

[00:00:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Is Ok. This is Jarek Zaba for the Amp Kingston Project from Creative Youth exploring art, music and pop fashion heritage in the Kingston borough and beyond. Uh, today is Monday the 14th of November, and I'm with Pete McSweeney and Pete O'Sullivan at Creative Youth's Office in Kingston upon Thames. Uh, Pete McSweeney was in attendance at David Bowie's famous launch of Ziggy Stardust at the Toby Jug in Tolworth in February, 1972.

[00:00:27] **Jarek Zaba:** And his friend Peter O. Sullivan has wider recollections of the Kingston Music scene during this era. Uh, Pete, uh, Pete One. Hi, . I think I'll say, uh, Pete, uh, do you mind stating your, uh, name for the tape and your date and place of birth?

[00:00:41] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, it's Peter McSweeney. Um, I was born in Kingston upon Thames, uh, second of the second 54.

[00:00:47] **Jarek Zaba:** Lovely. And the same to you, Pete.

[00:00:49] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I'm Peter Os Sullivan. I was born on the 25th of the sixth, 1954, and I was born in Nelson Hospital in Merton.

[00:00:56] **Jarek Zaba:** Lovely. Um, so I guess. Pete on my left [00:01:00] here. Um, uh, if I could just start with you. Yeah. Um, and just get a sense of your early years, uh, childhood, um, and your relationship to this area.

[00:01:10] **Jarek Zaba:** When, when, when did, uh, how long have you been around this area?

[00:01:13] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, so we, I mean, I was born in, in, in Kingston Hospital and, uh, grew up in New Malden, so, uh, since 1954. So, uh, all my memories are, are of this area. Uh, Pete and I went to school together, primary school and secondary school , um, over 50 years ago.

[00:01:31] **Pete McSweeney:** Oops. And, uh, yeah, no, we, we've seen it kind of grow up through, uh, various stages. Uh, certainly new Malden is, is now kind of totally Korean, but earlier. You know, it, it was very kind of, uh, you know, post wall, uh, just, just looked. Um, you know, as you see in the old textbooks, kind of kids playing in the street building, uh, Barney Barras and, [00:02:00] uh, kicking footballs.

[00:02:01] **Pete McSweeney:** It was, it was, it was a different era, uh, and certainly growing up, uh, into the music. You know, listening to the music and

how it had changed through the fifties, sixties, seventies was, was an amazing time, you know?

[00:02:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. How about, how about yourself, Pete? I mean, what are your sort of earlier memories of this area?

[00:02:19] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, again, I've lived in New Malden apart from a little couple of years, living in long way away in Tolworth. Um, when I got, when I got married, I've lived in New Malden all my life and still do, and so Kingston was the, the hub of things you did. Um, I used to work in Bentalls as a Saturday boy, um, in a book department.

[00:02:40] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I remember that. Um, so, and we both worked as clean as in C&A as well. Yeah. Um, after school and earning a few pennies. Um, but regarding the music scene and that era, in the seventies, that was the most significant cuz there was different venues you could go, Kingston [00:03:00] Poly. Um, Coronation Baths. I mean, you, you probably won't remember Coronation Baths.

[00:03:05] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Um, it's, it was a swimming pool, um, and they used to have bands in there. They used to board over the swimming pool. Uh, in there I saw, I saw America there. Um, so that was a, a very small, intimate venue. So, so the Polytechnic and other pubs as well. Um, so you. It's, you know, quite an interesting era to be actually growing up, especially in the early seventies.

[00:03:33] **Jarek Zaba:** What are some of your earliest memories of actually listening to music? Like your, your, your, your early tastes in your youth? Um, either of you.

[00:03:42] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, mine was actually, was the Beatles more was my first rule because my sister is five years older than me, will be playing Beatles records in her room and whatever.

[00:03:54] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So I, Even though I was not really at the start of that, cuz [00:04:00] in, you know, born in 54, uh, Beatles were the big influence because of her being, playing that music throughout the house. So I'm, I'm, I'm hearing it. So that's my first real thing in, into that. But then obviously, um, I left school in 1971. So that it's all the start of it then.

[00:04:19] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Was that sort of emerging, you know, bands, all those might call it heavy metal now, but you know, the likes of Deep Purple and

all that type of music. And, uh, that is the, what sort of the start of it for me is that type of type of music.

[00:04:35] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Was there a sort of very noticeable, the sixties is over now and the seventies has begun kind of, uh, a transition?

[00:04:41] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think so because as, as the sixties came to an end, there is. , the singles type approach. And then once you got into the seventies, there's more, become more sort of concept albums and, um, more ser.. What was deemed more serious stuff. [00:05:00] Whereas the other sixties up for me was more. Pop based rather than that.

[00:05:04] **Pete O'Sullivan:** That's when I think that new era, starting the early seventies onwards was that concept album. And you know, the album cover meant a lot and all those type of things as well.

[00:05:14] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm. , how about yourself, Peter? What's the taste? You were,

[00:05:17] **Pete McSweeney:** Well, my dad actually worked for Decca Records, so he pressed the records in New Malden.

[00:05:22] **Pete McSweeney:** Ah. Uh, so, uh, yeah, so quite often we'd, uh, you know, we'd get the Moody Blues album or, you know, some of the albums coming off straight from the press effectively. Um, but my er, my earlier, um, uh, growing up if you like, there was a lot of, in my, you know, I, I didn't have an older brother or sister, so it tended to be mom and dad's record, so it was a bit, kind of, Tom Jones and, you know, uh, older style of music. But I think when the sixties came in, um, there was the, there's no communication like there is now, but there [00:06:00] was radio kind of pirate radio kicking in. I remember going on holiday and seeing the pirate radio station just out. Parked out, you know, just in the sea, which was incredible.

[00:06:10] **Pete McSweeney:** But the, the sounds of the sixties were so varied and brilliant. I think "I Wanna Hold My Hand" was the first single I bought. Um, but I think from then it moved forward and, uh, towards the end of the sixties, it, it was a great era and, and, uh, the music pattern was so varied, but it slowed down and it, I think I, I think maybe it was cause we were coming to the age of 18 and stuff, but also there was a need for a new sound as it went into the

seventies. And uh, I think we were looking for it, you know, it, uh, there was a definite mood of change.

[00:06:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. Um, and in terms of live music, I mean, what did, what are your earliest memories of attending going to venues in, in the area?

[00:06:56] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, I went with you, uh, one of the [00:07:00] first gigs we went was cuz the Polytechnic was the place.

[00:07:03] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I mean, they used to have, you know, the amount of bands that they had on now, the, uh, they were sort of the leading bands at the time. How, whoever organized that was really good. I mean, he, yeah. Um,

[00:07:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, we're, we're hoping to speak to some of, some of the organizers of that, of that stuff. Yeah.

[00:07:18] **Pete O'Sullivan:** They had some great bands.

[00:07:20] **Pete O'Sullivan:** We saw Mott the Hoople there. Yeah. Uh, together. Um, and tell a little story about him. Yeah. He had these lured yellow jeans, flares. They were flares. . He got so excited cuz he saw Ian Hunter that he asked him to sign his trousers.

[00:07:36] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. . And he did. Yeah. And he did.

[00:07:39] **Jarek Zaba:** You don't still have 'em , do you?

[00:07:40] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I know, I asked him that the other day.

[00:07:42] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, that'd be great. For our exhibition if they still have those.

[00:07:46] **Pete McSweeney:** And, and the shoes. I wish I still had the shoes. I had the high heel. Yeah, yeah. Monsters platforms. Yeah, yeah,

[00:07:51] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. But that was the gig at the Poly, was it?

[00:07:53] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Yeah,

[00:07:54] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. So the Polly was one of the, the, the more frequented..

[00:07:57] **Pete O'Sullivan:** That was. That's where. Sort of [00:08:00] bigger bands tended to Yeah. Go to.

[00:08:03] **Pete McSweeney:** I, I had a quick look and, um, in 71, um, I went there and saw Yes and Queen, they were on the same bill. So that was, that was quite a concert. And then, uh, um, and, and then Mott the Hoople. Mm-hmm. , um, later. But, uh, but yeah, that's my memories of the Polytechnic.

[00:08:24] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And the other one was, probably, in that, but that was probably more to the, um, towards the mid seventies because the early ones was going to, to, uh, Toby Jug, they, they had a club in there called the Fox Club.

[00:08:38] **Pete O'Sullivan:** You, you had a little paper card if you were a member of the Fox Club. Um, and cuz it was around the back, weren't it? It was round the back. Yeah. Where the state, the room, it's just a, I mean it's a, just a room in a pub, you know, function room and uh , you know, I saw band, you saw, oh, I didn't see Barry there, but I saw [00:09:00] Nazareth and Status Quo.

[00:09:02] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So it was a lot of, it was quite intimate space.

[00:09:05] **Pete McSweeney:** I mean, a number of times Fleetwood Mac played there. It was incredible, you know? Yeah. The, the band list is extraordinary.

[00:09:12] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. Considering it's such a small space, but it's a lot of bands did a lot of start, well, starting off, did, did start, do gigs in there so that they're, they, they started off in obviously these small places and then obviously, Much, much bigger, but the hell of a lot of them. That's where they, they started.

[00:09:29] **Jarek Zaba:** Did you see Fleetwood Mac?

[00:09:30] **Pete McSweeney:** No, I didn't. No. I wish I had, but

[00:09:33] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah, I've, I've seen it. It, it was on the list, obviously, and we, we used to get, you know, flyers around locally, what was on. Yeah. Um, but obviously didn't go to every one, but it was a regular thing to go there.

[00:09:46] **Pete McSweeney:** I, I, I, I reckon, cuz my mate, Andy Keys, God dressed his, oh, he's dead, uh, dead now.

[00:09:50] **Pete McSweeney:** But, um, he was the music guru, uh, for me, and he tracked NME and so he'd be like the voice of, you know, what, where to go [00:10:00] next. And I'm sure that's where we picked up, uh, the, the. Bowie gig at, uh, Tolworth.

[00:10:06] **Jarek Zaba:** What were Queen like at the Poly?

[00:10:08] **Pete McSweeney:** Very early Queen. Yeah, very early Queen. Um, uh, yeah, I mean, it was just loud and great.

[00:10:15] **Pete McSweeney:** Um, my memory is more of, uh, Rick Wakeman on the, on the, you know, uh, playing for Yes, If I remember correctly.

[00:10:24] **Pete O'Sullivan:** One thing about the Mott the Hoople one was that David Bowie was there that night. Yeah. He came on stage because he wrote "All The Young Dudes", the song for Mott the Hoople. So he obviously knew them. So he didn't, um, appear there or sing or anything.

[00:10:43] **Pete McSweeney:** No.

[00:10:43] **Pete O'Sullivan:** He did appear at the end. He appeared with them on the stage. Yeah, he

[00:10:47] **Pete O'Sullivan:** did track them. Yeah. Quite a lot. Bow and not, yeah.

[00:10:50] **Jarek Zaba:** I have to confess, they're not being familiar. Is it Mott the Hoople?

[00:10:53] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. M o double T.

[00:10:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, right. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:10:56] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think they friend of mine, Fred. , [00:11:00] you know, you're Fred, he used to go school year below us.

[00:11:03] **Pete McSweeney:** Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Butcher.

[00:11:04] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. Fred, uh, Fred the butcher. Yeah. Um,

[00:11:08] **Pete McSweeney:** he, he's actually a butcher. Yeah. .

[00:11:10] **Pete O'Sullivan:** These are mad. He still goes to go, uh, gigs now all over the place. And he went to see Martin Hooper recently. Oh really? Yeah. So they still, uh, still.

[00:11:21] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. I'm just looking at 'em now. They're from Herefordshire.

[00:11:24] **Jarek Zaba:** Not far from where I'm from. I'm from Worcestershire, so, yeah. Yeah. Interesting. Um, and I just wanna pick up on the thing you mentioned about the trousers, just because I know fashion and music were obviously very closely connected at the time. I mean, was there. We talked about the shift for in music from sixties to seven seventies.

[00:11:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Was there a shift in fashion as well?

[00:11:45] **Pete McSweeney:** Oh, amazing. Yeah. Or it, or it seemed to me, obviously I'm just 17, 18, 19. But I mean, these trousers were something else. They were, they were bright yellow. They were, they had, uh, they were flares, but the front was a [00:12:00] nightmare when you went to the lou because you actually had.

[00:12:03] **Pete McSweeney:** It was like a flap. So you had, you had about 16 buttons each side to put the flap down and then had four buttons to . They like hipster type button. Yeah. It was a nightmare, you know.

[00:12:13] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Uh, so, but flares, flares were the thing, I mean, PE people would make their own flares by, or get their mum to. , they'd cut a pair of jeans and they'd insert a triangle of another contrast in material to make them even wider.

[00:12:28] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah, and as you were really outraged, as you had a pair over these things called loons, where, I mean, they were about 18 inches wide at the bottom. Yeah.

[00:12:38] **Pete McSweeney:** So awesome. I mean, I was working at Bartley's Bank at the time and I had these, these, these monster high boots, which were black but red heels, which were about two inches tall.

[00:12:49] **Pete McSweeney:** Uh, and you know, you clump around on these things. I mean, it was hilarious.

[00:12:53] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. That was the shoes wise. That was early seventies was the defined, it was platform shoes for [00:13:00] men. They must, you know, they, the front soul. . Yeah, it was one and a half, yeah. Inches and a say with heels about four inches At the back.

[00:13:10] **Jarek Zaba:** Where, where were these trends coming from? Were you taking your cues from musicians or was it like something coming out of America, or do you

[00:13:17] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think it was, it was musicians you think was it was it was the telly as well. Yeah. So you know the pop programs that were were on as well, because you would see people in certain fashions also film.

[00:13:32] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So that and other media people,

[00:13:35] **Pete McSweeney:** Top of the pops and stuff was coming on, wasn't he?

[00:13:37] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Exactly.

[00:13:38] **Pete McSweeney:** So he had a continuous, you know, bands kind of trying, you know, the glam rock thing was coming in, so, you know, and, and the new musical Express was, you know, and, and when Bowie here, I mean he was everywhere cuz he was a good looking guy and uh, and outrageous.

[00:13:55] **Pete McSweeney:** And it's just sold magazines, didn't he?

[00:13:57] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And also, when. . Some [00:14:00] people start wearing it, you know, I mean that. Then you get to peer level where. You know, like any kids nowadays, you know, a fashion starts, it's once it gets onto streets and people see it, they copy it. You know, it's, it's that initial who starts, who starts it first, Don.

[00:14:14] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And, uh, how did your parents feel about your, your fashion choices and your music choices at the time? Were they disapproving or did they, were they

[00:14:22] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, I think, I don't think they cared that much.

[00:14:25] **Pete McSweeney:** I think so.

[00:14:25] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And they knew that If they said anything, we would've said tough. You know, when, when, you know, we've left school, we're, we're 18,

[00:14:33] **Pete O'Sullivan:** we're working.

[00:14:33] **Pete McSweeney:** I think my sisters loved it. It was just, uh, they, they loved the boots I bought. Just,

[00:14:38] **Pete O'Sullivan:** That's another thing you had, tank tops.

[00:14:40] **Pete McSweeney:** Tank tops, and as well, yeah,

[00:14:42] **Pete O'Sullivan:** normally brightly colored, multi stripy colored ones, you know. Ridiculous now.

[00:14:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Was your sister an older sister?

[00:14:49] **Pete McSweeney:** No. Younger,

[00:14:50] **Jarek Zaba:** younger sister was, was she into the makeup at the time and all of that sort of stuff?

[00:14:53] **Pete McSweeney:** Oh no. She was just, A bit younger than that. So I'm, I'm kind of just 17, so she's,

[00:14:59] **Pete O'Sullivan:** My [00:15:00] sister was more into, so she was five years old than me. She was into all that flower power type stuff. So all her friends know, my mom thought, you know, she's a hippie and she stays out late and she's got these flowers in her hair and all this.

[00:15:13] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So she was at that era. So I obviously, being that older sister, I could. It's up with generations that's slightly about older cuz you know when she's 18. I'm 13, so you know, we are com two completely different animals. A 13 year old boy . Yeah. And an 18 year old girl. You know, our, our lives are completely different.

[00:15:35] **Pete McSweeney:** Well I obviously, I can't show you the over this, but

[00:15:38] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:15:39] **Pete McSweeney:** This is what I was saying to Pete earlier that, so Bowie came on, uh, Toby Jug to the Clockwork Orange theme.

[00:15:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm.

[00:15:46] **Pete McSweeney:** And and I, I remember at the time thinking he's nicked the outfit or copied it because that's Clockwork Orange with the boots and everything.

[00:15:55] **Pete McSweeney:** And this is Bowie. So he, he's used the boots and he's glammed it [00:16:00] because What year did the Clockwork Orange come out?

[00:16:02] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Uh, um, would've been that, I think 70. Oh, lemme look it up. I'm not sure. Stanley Kubrick, wouldn't it? Yeah.

[00:16:10] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. I mean they're, they're miles apart, but you can 71. So when? The year before.

[00:16:15] **Pete McSweeney:** The year before, but came along. Yeah. So he's

[00:16:17] **Jarek Zaba:** certainly been inspired by it, hasn't he?

[00:16:18] **Pete McSweeney:** Absolutely. Cuz he's come onto that theme as well. Yeah. You know, as he's walked onto the stage. Yeah. So you can see how fashions, uh, evolve.

[00:16:29] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And yeah, I mean, obviously one of the reasons we're keen to talk about fashion is Bowie's such a key figure within, within that, within that world. Uh, just before we get onto the Bowie gig, um, the Toby Jug overall, um, we've already, yeah, you've spoken about Fleetwood Mac being there, but I wonder if you could just talk a little bit about the character of the place, what your memories of walking in there.

[00:16:51] **Jarek Zaba:** What, what kind of feelings does it invoke?

[00:16:53] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, it was, uh, I think it was. , maybe you are doing something. It was new and and [00:17:00] exciting and you know, you're going to see live bands that something we didn't do before, but, and, and

because the venue was, was local and, um, easy to get in. And also the fact is, it was, you were very close and it's, um, very sweaty.

[00:17:17] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:17:18] **Pete O'Sullivan:** To get, try and get a pint of beer. You had that hatch.

[00:17:21] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah,

[00:17:22] **Pete O'Sullivan:** because it was, um, separate part of the pub. It didn't have a bar as such. It had a hatch into the main pub area. Such like you have to go up to the squeeze in this little hatch and try and get a pin of beer because that's the other thing is we'd, um, start just starting drinking as well.

[00:17:40] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. So that was another thing about, you know, well we went into pub miles earlier than when we were 18 mind, but, but as people do. But um, that was an also. Another factor. You're going out watching a band and going, starting, starting drinking as well.

[00:17:58] **Jarek Zaba:** Would you, uh, would you walk [00:18:00] there from New Morden?

[00:18:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Would you get the bus or,

[00:18:02] **Pete McSweeney:** uh, I actually got, um, I just, uh, passed my test, so I drove there in a, a yellow. Ford Popular that cost 25 quid

[00:18:12] **Jarek Zaba:** 25 quid.

[00:18:13] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I had, I had a Honda 50.

[00:18:15] **Pete McSweeney:** Oh, did, yeah. Yeah. I had a Honda 50 as well.

[00:18:17] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah.

[00:18:18] **Jarek Zaba:** Well that's the interesting thing about the Toby Jug is it was originally a, a driving pub almost, wasn't it?

[00:18:22] **Jarek Zaba:** Cuz it was there on the, on the,

[00:18:23] **Pete O'Sullivan:** on the corner. Yeah,

[00:18:24] **Jarek Zaba:** yeah, yeah. And it was almost there. It was a stop off for people. Yeah. Driving, driving through.

[00:18:28] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. I mean, it was a big old traditional pub. What is it?

[00:18:32] **Pete O'Sullivan:** It was Courage Pub. It was that built in that area , it had a saloon bar. A public bar and like a lot of those pubs as well, not now, but they had, they had big function rooms, um, in them mainly for sort of weddings and things like that.

[00:18:47] **Pete O'Sullivan:** But that's where it changed. They obviously thought it would make more money by, by having bands in them, but there, there were other pubs in the, the one in Kingston Road that used to have,
[00:19:00] I know, um, Eric Clapton played in there. See him myself, but I read his autobiography and, and because he was a student at, um, the art college at, uh, Kingston, uh, cuz he used to live in Ripley and go there.

[00:19:14] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So there was a lot of pubs that did have rooms that. Bands played in as well.

[00:19:20] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, he, Kingston. I kind of read that the Toby Jug, I dunno if it's true or not, that John Lennon's dad served behind the bar as you do.

[00:19:28] **Jarek Zaba:** I've heard that, yeah. . Yeah. I, I feel like that's like a rumor that's never been verified.

[00:19:32] **Pete McSweeney:** Exactly.

[00:19:32] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think it's either his dad or his uncle. I'm sure it was in that article guy wrote.

[00:19:37] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, it might have been. But uh, but yeah, I remember going to the Toby Jug. It was. a great experience. You know

[00:19:45] **Pete O'Sullivan:** and so the other venue that I went to in Kingston was the Coronation Baths. So, um, there's a few bands I saw there.

[00:19:52] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:19:53] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Not as much as, because obviously it had to be when they closed, obviously it'd be a bit wet, otherwise. Um, [00:20:00] so it, it, but certain, um, weekends, uh, in the evening, the Saturday evenings, they, they had these boards that they just. slotted over the swimming pool and

[00:20:11] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh,

[00:20:12] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And you, uh, and the band was at one end and, uh, you, you did that, yeah.

[00:20:16] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, I didn't realize there were still pools at the time. I thought it was former pools that had been converted to a venue.

[00:20:21] **Pete O'Sullivan:** No, no, it was a small, um, as I say, it was called Coronation Baths and that was where I used to go swimming as a kid, whatever. But then they started to do, do bands. I say the band, the only band that I can remember is America, you know?

[00:20:38] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Um, famous for a Horse With No Name is for the one of the,

[00:20:41] **Jarek Zaba:** Am I right in thinking that's on Denmark Road? Uh,

[00:20:43] **Pete O'Sullivan:** yes. Yeah, that's where it was. Yeah. Yeah. Just down on the left. That's where it was. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:20:48] **Pete McSweeney:** My sister was a lifeguard there. Oh, right.

[00:20:50] **Jarek Zaba:** Really. Ha. Um,

[00:20:53] **Pete McSweeney:** Just to complete the circle,

[00:20:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Well, uh, let's, let's move on to the most
[00:21:00] famous Toby Jug gig of all.

[00:21:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Was, which, which we, which we've mentioned David Bowie, I mean, prior to February, 1972. Uh, were you a fan of Bowie? Had you already come across his

[00:21:09] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:21:09] **Jarek Zaba:** His music?

[00:21:10] **Pete McSweeney:** I was, I was, .

[00:21:12] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Obviously, um, space Oddity had kicked in in 69, um, and that had been a hit. And I, you know, I liked the sound of that. And then into the seventies and you, you know, I was, look, I was looking for sounds that sounded different.

[00:21:29] **Pete McSweeney:** And um, I, I heard two of his songs. One was, um, Changes which, uh, had just come out before we went there, which was a single, which I really liked. Uh, like the sound of him. And, and I think that was probably the thing that made, made me go along to, to the gig cuz I, Space Oddity and Changes it's like this might be something different. Um, and also Peter Noone did a cover of Bowie's called Oh You Pretty Things. And it was on, it was on the [00:22:00] radio and I heard it. And um, it was like a jukebox jury thing where they, they played a new track and it's like, what you think of this? And they played it as like a double 'A' side and the other side.

[00:22:12] **Pete McSweeney:** The A side, this was a B side, and I listened to it and I heard the panel going, the B side's pretty good. And I'm thinking that B side's a hit, you know? Um, and it was, um, but so I thought, oh, blimey, he writes for other people as well. So I thought that that was the influencing, you know, behind it. I'd heard three of his tracks and, uh, and wanted to hear more.

[00:22:37] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. You actually bring up a, an interesting point about the radio. I mean, how were you guys discovering music at this point? Was it primarily through the radio? Was it through television? Um,

[00:22:48] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think

[00:22:48] **Jarek Zaba:** getting into record stores and listening to records there,

[00:22:51] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think, uh, um, your. Kathy, your first wife worked in the um, she did in the record Department of Bentel.

[00:22:59] **Pete McSweeney:** She [00:23:00] did? Yeah, yeah, yeah. With the booths. You know where you go in

[00:23:03] **Pete O'Sullivan:** and you listen to it. So

[00:23:05] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah,

[00:23:05] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Often I used to go up there, um, the lunchtime when I used to work there cuz uh, and go in those booths. And she used to let me,

[00:23:15] **Pete McSweeney:** yeah, yeah.

[00:23:15] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Listen to loads of records for, um, so that, that, that was an influence. But I think radio more than tv, cuz there wasn't that much apart from, you know, was it All Our Lucky Stars or something and

[00:23:27] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, I was trying to think of the radio.

[00:23:29] **Pete McSweeney:** Who was it? Um, Radio Luxembourg,

[00:23:31] **Pete O'Sullivan:** yeah, we used. You know, in the, when we, so we started to get our first cars, so, you know, they didn't have cassettes or whatever, may, maybe eight tracks, but primarily you're in the car, you've got a car, you've got a radio, and as you say, normally because you know, Radio One didn't exist.

[00:23:50] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And that was the place that the, the stations that you were listening to, because that they were. this, this modern music.

[00:23:57] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:23:58] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Rather than the BBC or [00:24:00] the, the, the, the, the standard, those type of, I think so, it was, and, and also, you know, 'ohh we're listening to a pirate station'.

[00:24:06] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. .

[00:24:07] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And course the disc jockey on that were all different the way their attitudes.

[00:24:12] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. The BBC was very

[00:24:13] **Pete O'Sullivan:** They stayed

[00:24:14] **Pete McSweeney:** BBC

[00:24:14] **Pete O'Sullivan:** yeah.

[00:24:15] **Pete McSweeney:** You know,

[00:24:15] **Pete O'Sullivan:** this was something new, you know, this was, uh, of our era. They're, they're, they're, you know, they're experimenting and they're giving us. , all new stuff that we probably wouldn't have.

[00:24:25] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. And I think quite often, I'd, uh, before I'd go to bed, I'd, I'd listen to the radio, just, uh, Radio Luxembourg to hear, the, you know, and there'd be a countdown, you know, like, like today.

[00:24:37] **Pete McSweeney:** So you're always in, you know, you're getting involved with the music scene to hear what's, what's going on, so, so, You are tracking the bands if you like. So although Bowie wouldn't have been on the charts at that time, uh, you could see that the charts were changing. You know, if you look at the sixties or the seventies, there's a definite, uh,

[00:24:59] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And then, and we [00:25:00] got tape players.

[00:25:01] **Pete O'Sullivan:** We used to record, uh, you know, the Top 20 show on the radio in an, um, and some of. , uh, yoyou - Luxembourg as well. You should, you, you record things from the radio rather than buy them. Um,

[00:25:16] **Pete McSweeney:** yeah, you did. It was, it was

[00:25:19] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And then play

[00:25:20] **Pete McSweeney:** It was a strange world.

[00:25:21] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah.

[00:25:22] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And were you guys buyers of vinyl as well, or?

[00:25:25] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Oh yeah. Yeah. I mean all the, you know, an album coming up, uh, was, was a big thing.

[00:25:32] **Pete O'Sullivan:** If you add, have you got this or whatever, cuz also you - half of it, you're buying it for the, for the actual album cover.

[00:25:39] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:25:39] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And the art and the design on that, because that, that was a big thing, you know? Um,

[00:25:45] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, I mean music shops, the selling LPs, it, it was like the new sweet shop, wasn't it when you grow up? Yeah. Cause you, you go in there and, and there's, it's not quite the same these days with, you know, people streaming and things like this. You, you've [00:26:00] lost that kind of, uh. I see Banquet Records, it's still around the corner.

[00:26:04] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah, that's right.

[00:26:04] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Yeah. Just, but, you know, the, the, the, the sense of excitement just going in and looking at all the album covers and,

[00:26:13] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And people would know what music got, because often you'd go to other people's houses, you take your albums or sometimes you take 'em to school.

[00:26:21] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Of course, people would know what your music takes cuz they could just look at the cover and know what what band your,

[00:26:26] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:26:26] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Band you're into. So say the, the actual design and artwork was, was quite a big part of it.

[00:26:32] **Pete McSweeney:** I, I, I was saying to Pete the other day that, um, when we were at school in the, in 1970 or whatever, they did ask us to bring in an lp, you know, all the kids.

[00:26:42] **Pete McSweeney:** And so all the kids brought in their favorite LPs and it was, uh, shame we couldn't take a photo of that event, you know, just, but it was. It was a reflection of our, our kind of music at that time.

[00:26:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, it's, it's, it's really interesting that you, I was just gonna ask you about artwork actually, [00:27:00] because, um, you know, we were talking, you were saying the whole thing isn't the same as streaming and actually artwork is one of the big things you lose with the streaming cause you just have one little tiny little picture.

[00:27:09] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, yeah.

[00:27:09] **Jarek Zaba:** Rather than this big cover and an, an inside sleeve and all of that stuff.

[00:27:13] **Pete McSweeney:** Absolutely.

[00:27:14] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, the other thing was, they're, they're often, you know, I've. Um, an album by Nice. It's called Five Bridges Suite, and it's like, it folds out about three or four, five times in pictures. And also the other thing that you, you didn't get, obviously you, you got also, you got all the words as well to the, the lyrics to the, the songs as well.

[00:27:36] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So, you know, because sometimes you'd listen to on their own and actually you couldn't understand what, but then you actually read it and. And that can help you understand the song more. Cause you're actually seeing the words as well as hearing the words now that it was, it was a big thing. The, the album cover and all that, all that together.

[00:27:55] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Incredible.

[00:27:57] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. So let's, uh, turn [00:28:00] to up and talk about February, 1972. That, that night, I mean, um, paint, paint us a picture of, of what you remember from that evening. I mean, what are your sort of foremost memories of how that night went?

[00:28:10] **Pete McSweeney:** So, so I remember. I remember Andy Keys was, uh, came along with me, uh, Kathy, my first wife, and uh, I think Terry Laughaner as well.

[00:28:23] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Oh, right.

[00:28:23] **Pete McSweeney:** Uh, so there was four of us went along in my, uh, little yellow car with a blue stripe down the front, like. The police kept stopping me for, cuz it was racey Ford Popular. Um, yeah. And we pulled up at the Toby Jug and went in and my memory as we went through the door, uh, on the right hand side was the desk where they, they stamped your hand.

[00:28:46] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Mm.

[00:28:46] **Pete McSweeney:** And on the wall they had the albums. . And, uh, it had, it had, uh, this, one of the other things that intrigued me about by was, uh, The Man Who Sold The World, the, it [00:29:00] it, it got a lot of press cuz he

was wearing the dress. Um, which, you know, obviously the, the music industry loved, you know, something outrageous.

[00:29:09] **Pete McSweeney:** But I remember they put the albums on the wall. Obviously Ziggy wasn't out yet cause this was, the album was released later that year. And, uh, and then we got a drink and then went through the bar. As I remember, I thought it was on the, the, the actual band area was on the left. It was at an angle, I think.

[00:29:27] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Yeah. And, um, and I think we just went in and, and, and stood up. And my memory of of Bowie coming in was, was in that Ziggy outfit, um, with Clockwork Orange playing. And, uh, you know, and a feeling of. , something's gonna happen. You know, and, and uh, and it was cuz the music was, was so vibrant. You know, if you, you listen to Ziggy Stardust, I mean, uh, it's not all the album, but, uh, you know, if you [00:30:00] listen to the songs from it, uh, they're, they're driving and they've got, they've got real kind of, uh, Newness to it, you know?

[00:30:10] **Pete McSweeney:** Um, so I mean, I was totally blown away by it. Um, I remember they did Space Oddity, and it, and it was a very simplified version. I think he did it on his stylophone, you know, the, the new Rolf Harris thing or whatever.

[00:30:24] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah.

[00:30:25] **Pete McSweeney:** Um, so it wasn't the massive production, but um, but it was just great, you know?

[00:30:32] **Pete McSweeney:** And I remember going to the desk and saying is this music on the album? And it's like, well, no, he's just, he's done Hunky Dory. But this, a lot of it is new. So, um, you know, from that gig, I went to the record, um, store and ordered it on the first day it came out. Uh, I just thought I, I've gotta, I've gotta hear that stuff.

[00:30:54] **Pete O'Sullivan:** You were hooked.

[00:30:55] **Pete McSweeney:** I was hooked. Hooked, yeah.

[00:30:56] **Jarek Zaba:** Because the album came out just, just after the gig. Is that, is that right?

[00:30:58] **Pete McSweeney:** It came out I think in [00:31:00] June. Yeah. The gig was in February. Yeah. So,

[00:31:04] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, I think Tim Harrison estimates of around 60 people in the room that are, does that sound like right to you?

[00:31:09] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, I mean, it was,

[00:31:10] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I think, uh, it, it could hold a bit more.

[00:31:14] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I'll say hundred was probably, its, its, its tops. Because it wasn't that big, was it?

[00:31:20] **Pete McSweeney:** No.

[00:31:20] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And you were all squashed in.

[00:31:22] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:31:22] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So it, um, it seemed more, I think,

[00:31:26] **Pete McSweeney:** I mean I was trying to, I we must have all been standing with pints. Was it?

[00:31:30] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah, it was all standup. There was no seats. No, no, no. It's all squashed. So it's squashed in against,

[00:31:34] **Pete McSweeney:** it's a small area, you know, it's like you're not a hundred with seats, you are a hundred standing.

[00:31:38] **Pete McSweeney:** So the area is, it's, it's, uh, but that generates a kind of atmosphere, you know?

[00:31:47] **Jarek Zaba:** Do you think

[00:31:47] **Pete McSweeney:** intensity. .

[00:31:48] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Hmm.

[00:31:49] **Jarek Zaba:** Do you think everyone else in the room was similarly captivated as you were? Was there an atmosphere of, of, of something special happening?

[00:31:56] **Pete McSweeney:** I think so, um, you know, it was a mix of
[00:32:00] people, but, uh, um, I was totally blown away by it.

[00:32:04] **Pete McSweeney:** Um, you know, and, and

[00:32:07] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Did Andy say anything to you about it?

[00:32:10] **Pete McSweeney:** I, yeah, he's,

[00:32:12] **Pete O'Sullivan:** he's pretty laid back weren't he.

[00:32:13] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. it was trad well, Andy was a friend of mine. He, he died um, kind of earlier this year. Um, and oh, it's a shame cuz his memory, he was Mr. Memory man, you know, but, um, I, no, I never really got to talk to him on it. So, uh, but.

[00:32:34] **Pete McSweeney:** But yeah, no, um, I dunno if any, anybody could see Bowie getting as massive as he did get. But I do remember thinking that I discovered him . And so, uh, so and so in a way, through his life, I've kind of tracked his life to see how my mentor's getting on.

[00:32:56] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, very good. Um, and yeah, his, his rise [00:33:00] was fairly meteoric after that, wasn't it?

[00:33:01] **Pete McSweeney:** It was, it was, um, from there I went to see him at, uh, uh, where was it? The, the Rainbow, uh, which I think was the best gig I ever went to. Cause it was Roxy Music and David Bowie, which was, I mean, I was, I like Roxy Music as, as well.

[00:33:19] **Pete O'Sullivan:** That was a, that was a, i, I went to The Rainbow a few times. That was a good

[00:33:23] **Jarek Zaba:** Where was the Rainbow?

[00:33:23] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Finsbury Park.

[00:33:25] **Pete O'Sullivan:** It was the Astoria Theatre. It was a, a theatre stroke picture house. And it'd been converted into, cuz it, it was two tier.

[00:33:34] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:33:34] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Cause it was like a cinema, so you had, uh, stalls and then the balcony above. So it's quite, quite a big venue. I saw Thin Lizzy. I saw Rainbow at the Rainbow. . . Um, so there was, that was a big cuz a long way for us to, to go to North London, but that, that was one of the ones I would travel to The Rainbow.

[00:33:56] **Pete O'Sullivan:** It was a good,

[00:33:57] **Pete McSweeney:** it was an amazing gig. And, and the thing was,
[00:34:00] um, Elton John and, uh, Brian Ferry, uh, were in the bar. They'd actually came along to. listened to Bowie and, uh, I, I stood on Elton John's toe and he bought the round.

[00:34:15] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, he,

[00:34:16] **Pete McSweeney:** I was with Andy Keys and kathy not,

[00:34:18] **Pete O'Sullivan:** He's difficult to see. He's not that tall.

[00:34:19] **Pete McSweeney:** No. . He makes quite a yelp when you stand on his toe .

[00:34:24] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh, he was he big at the time? Was he big at the time Elton John?

[00:34:28] **Pete McSweeney:** No, no, no, no. He was still, well, he, I can't remember when Goodbye Yellow Brick Road came out. He was, he was.

[00:34:34] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Oh, he had, it was before that. I'd say one of his first singles. My Song, wasn't it?

[00:34:39] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:34:40] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Uh, that was probably one of his first breaks. Yeah.

[00:34:43] **Pete McSweeney:** So I think they, they were kind of moving at the same pace, you know? Yeah. But, uh,

[00:34:48] **Jarek Zaba:** And um, with Bowie, and I think, you know, you mentioned Roxy Music with them as well, to an extent. Again, going back to the fashion thing, there was sort of this sort of androgynous thing.

[00:34:57] **Jarek Zaba:** You know, men were wearing more clothes that were, [00:35:00] you know, a bit more traditionally what women were wear or they'd wear makeup and stuff like that. I mean, was that like a, a noticeable, noticeable shift and was Bowie a big part of that?

[00:35:09] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well, I think that was more, must have been, I wasn't into it, but. . But I think to me that was more of influence on the, on sort of, you know, like sweet and all that glam rock where they, they would wear glitter and makeup and eye makeup and things like that.

[00:35:27] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Um, so a lot of them were dressing like that in that glam rock. Era as well.

[00:35:33] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. I ne I never got into the old,

[00:35:35] **Pete O'Sullivan:** But Bowie was different in the sense that, you know, he'd reinvent himself every couple of years or less, you know, you, you thought that's what he was then, and then he'll cha he change, he changed physically and musically.

[00:35:49] **Pete O'Sullivan:** He, he, yeah, he's done that all over his career.

[00:35:52] **Pete McSweeney:** That was the thing that, you know, it was like, if I could freeze time, I'd like to freeze that Toby Jugz [00:36:00] era that that whole discovery of Ziggy Stardust and, and that excitement and, and dynamic feeling that I had of that time. And I, I, and the thing was I never wanted him to move on.

[00:36:14] **Pete McSweeney:** You know? It was like, no, that's, that's it.

[00:36:18] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, you said you, um, you ordered the album, uh, as soon as, as soon as you could. Yeah. Um, how did, how did. Uh, receive the album when you first

[00:36:27] **Pete McSweeney:** Oh, I loved it. Yeah. Really did. Um, yeah, the, um, the, the album just, uh, the first side is, is kind of. I can't remember. I haven't played the album in years, but it is kind of, slowish starts off with Five Years, I think.

[00:36:42] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Five Years

[00:36:43] **Pete McSweeney:** And then the second album, the second side goes, it's me talking about an LP where there's two sides. You know, people who listen to this won't. Won't think about two sides to an album, but, but it was, music was definitely two sides, you know, [00:37:00] and the second side went a bit Speed, uh, speeded up a bit with Star and Ziggy Stardust.

[00:37:05] **Pete McSweeney:** Hang Onto To Yourself. It was, you know, it kind of went out with a bang.

[00:37:09] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I mean, another thing with LPs was, uh, his, you listened to the, the, the songs in a chronological order and cuz a. and that that made sense because the way the music w was arranged, it would go into one another.

[00:37:27] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:37:28] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Because I remember buying an album once and it had been remastered from the original.

[00:37:33] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:37:33] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And when I played it, I thought, there's something wrong here. And I worked out, they changed the tracks around. , they played him in a different order.

[00:37:41] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:37:41] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And it thought, my mind, my mind wouldn't work. It thought, no, no, you have this song, then that song in, in the following order. You know,

[00:37:48] **Pete McSweeney:** It's like, it's like Mr. Blue Sky by ELO that album.

[00:37:51] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah.

[00:37:52] **Pete McSweeney:** The last words on, on the first side of Mr. Blue Sky is, please turn me over. Yeah. Which, you know, it's like, because it's [00:38:00] an LP.

[00:38:00] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. .

[00:38:03] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. No, it's an interesting, interesting thing. Yeah. Um, in terms of differences between then and now and streaming and all of that sort of stuff, it's an interesting point you make about the two sides, about how that helps to guide the art because they know they're gonna have the stopping point in the middle.

[00:38:19] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Yeah.

[00:38:19] **Jarek Zaba:** Whereas now that's not the, not the case. It's interesting.

[00:38:22] **Pete McSweeney:** It's, yeah. And it worked so well because quite often a lot of the albums, if you go back and think there's two sides, the two sides can, can almost be different themes.

[00:38:32] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah.

[00:38:32] **Jarek Zaba:** And then beyond the, the sort of early seventies period that we're talking about, did you find your music tastes evolving as the seventies went through, or was it, would you, you know, were you sort of more the same as a as as well, as the decade evolved?

[00:38:46] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Personally, I think I've got a reasonably eclectic taste. Because I mean, we went to discos, so we'd be listening to, you know, Motown, we were listening to uh, uh, that type of soul songs and [00:39:00] things like that. So we, music was. Different for a certain appropriate situations. Whether you were going to a disco or actually you went, listened to a, went to listen to a band, or even at home you listened to an album, you know, Dark Side of the Moon or, or something.

[00:39:15] **Pete O'Sullivan:** But then you'd go out and listen to different music. Because you're going dancing or whatever. So it is a cross section

[00:39:23] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:39:23] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Of, of, uh, things you did, you didn't, you I think I, I've never got stuck. I mean, the seventies probably one of the music I like. Most still now, but the eighties and even nineties.

[00:39:39] **Pete O'Sullivan:** There are certain bands, whatever that i, I like. So it does evolve. I don't think you, you don't don't stay in it. There might be things that you always love.

[00:39:49] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:39:49] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Cause they were the first significant things. But no, I think, um,

[00:39:55] **Pete McSweeney:** I think, yeah, I think it, you know, the seventies, it kind of kicked off at a [00:40:00] pace, didn't it?

[00:40:00] **Pete McSweeney:** With uh, with glam rock coming in and, and, um, and it was all mad, you know, it was sweet and all that stuff. It was, it was just insane. Mud. Mud. And yeah, it was, it was a, it, it started off kind of quite poppy, you know, quite, you know,

[00:40:21] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Well there was, I think there was two, two, there was that side. . But then, then there was the more concept album, side

[00:40:27] **Pete McSweeney:** yeah, that's true.

[00:40:29] **Pete O'Sullivan:** More, a bit more heavy, a bit more, um, thoughtful, you know?

[00:40:33] **Pete McSweeney:** And you had Yes. Didn't you?

[00:40:35] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Oh, I love Yes.

[00:40:36] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:40:36] **Pete O'Sullivan:** That's one of my favorite bands.

[00:40:37] **Pete McSweeney:** Really long albums and stuff,

[00:40:38] **Pete O'Sullivan:** yeah.

[00:40:39] **Pete McSweeney:** Um,

[00:40:40] **Pete O'Sullivan:** the Yes album was one of my favorites.

[00:40:42] **Pete McSweeney:** It was a brilliant album, wasn't it?

[00:40:43] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah.

[00:40:44] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. I I love their cover of, uh, America, the Simon & Garfunkel tune.

[00:40:48] **Jarek Zaba:** That's the,

[00:40:49] **Pete O'Sullivan:** yeah, no, they did. Jon Anderson had a great voice and, and it was a, uh, no they were good, but again, that was more. that concept music. I [00:41:00] mean that Yes album is, you know, typical example of that type of

[00:41:05] **Pete McSweeney:** Mm.

[00:41:05] **Pete O'Sullivan:** In the songs.

[00:41:06] **Jarek Zaba:** And then in terms of Kingston's scene, um, do you remember, obviously a lot of the venues we are talking about are no longer around.

[00:41:13] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, do you remember some of the venues closing down? Do you remember new venues cropping up? Do you remember things changing at all over the years?

[00:41:20] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Um, I remember lots of pubs have shut in Kingston and there used to be hundreds of them. Um, But there wasn't, apart from, there wasn't that many. I went to, I think I went to the Kingston Hotel a couple of times.

[00:41:34] **Pete O'Sullivan:** There was some, bands there,

[00:41:38] **Pete McSweeney:** I, as I say, I, uh, I was working in, um, uh, Tolworth or Chessington, uh, when they pulled down the Toby Jug. So I did take photos of it, uh, cuz I thought, oh, somebody's making a real mistake here.

And I, I remember thinking it at the time and, and, and I thought, I need to take photos because [00:42:00] it's the type thing.

[00:42:02] **Pete McSweeney:** People won't even care, you know, because there was an air of, well just pull it down, you know, it's an eyesore. Um, and I, you know, it was quite a sad day for me. Just, you know,

[00:42:13] **Jarek Zaba:** yeah. I think from my understanding, I think it was, I think it was Tesco owned the land at the time.

[00:42:16] **Jarek Zaba:** What, was it Tesco?

[00:42:17] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah, Tesco. Tesco's bought it to build a superstore on it, and

[00:42:22] **Jarek Zaba:** which they never got plenty permission,

[00:42:23] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Never got plenty permission.

[00:42:24] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And then they owned the land for nearly 10 years until they sold it to another property developer. , And of course they're working on it now. So there's about seven or 800 homes being built on, on that land as we speak.

[00:42:38] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah,

[00:42:38] **Pete McSweeney:** But it was derelict for 20 years, right?

[00:42:41] **Pete O'Sullivan:** It was, yeah. It was a long time. The Tescos kept on trying, I think they tried about half a dozen times to get planning permission, but the Kingston refused it.

[00:42:49] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah. My understanding is that they sort of. It was almost like in the dead of the night. They sort of went and tore down the Toby Jug because they let you know. They, I think they maybe knew if
[00:43:00] they

[00:43:00] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:43:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Went through a proper consultation process. People would go, no, this is actually a, a, a venue of

[00:43:05] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:43:06] **Jarek Zaba:** Cultural significance.

[00:43:07] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yes. Cause it's quite strange that that went, but the Tolworth Bowl that's been there forever. Well, it seems, that that never, that never got part of the scheme.

[00:43:18] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm. So

[00:43:19] **Pete McSweeney:** yeah.

[00:43:19] **Jarek Zaba:** Now the Hollywood Bowl.

[00:43:21] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. But it's been the Tolworth Bowl for well, as long as I've been alive. Yeah,

[00:43:25] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Yeah. No it's, uh,

[00:43:27] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Cause that was right next door to it.

[00:43:29] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. By the way, did you guys ever go to the Swan? That's one of the venues that we are looking at, uh,

[00:43:34] **Pete O'Sullivan:** In Thames Ditton?

[00:43:35] **Jarek Zaba:** No. Um, this, it's around the back of what is, uh, the Knights Park campus. Um, up, up, uh, I think Mill Street is the name of the

[00:43:45] **Pete O'Sullivan:** I know. Mill no, I know Mill Street,

[00:43:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Kingston. Um,

[00:43:47] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Don't, don't remember a pub called The Swan.

[00:43:49] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, yeah, it's now, it's now owned by the uni and they use it for, um, but you used to have like rock and roll nights. Um,

[00:43:56] **Pete O'Sullivan:** no, I didn't go there.

[00:43:57] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, no, fair enough. Um, yeah, just like to ask cuz that's just [00:44:00] one of the, one of the places we're looking at.

[00:44:02] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, but yeah, no, just talking about yeah. Toby Jug has gone, um, the Surbiton Assembly Rooms are no more. The university doesn't quite host the music like it used to when it was the Poly. Um, I mean, what, what, what do you make of Kingston and music today? Um, do you have a sense of the direction we're traveling in, in terms of live music around here?

[00:44:23] **Pete O'Sullivan:** There are, you know, my local pub has, it's a very, you know, small bands on every, every Saturday and then, and, you know, and you got the, um,

[00:44:34] **Jarek Zaba:** Which pub is that, sorry?

[00:44:35] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Pub called Woodies is in New Malden.

[00:44:37] **Jarek Zaba:** Yes, I know it. I know it. Yep.

[00:44:38] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Um, cause I live about a hundred yards down the road from here. .

[00:44:41] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. No, I like that pub. Yep.

[00:44:42] **Pete O'Sullivan:** But then

[00:44:43] **Pete McSweeney:** It's my local as well.

[00:44:44] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. . But the, the Black Lion in Surbiton, you know, there are, but obviously these, the, the pubs are small and, uh, so they, the amount of bands. You've got the one down Richmond Road as well. What's it called? Um,

[00:44:59] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, the [00:45:00] Grey Horse.

[00:45:00] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Grey Horse.

[00:45:01] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:45:01] **Pete O'Sullivan:** So it tends to be now live around here are pubs.

[00:45:06] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm. ,

[00:45:07] **Pete O'Sullivan:** um, but not. Obviously you, you're only gonna have to get three or three people and it's just a normal pub. It's not a special room or, or anything like that. So it is inherently, it, it, it's small stuff.

[00:45:21] **Jarek Zaba:** Mm-hmm. ,

[00:45:21] **Pete O'Sullivan:** there's no real venue in Kingston for, you know, you know, one or 200 people to go along type thing. And

[00:45:31] **Pete McSweeney:** I, I think the, the, the thing you're probably never gonna replace is the intimacy of the places like the Toby Jug had the pulling power to pull in those big bands that were current in the day. I mean, if you could do that today, then, you know,

[00:45:47] **Pete O'Sullivan:** it'd be nice to have, nice to have a venue where up and coming people could, could start their careers off, bigger than pubs, but, you know, they, they wanna move on to that.

[00:45:58] **Pete O'Sullivan:** But I don't think, there isn't a stage [00:46:00] for them to move on from a pub to another, another stage. But do, do people want to do that now? Do they just wanna record music?

[00:46:07] **Pete McSweeney:** I suppose the other thing is,

[00:46:08] **Pete O'Sullivan:** and stream it.

[00:46:09] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. The other thing is, if you look back on the sixties and seventies, the, the, the, uh, the musicians that were making it were, were.

[00:46:17] **Pete McSweeney:** Well, very small in numbers, in comp. You know, really if you look at it, if you look at that scene we were talking about in the sixties and seventies, you know, you were, if you looked at the people who are in the charts and, and newcomers, you know, you 50 people max or whatever, you know now because it's streaming and you know, I mean, there's millions of bands aren't there.

[00:46:41] **Pete McSweeney:** Um, so you wouldn't know where to start. You know.

[00:46:44] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And also the ability to people, which wasn't before to re, sorry to record, relatively cheaply.

[00:46:50] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:46:51] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Can do it in your own house or whatever. That, that the technology that you can record your own music and put it on the. On the internet, [00:47:00] is. It it, for young people, that's probably the, the avenue that they're, they're going down now, not going into smaller venues and things like that.

[00:47:10] **Pete McSweeney:** I mean, we, we, uh, record an album every year, me and my kids. So we, we've recorded 10 albums, uh, and bizarrely, I wrote a song called, This One's For David Bowie, and I recorded it in the December before he died in the January.

[00:47:25] **Jarek Zaba:** Oh wow.

[00:47:26] **Pete McSweeney:** I know.

[00:47:26] **Jarek Zaba:** Wow. And that was on the, the Radio Jackie, uh, news, uh, kind of sheet that, that was on the, on the radio. Uh, it had a link and, uh, and it was on the bulletin and stuff.

[00:47:40] **Pete O'Sullivan:** You had your songs played in America mate.

[00:47:42] **Pete McSweeney:** I did , I did.. Fame at last.

[00:47:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, did uh. Uh, I didn't realize you played yourself. Were you? Play guitar? And

[00:47:51] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, I'm, I'm, I'm an awful guitarist. No, my, well, I, I've got two sons that can play guitars really well. So, um, [00:48:00] basically, and we all write, uh, and, uh, mainly dream songs. In fact, I, I had a dream song from John Lennon last night, which was strange. But anyway,

[00:48:11] **Pete McSweeney:** uh, so

[00:48:12] **Jarek Zaba:** Is that a song that comes to you in a dream?

[00:48:13] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:48:14] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. That's interesting.

[00:48:15] **Pete McSweeney:** Most of them, uh, Most of them are.

[00:48:17] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:48:18] **Pete McSweeney:** So very,

[00:48:19] **Jarek Zaba:** Very, very coincidental. I was just listening to a podcast this morning about an album, uh, in which all the songs were based on the person's dream. So, um, yeah.

[00:48:26] **Pete McSweeney:** Well all, that's bizarre. All if you listen, I've, I've recorded 50 songs now, uh, in, in the studio, and they're all dream songs.

[00:48:35] **Jarek Zaba:** Wow. Wow. I I, I'd definitely like to hear some of these. Um, yeah. Um, yeah, I was just gonna pick up on what you were saying about the loss of, um, venues and the fact that you don't have the larger ones and more so. Yeah. Um, Banquet Records, who you mentioned earlier are still very much

[00:48:52] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah,

[00:48:53] **Pete O'Sullivan:** yeah.

[00:48:53] **Jarek Zaba:** Putting on a lot of live music.

[00:48:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, but um, they were very against the closure of the Hippodrome just opposite this building.

[00:48:59] **Pete O'Sullivan:** That's [00:49:00] right.

[00:49:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Which now a pile of rubble. Well it's

[00:49:02] **Pete O'Sullivan:** a big hole in the ground.

[00:49:02] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, well it's, yeah. And it's gonna be flats like everything.

[00:49:05] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah, everything else.

[00:49:06] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, um, but that was the last, I believe, thousand plus capacity venue in Kingston and now, and now that's gone. So they Banquet now do a lot of their stuff at PRYZYM, the nightclub, um, over by the station.

[00:49:19] **Pete McSweeney:** They're doing, they're doing a great job there. They're doing a fantastic, uh, cuz they, I dunno if you know, but they have, uh, like the, when people, uh, about to release an album,

[00:49:30] **Pete O'Sullivan:** do a lot of launches there don't.

[00:49:32] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. But, but they've

[00:49:33] **Pete O'Sullivan:** And big names as well.

[00:49:34] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah.

[00:49:34] **Jarek Zaba:** Huge names. Yeah.

[00:49:35] **Pete McSweeney:** Yeah. Gary Barlow, my wife goes to loads of them cuz they're like, it's a tenner to get in and that's, you get an album, you get a CD or 15 quid to get in, you get a cd.

[00:49:44] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:49:44] **Pete McSweeney:** And it's, it is like a 45 minute set or something. And they do it two or three times an evening.

[00:49:50] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:49:50] **Pete McSweeney:** That's great. You know,

[00:49:51] **Pete O'Sullivan:** it is good. It's, it's at least getting people to see easily. The p the people that, that like their music for a reasonable price
[00:50:00] and everybody's happy that they get to get, sell their music and they, and the people get to see the

[00:50:06] **Pete O'Sullivan:** artists

[00:50:07] **Pete McSweeney:** And the venues are kind of reasonable size cuz you know, if you go to some of these mass, you know, Wembley or you know, uh, they're just monster venues.

[00:50:16] **Pete McSweeney:** You, you end up looking at the screen.

[00:50:18] **Pete O'Sullivan:** You need binoculars to see 'em. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:50:20] **Pete McSweeney:** It's not the same.

[00:50:21] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. I was at Glastonbury this year with Paul McCartney playing, and I'm so far back that you yeah, you basically did need binoculars, it was, uh, you know, the atmosphere was great, but you, you, you weren't anywhere near him.

[00:50:32] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Exactly.

[00:50:33] **Pete McSweeney:** I think my first festival was, uh, Bath in 71 and I, I went there with George Stroud on my Honda 50 and, uh, nearly killed us. But that's another story. . .

[00:50:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And I guess just, just to round, round off, um, we, yes. I'd just like to ask everyone that I interview these, this, this question. It's just a kind of almost word association kind of thing.

[00:50:57] **Jarek Zaba:** So our, our project is amp, art, [00:51:00] music, pop fashion. If I just say those words, what's like the first thing that comes to your head, uh, to you first, Pete.

[00:51:09] **Pete McSweeney:** Sounds good. , . No, it sounds, um, sounds like I'd like to go and see it. Whatever it is.

[00:51:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[00:51:17] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Yeah. Similar. Yeah. Sounds interesting. The project, I'd like to see that obviously when it ends and you finished it, what, what date will that be with?

[00:51:26] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, well, uh, so the exhibition we're gonna, we're gonna do on the, uh, is gonna launch on, I think the 30th or the 31st of March.

[00:51:33] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Okay.

[00:51:34] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, I will email you to confirm that just so you can get it in your diaries. Um, It's the 30th, which is a Thursday.

[00:51:41] **Jarek Zaba:** It'll probably be like a late afternoon, early evening thing right, where we just, and that will be the launch night. So that's where all our interviewees will be there. Um, and then it will be open at the museum for, I think until like November or something. So it'll be there for like six months or something like that.

[00:51:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, but yeah. Um, unless, do you guys have anything that [00:52:00] you feel along the, along this topic that you haven't mentioned that you'd like to mention?

[00:52:05] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Nope. Not for me.

[00:52:07] **Pete McSweeney:** Uh, no, I don't think so. No.

[00:52:09] **Jarek Zaba:** No. In which case, uh, yeah. Thanks for your time.

[00:52:12] **Pete O'Sullivan:** Okay.

[00:52:12] **Pete McSweeney:** Thank you.