

Interviewee: Lucille Borella

Interviewer: Norie Guthrie

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Interview Transcript

Norie Guthrie: My name is Norie Guthrie from the Woodson Research Center at Fondren Library at Rice University. I am interviewing Lucille Borella. Today is October 23rd, 2020. This is part of the Houston Folk Music Archive oral history project. Can you tell me about your early life?

Lucille Borella: I was born in Houston, Texas and mostly grew up there. Uh, my father was in the oil industry, so we moved around somewhat. I lived in Oregon, Louisiana, Venezuela, uh, but came back and went to, uh, middle school and high school and college in Houston.

Norie Guthrie: What first drew you to music?

Lucille Borella: Uh, I joined the high school choir. Uh, not being able to read music or sing, uh, I just did it anyway, and the, the gentleman was nice enough to accept me. Mm, my boyfriend at the time was Bill Cade, and he and I went all through middle school, high school and college together, and he encouraged me to sing. So I guess that was, uh, the drawing factor. And he played guitar, so I had to buy a guitar too.

Norie Guthrie: Hmm. How did you teach yourself how to play the guitar?

Lucille Borella: I bought a book. Uh, it had pictures of chords in it, and I said, "I can do this." And of course being around Bill and, and his friends, uh, I was able to watch them and learn from them.

Norie Guthrie: So in your, um, like, well, autobiography that you wrote up, um, how did you hear about the Houston Folklore Society concerts headed up by John A. Lomax Jr.?

Lucille Borella: Oh, goodness. It was just, uh, rumored around the community. Uh, we lived in Montrose at the time, and people said, "Come, go to the meeting," so we did. That was an experience.

Norie Guthrie: Can you –

Lucille Borella: John Lomax was a larger-than-life figure who s, sang, uh, without accompaniment ever, and so that was different. And, and what he brought to the table was new to us also.

Norie Guthrie: In what way?

Lucille Borella: Uh, we were familiar with what was going on at the time, Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, uh, but he sang old folk songs that he had discovered in his travels of interviewing other people.

Norie Guthrie: And then can you, um, well, those, those were ones that you went up to at the Jewish Community Center, or were you actually going to his home?

Lucille Borella: Oh, goodness. I don't think it was either. And –

Norie Guthrie: ****.

Lucille Borella: – I can't remember where, I can't remember where it was. Just, uh, a gathering of a group of people, and it, it, it must have been at the community center because it was not at someone's home.

Norie Guthrie: All right. Because I think in the be – in the early days, he would have them at home, and then they got too rowdy. And so his wife said that, "No, we gotta, we gotta do this someplace else."

Lucille Borella: We, we must have got in on the late, the late part of it then. Ah.

Norie Guthrie: Um, so what, um, led you and Bill Cade to form a duo?

Lucille Borella: Oh, he always had such a gorgeous voice and started singing and playing, and, and I wanted to do that too. So, um, I guess from my choral background, I was able to find harmony. That and listening to Peter, Paul and Mary. Always harmony.

Norie Guthrie: Did you practice, like, a lot together? Like, what was, what was –

Lucille Borella: Oh, oh.

Norie Guthrie: – all that kind of like?

Lucille Borella: Uh, at the beginning, I had to practice a lot by myself because he was so much better than I. Um, we would practice, you know, set aside some time every day to try to sing, learn a new song, things we liked.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. Um, so you were doing this while you were attending the University of Houston?

Lucille Borella: Correct.

Norie Guthrie: Is that correct?

Lucille Borella: I was –

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: – I was in classes there and got a job in the Religion Center as a secretary, and after that, we started, uh, trying to get gigs out in the community.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. Um, so what was, what was your major there at U of H?

Lucille Borella: Uh, English, secondary education with a little Spanish.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. Were you, was your plan, I guess, to teach, uh, like to, to teach?

Lucille Borella: It wa, it was, but it was really unfortunate because, uh, wh, when we had student teaching, we were seniors, and I had to do student teaching in a, in a barrio ghetto school, and I decided I never wanted to teach. So there I was with an English degree –

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm.

Lucille Borella: – and, uh, I got jobs as a legal secretary.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. Um, so when you were at U of H, you started performing, um, around, and so, um, I kinda wanted to go through the places where you and Bill played, uh, kinda like, just go through them.

Lucille Borella: ****.

Norie Guthrie: Um, and you can feel free to talk about the shows or the interiors of the venues –

Lucille Borella: Uh –

Norie Guthrie: – um, or other –

Lucille Borella: – uh, the very first –

Norie Guthrie: – singer songwriters.

Lucille Borella: – place I remember, we, uh –

Norie Guthrie: Oh, continue.

Lucille Borella: Okay.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah.

Lucille Borella: The, the very first place I remember is the U of H Coffee House which was in an old, um, ROTC barracks at the time. And, let's see, people like Don Sanders played there too. Um, from there, when the new, uh, University of Houston student center was built, they had a coffee house there and played with Mance Lipscomb, Jimmy Buffet, um, before "Margaritaville." Mm, people who were there? My favorite band that played there was Rat Creek, uh, never to be heard from again, but they were great. Five guys. Mm –

Norie Guthrie: How did you feel during those early shows? Were you, since you had been in choir, did it mean that you were not as nervous, or were you really nervous? Like, how did you handle –

Lucille Borella: I was –

Norie Guthrie: – that?

Lucille Borella: – always nervous. I hadn't, I hadn't discovered alcohol yet, so, uh huh. I was really nervous. Um, I don't know how one gets over that eventually.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm.

Lucille Borella: Time I suppose.

Norie Guthrie: Um, okay. So you talked about the coffee house. What about, um, Sand Mountain?

Lucille Borella: Sand Mountain was, was home for a while for us, uh, literally because we lived upstairs. There was an, an apartment, and Mrs. Carrick was the owner, and she let us live there in exchange for, uh, char duties. We, we had to clean up the club. Um, there, I saw Willis Alan Ramsey. Before he was Willis Alan, it was just Alan. Um, Jerry Jeff Walker. Mm hmm. Townes Van Zandt, Don Sanders, Eric Taylor, Vince Bell, Mickey Newbury. It was, it was wonderful, all, all of the talent that was there.

Norie Guthrie: Well, um, what was Mickey Newbury like?

Lucille Borella: Uh, quiet.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: We, we, we just, I saw him on stage, and then, you know, we saw each other in passing. It was just, uh, people that I, I came to know and love, or Eric Taylor, uh, David Rodriguez, Don Sanders. Mm.

Norie Guthrie: So I remember from my interview with Don Sanders that he had said that perhaps when you lived upstairs, you might also have, like, MC kind of duties or organizing, um, who would be playing. Did you all have that kind of thing too or not?

Lucille Borella: It's possible.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: Uh, but that would have been Bill. He, he was always a good spokesperson, and so he probably was.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. Uh, what, what was that little apartment like? Do you remember what it was like?

Lucille Borella: It was one room, bathroom and kitchen. And I remember, huh, that I needed to spruce it up, so I painted the far wall cobalt enamel blue. I just, I liked blue at the time. I never heard any complaints after we moved out whether that was forbidden or not. Hmm.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah, I think, I think the building is long gone now.

Lucille Borella: Oh.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah.

Lucille Borella: I'm not in Houston anymore, of course, and I haven't driven by the area in years and years.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah. It looks very, very different. And I've been, yeah, 'cause I've lived here, uh –

Lucille Borella: That's everything.

Norie Guthrie: It's everything. Yeah. I mean, it's just these big, big flashy buildings. It's, uh, gotten pretty fancy in that area. Once, uh –

Lucille Borella: Oh. The Texas Opry House was down the street, and that's all that I remember from the area actually.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm. What was, uh, well, before we get to the Opry House, can you also talk about, um, Old Quarter?

Lucille Borella: Ooh. We did love the Old Quarter. Uh, Dale Sofar was one of the, the managers of that place, and it was, it was kinda magical. Uh, the, again, Townes Van Zandt, Guy Clark, uh, some of the, uh, members of, uh, ZZ Top would drop in. People would just come and, and listen, and, and it was fun.

Norie Guthrie: Um, other people have talked about the kind of difference between Sand Mountain and the Old Quarter. Did you also –

Lucille Borella: Probably, yeah, probably the biggest difference was alcohol. Huh. Uh, Mrs. Carrick did not allow alcohol, um, and I guess the Old Quarter had beer.

Norie Guthrie: Uh, can you talk about the, uh, Texas Opry House?

Lucille Borella: Um, I only remember really one concert that I went to with a neighbor friend, Jackie McCauley, who was a, a DJ at that time, and she was, uh, MC for the night, and I wanted so badly to go back stage and meet – who did I say? Tom Rush?

Norie Guthrie: Oh, I, I forgot who, I forgot exactly who you mentioned, the exact person. I'm sorry.

Lucille Borella: But that didn't happen. Jackie said, "Mm mm. Not tonight, girl." Uh –

Norie Guthrie: Was that –

Lucille Borella: – it was a much larger venue than any of the others. It was a concert hall.

Norie Guthrie: And then, uh, how many did that seat? About a hundred or so maybe?

Lucille Borella: Yeah. Uh, just a guess.

Norie Guthrie: Oh. Okay. That's all right. I, there, we've recently gotten a lot of images from –

Lucille Borella: Oh.

Norie Guthrie: – Texas Opry House from, like, a span of the mid '70s, but it's rare to see the other side. You just see the people who are on the stage.

Lucille Borella: Right. It, I saw a picture recently where a performer took a picture of his, uh, his audience, and I thought, "Oh. That was fun."

Norie Guthrie: It's nice to see them.

Lucille Borella: Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: Um, can you also talk about Anderson Fair?

Lucille Borella: Oh. Now, Anderson Fair actually was another home. Um, we used to eat spaghetti like everybody and play at lunches and then grew up and, and played on the, the stage for, you know, nighttime, weekends, weekdays. Whenever we could.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm.

Lucille Borella: Um, actually, Anderson Fair was the first stop home from the hospital after Bill's and my daughter was born. So before we even got her home, we had to go by Anderson Fair.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm. Did she end up spending time with, uh, Lilly? The chimpanzee? Just wondering.

Lucille Borella: You know, I'm trying to think because Lilly had, I mean – who was the owner?

Norie Guthrie: Lyse.

Lucille Borella: Lyse had Lilly the chimp, and I remember spending, uh, some time with her and realizing that it was a, a big job, that they, they're strong and willful and, uh, not a cute little toy pet.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah, I feel, I don't know who it was, but there was somebody who had mentioned, I, I assume when Lilly was very, very small, that she was sometimes cuddling up with other kids who, whose parents hung out at the venue.

Lucille Borella: That could have happened.

Norie Guthrie: Um, and then finally, um, if we could talk about, uh, the Sweetheart of Texas.

Lucille Borella: Oh. Bruce Bryant. What a great little club. Uh, it was downtown. Um, it wasn't open very long, so we didn't play there very long. Uh, my current husband, Larry, ran the sound occasionally there. Uh, Bill and I and Pete Gorisch played there with Ramblin' Jack Elliott. He was, I just loved it.

Norie Guthrie: Were you, um, were you singing, like, kind of singing accompaniment for him? For Ramblin' Jack?

Lucille Borella: No. Mm mm.

Norie Guthrie: Oh, okay.

Lucille Borella: We just, uh, the trio of us, um, did, were the opening act.

Norie Guthrie: Oh, okay. Okay, okay, okay. Okay, that makes sense. That makes sense. Um, you have ended up mentioning a lot of people while we've been talking, and is there – well, actually, let me ask about you instead of hearing about other people first. So when you were playing at these different venues, were there ways that, um, you and Bill switched up the act for the different, um, uh, for the audience members? Were there different, like, kind of, what are some ways that you guys performed?

Lucille Borella: Entertained? Uh, uh, there were songs that I was drawn to and, and I wanted to sing lead on and others, uh, I love singing harmony. Bill was a wonderful flat picker. Um, didn't, didn't learn nearly enough from him that I should have. Um, but we would just, uh, what fit with what we liked and what our voices could accomplish. Now, you, you might like a Joanie Mitchell song, but that doesn't mean you can sing it.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm. Um, and then did you, uh, work with him on, um, writing? Did you, did you ever write very much together?

Lucille Borella: Never. No. Not at all. Bill, Bill was the writer, and Larry and I actually sing, uh, one of his songs.

Norie Guthrie: So were you not drawn to writing? Were you more drawn to –

Lucille Borella: No.

Norie Guthrie: – performing?

Lucille Borella: Mm mm. Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: No, I al, always felt, uh, my, my English degree, uh, uh, failed me completely.

Norie Guthrie: Oh.

Lucille Borella: And, and moon, spoon, June just doesn't work, and there are so many good songs. I mean, I mean, this is my current songbook.

Norie Guthrie: Oh, wow.

Lucille Borella: It's just, just a li, just a little guy, and I, I got some more to put in it.

Norie Guthrie: Uh, that, that makes sense. Um, I actually am an English lit major for both Bachelor's and my Master's degree, and I really don't have any, like, creative skills. Some of us read it and think about it, and others create it, and that's okay.

Lucille Borella: Yeah. I like it when other people do it.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm. Yeah. Same with me. Um, so are there any relationships with fellow musicians that you would like to talk more about? You have mentioned, like, Don Sanders and David Rodriguez and a variety of people who are still here and some that are not.

Lucille Borella: Right.

Norie Guthrie: Um, are there any that, like, interesting stories or just impressions of those people?

Lucille Borella: Hmm. Interesting stories, we'll have to pass on those.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: Um, but Don Sanders and, and mostly Eric Taylor and, uh, David Rodriguez, I just adored their guitar playing. Uh, David and Eric were, were he, heavy bass users, like, uh, like Don was the heavy word user. I always envied Don with all the things he could come up with for songs. Uh, Eric Taylor was so singular. I mean, you could recognize one of his songs in, in three beats. It was just wonderful.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm.

Lucille Borella: And, of course, all three of those are gone.

Norie Guthrie: I know. And you, um, anything about, uh, uh, David Rodriguez?

Lucille Borella: Uh –

Norie Guthrie: Did you just like his song-crafting ability or –

Lucille Borella: Yeah. Yeah. His, his guitar playing and whatnot. Uh, I knew him at, uh, Anderson Fair. Uh, he and his wife. And, mm, just always nice people. Mm hmm.

Norie Guthrie: So after breaking up with Bill Cade, you began playing on your own.

Lucille Borella: Yes.

Norie Guthrie: So could you –

Lucille Borella: For a while.

Norie Guthrie: – yeah, can you talk about playing at Corky's and the Green Room? And I want you to keep in mind that no one has ever talked about the Green Room.

Lucille Borella: Ah.

Norie Guthrie: So it would be great to learn more about that place.

Lucille Borella: Well, John Moss hired me to come play there, and I remember playing one time with Lucinda Williams. And, uh, I knew that she had started into blues, and that's, that was her love, and so I had one blues song, and, and I played it, and that was the one song that she chose to compliment me on. Uh, that makes sense. Uh, the Green Room was located in a three-story brick building downtown, and it has since been torn down. Um, this was Charlottes 517 next door, the same deal, a hundred-year-old building. They raised it to, um, make a parking lot for a nearby hotel. Um, what can I tell you about the Green Room? The music was on the ground floor. Um, three stories, and I think the upstairs third floor was an apartment for John Moss and maybe a man named Toomy who may have been the owner of the building at that time. And other than the, the picture that I found, uh, uh – I'm sorry.

Norie Guthrie: That's okay. No, it's something. I mean, I, I assume that it was called the Green Room because it was near, in the theater district.

Lucille Borella: Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: So that's my assumption of why it was named that.

Lucille Borella: It, it may have been painted green inside. I –

Norie Guthrie: Oh.

Lucille Borella: – uh –

Norie Guthrie: That sounds special. The idea of green. Um, okay. Uh –

Lucille Borella: You'll have to ask, have to ask John Moss. He was, uh, the one who would know.

Norie Guthrie: Hmm. Uh, is he, is he still alive?

Lucille Borella: Yeah. Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: In Houston.

Norie Guthrie: I have –

Lucille Borella: ****.

Norie Guthrie: – heard that name before.

Lucille Borella: He managed several clubs, uh, Corky's, um, Theodore's, the Green Room.

Norie Guthrie: Oh. Okay. I will search him out then.

Lucille Borella: Um – I could give you his number

Norie Guthrie: That would be great. Um, so do you wanna say anything about Corky's?

Lucille Borella: Um, Corky's was fun. Uh, Bill and I would play there, uh, nights of course, and back then, all the clubs allowed smoking, and invariably, after singing, I would get sick. So, uh, uh, I don't know whether it was the, the smoke lowers were resistant, staying up late at night and having to get up and go to work the next morning. Uh, so I pretty much then decided I didn't wanna sing in smoky venues.

Norie Guthrie: Hmm. That totally makes sense. That makes –

Lucille Borella: Uh huh.

Norie Guthrie: – sense. And I, I've heard that Corky's was pretty loud, that they –

Lucille Borella: Oh, yeah.

Norie Guthrie: – they made a lot of piña coladas.

Lucille Borella: I didn't drink –

Norie Guthrie: Uh –

Lucille Borella: – that, but – oh, there's your kitty.

Norie Guthrie: I just, I think it was Lynn Lingham who had told the story about being at Corky's and trying to sing, you know, a, a nice ballad and then –

Lucille Borella: Ah.

Norie Guthrie: – um, and then that, that blender would turn on, and it would just, uh, get real loud, and it would make it hard.

Lucille Borella: Exactly.

Norie Guthrie: And so they, when I think of Corky's, especially with this kind of, uh, island theme, it seems like a place that would have been that kind of – uh, I don't know if that's the time in the '70s when piña coladas became popular.

Lucille Borella: Yeah, I think so.

Norie Guthrie: I guess it's a thing.

Lucille Borella: Yeah. My mother-in-law really liked 'em.

Norie Guthrie: Um, okay. So, um, you then, um, became, you formed a second duo with your husband, your current husband, Lori, Larry. Lori, Larry. And –

Lucille Borella: Larry.

Norie Guthrie: – um, can you, um, talk about how that happened, how you decided to form a duo?

Lucille Borella: When I was still married to Bill, we knew Larry and his current wife, and Larry wanted to learn to play guitar. So I said, "Oh, I'll teach you," not knowing anything about

teaching since I taught myself. And he said it was probably the most traumatic thing that he ever read through. And he's amazed that he, first of all, learned how to play guitar and second of all, that he still wanted to, you know, be with me later on.

Norie Guthrie: Oh. And then did you end up using, did you gravitate towards some of the songs that you had performed previously with Bill, or did you kind of come up with a new, like, repertoire?

Lucille Borella: Mm hmm, pretty much the same, but just like now, if there's a new song that we really like, we'll learn it.

Norie Guthrie: Um, where did you and, um, Larry end up playing?

Lucille Borella: The same places. Anderson Fair, um, clubs and, and eateries that were opening around Houston. Uh, goodness. I need to call him in here. Where did we play? Just restaurants, Anderson Fair. That's all, and then we moved to Austin.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. So before you, before you moved, um, you were actually working through this whole, through most of this whole time, correct? Like, keeping a regular job?

Lucille Borella: Yes.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah. How is it like kind of keeping that balance of, like, night life plus a 9-to-5 job?

Lucille Borella: Hard.

Norie Guthrie: Hard. And a child too.

Lucille Borella: Yeah. Yeah. Lot, lots of people do it. I, I have a friend who's a fabulous musician, and he's also a librarian.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: That's interesting. Uh, sleep-deprived nights. That's, hmm, when you're young, you've got more energy.

Norie Guthrie: Right. Right. Um, I just wanna, and were there – let's see. I'm just trying to think about – 'cause there's more to you than just being a musician, so I'm trying to kind of bring that out a little bit. Um, let's see. Did you find it, um, I guess did Larry also maintain another job, or was he kind of, uh, was he kind of doing sound as a way to make money during that time or –

Lucille Borella: No. He had full-time jobs. He was a geologist and then went to law school.

Norie Guthrie: Oh. Okay.

Lucille Borella: Full-time jobs.

Norie Guthrie: Full-time jobs. All right. Um, okay.

Lucille Borella: So playing was definitely something for fun.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: Not for a, a career endeavor that we had to drop everything and, and try to sing. No.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. That makes sense.

Lucille Borella: When I was married to Bill, I remember one month, we made \$50.00, and I said, "Okay, this won't work."

Norie Guthrie: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I think you, yeah, uh, it must have been really, it's hard now to do it, and I can imagine it was hard, especially, uh, it was also hard in the past trying to make that. Yeah. Um, okay. In that time that you, when you were s, when you continued playing, and you were starting in the late '60s and playing through, um, the '70s, can you talk about how the venues changed over that time, perhaps how the audiences changed?

Lucille Borella: Hmm. I think it depended on the club owner to direct how they wanted the audience to react. Some places like Anderson Fair, uh, would not tolerate noise. If, if you were talking, you'd get a tap on the shoulder and asked to leave. So, other places, like you said, uh, that, that "C" Club, um, were very loud, and it was just fine as far as the, the owners were concerned. Uh, how they changed, you know, I think it depended on the owner. Hmm.

Norie Guthrie: Okay, so another thing to think about is how did the other singer songwriters change over time?

Lucille Borella: Hmm. Well, I remember Lyle Lovett at Anderson Fair, when he first came to sing from A&M, uh, was so humble and quiet and, you know, still is, but, um, we told him, Larry and I told him that we just loved his songs, and, and we would really like to learn them. And so he made a tape, a cassette tape and gave it to us, and we still have that tape. I don't know if we have a tape player, but we, we still have the tape. Uh, he went on to, uh, be quite famous, and Nanci Griffith was somebody that sang there, and I got her to sing harmony with me on, one night on one song, and Larry was there and recorded it. So I still have that. And, of course, Nanci went to Nashville and got famous.

Norie Guthrie: Do, did you, have you, has, 'cause I know that Larry has digitized, um, some of the reels that you had.

Lucille Borella: Mm hmm.

Norie Guthrie: Um, did he ever digitize that cassette tape?

Lucille Borella: Probably.

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: He's done all of it. Well –

Norie Guthrie: Okay.

Lucille Borella: – should we try, should we try to sell it?

Norie Guthrie: No, no, no. If you wanted to donate that audio, I could totally take the audio, or if you don't have a way to digitize it, I can, I can digitize it.

Lucille Borella: That's ****.

Norie Guthrie: I just wanted to let you know.

Lucille Borella: Okay.

Norie Guthrie: In case it's just, so, 'cause eventually, that little, that little felt bit that's inside will fall off, and it, it won't be able to play anymore. And so.

Lucille Borella: Gotcha.

Norie Guthrie: It's got, it's got a limited lifespan. Um, long but limited. Um, okay. So when did you end up leaving Houston?

Lucille Borella: '89, '90. I'm counting. We moved into this house in '92. We lived in Austin for a year, '91. So somewhere around 1990, '91 came to Austin, and we looked around for a house and land. Larry wanted away from the city, and, uh, so we moved out here in '92, Dripping Springs.

Norie Guthrie: So you just wanted more land? Did you just wanna get out of Houston? Which it seemed like others from your time period also wanted to get out of Houston. Is that true?

Lucille Borella: Yes. Yes.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah?

Lucille Borella: You know, uh, you don't wanna be able to reach out and touch your neighbors. And where, where we are now, we have to really look to even see, uh, a nearby house. We love it.

Norie Guthrie: Um, and so then, um, what happened with your life from then on, wh, after you left Houston?

Lucille Borella: After I left Houston, I went to work for the attorney general's office, and I was there for 20 or 25 years. Um, the only playing and singing that I did was at church. Uh, I joined the choir. We had a praise band. You know, we had six, eight, ten members. Played on Sundays. Uh, and then for some reason, I can – oh, I know. I started doing open mics at, uh, some venues around here and finally convinced Larry to start playing and singing again because he had not touched a guitar in 10 years at least. So we did that, and now, we try to play several times a week anyway.

Norie Guthrie: Can you talk a little bit more about that? Like, where you play and –

Lucille Borella: Oh.

Norie Guthrie: – stuff?

Lucille Borella: Oh. Oh. We play in our house.

Norie Guthrie: Oh, okay.

Lucille Borella: We, uh, before the pandemic hit, were, uh, playing at local venues, clubs. Um, we played at a liquor store once. That, that was something that surprised me moving up here is that if you have doors and they open, you have music. People play music everywhere.

Norie Guthrie: Oh.

Lucille Borella: Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: So do you, when you play now, do you just kind of get your, um, use that big old songbook I think you have, right? And do you just kind of select some for the night and kind of put together a set list, or do you –

Lucille Borella: Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: Okay. Yeah.

Lucille Borella: Uh, things that we're familiar with, of course, come first, and, and I wanna learn a new song, and it's like pulling teeth to get Mr. Borella to learn a new song. Oh.

Norie Guthrie: Um, and so –

Lucille Borella: Fortunately –

Norie Guthrie: – I guess – mm hmm?

Lucille Borella: – uh, uh, fortunately, we, we know a lot of songs. I don't have to learn new ones.

Norie Guthrie: So are you looking forward to performing when, when things get better?

Lucille Borella: Sure. Sure. There's, uh, one special place here, uh, a brewery. We know the owners, and we played there before all of this hit, uh, and played at one of their other locations. The, that one's called Acopon Brewing, and the other place they own is the Barber Shop. And it, it was a barber shop before it became the Barber Shop Bar.

Norie Guthrie: Oh, okay.

Lucille Borella: Uh –

Norie Guthrie: ****.

Lucille Borella: – there's lots of music going on at, at the Barber Shop. Um, picker circles and things like that.

Norie Guthrie: Now, if I'm remembering correctly, don't you also do something with a festival? A folk festival in your area?

Lucille Borella: Oh. We dearly love the Dripping Springs Songwriters Festival. And it was cancelled this year. Um, we're, we're sponsors of it. We just love it so much. People come from all over the world, literally, uh, to perform, and they don't get paid. They bring lots of CDs to sell, and I've tried to, uh, tell friends of mine that if you sell a hundred CDs, that will be, uh, you know, just like you got paid. Maybe more. No. There, there are people that say, "I won't play anywhere unless I get paid." So, uh, sorry. Uh.

Norie Guthrie: Well, yeah, I would assume that it would, uh, it would be very costly to deal with all of those payments, but it, it makes sense, but people give their time in an attempt to promote their own materials. That, that makes sense. Yeah.

Lucille Borella: There are about five venues, uh, in downtown Dripping Springs that would host the singers, and they'd do a round. Like, every 45 minutes, three singers would play, and then they'd go to another venue, play there for 45 minutes. And so, uh, you as a, uh, observer could just sit in one chair and see most of the performers. Uh, and you, you could follow your favorite around to the different clubs, but otherwise, just sit there in that chair and have a beer.

Norie Guthrie: Is that what you usually do? Do you have just kind, do you just kinda stake out a place and you just kinda stay there and wait for the people?

Lucille Borella: Uh, both. You know –

Norie Guthrie: Yeah.

Lucille Borella: – if we've got, got a favorite and we've come to know them, then we'll, you know, follow them around. But yeah, at the, the Acopon Brewery, at the end of the bar, there are two chairs, and, and I say, "Mm, those are for Larry and Lucille."

Norie Guthrie: Oh, that's great.

Lucille Borella: Yeah. Yeah.

Norie Guthrie: Well, do you, do you feel like there is anything else that we should talk about that you have, we have not talked about or anything that you?

Lucille Borella: Hmm.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah.

Lucille Borella: Uh, waiting for this nonsense to be over with. We literally have, have not gotten out, you know, maybe once or twice since March. Um, so we've got a sound system. We've got songs. We, uh, you know, just about ready to get out.

Norie Guthrie: Yeah. Yeah, I, I'm, yeah, I'm, I'm sorry that you're having to, to stay in and, um, but it, uh, it messes with your ability to perform, which I'm sure that you, you of course enjoy doing.

Lucille Borella: Yeah. Mm hmm. But that's why we go ahead and try to play regularly at home.

Norie Guthrie: Mm hmm. And do you, do, would you like to play anything that you normally, that you enjoy playing?

Fix song transcription

Lucille Borella: An old song, "Wayfaring Stranger."

I am a poor wayfaring stranger / Traveling through this world alone / There's no sickness, no toil or danger / In that bright world to which I go / I'm going there to see my father / Going there, no more to roam / I'm only going over Jordan / I'm only going over home / I'll soon be free from every trial / And this form will rest beneath the sod / I'll shed the cloak of self-denial / And enter in my home with God / I'm going there to see my father / Going there, no more to roam / I'm only going over Jordan / I'm only going over home / I'm only going over Jordan / I'm only going over home

Norie Guthrie: – well, is there anything else that you want to cover that you feel like we haven't?

Lucille Borella: Mm, it, it might be time to go to the brewery and get a beer.

Norie Guthrie: Oh. All right. Well, um, I thank you so much for taking the time, uh, to do this interview. I really appreciate it.

Lucille Borella: Thank you very much for asking. It's a real honor.