At that’s how “Juke” came to be.

DC: You mentioned some of the clubs that were, but no longer exist. Is that a major change you’ve seen with the blues?

PAT: Well no, that’s just basically any city. This club will be in existence for ten years, club owner gets burned out, sells it and it becomes a carpet shop. That’s not a direct thing on music. One of the clubs got bought by some Iranians who made it into a Middle Eastern restaurant. Now there’s a line out the block every night. As opposed to eight drunks in there. It’s just economics.

DC: Would be fair to say that summer time festivals are key to a lot of artists?

PAT: Festivals usually go spring through fall and they are worldwide. So if a good agent has developed good relationships with these fests, you can get a lot of work for your acts through fests. [It’s] great exposure. They sell ten times more CDs than they would at

clubs. It's monetarily and visually better. For instance Rod played a big festival a couple of years ago in Annapolis, Maryland, a very noted showcase room there. Last year I sent them an email saying that I had Rod Piazza coming by this year, he just played there a few weeks ago, would you be interested? And what they do, they have thousands of people on their email so they send out a survey saying if I had a chance to present Rod Piazza would you come? And what night of the week would you prefer? He got an astounding yes, but for a Friday or a Saturday. Which shows you the age group that was attracted by the show. If it wasn't for that festival, he won't have played the major showcase room and made big bucks.

DC: Pat, it was a real pleasure to talk with you today and hear some of your adventures and blues history. Thanks for taking the time to share all this with us.

PAT: A pleasure. I'm interested to see how it all turns out.