

[00:00:00] **Jarek Zaba:** 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. It's Wednesday the 4th of October 2023. And I'm with Sue Smallwood at Creative Youth's Fusebox space here in Kingston, um, and we're here to talk about Sue's memories of Kingston's music scene around the late 70s and 80s.

[00:00:25] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, Sue, do you mind stating your name for the tape as well as your date and place of birth?

[00:00:29] **Sue Smallwood:** Sure, I'm Sue Smallwood and I was born in Kingston upon Thames, um, 8th of April 1962.

[00:00:39] **Jarek Zaba:** Great. Um, so yeah, you said you were born in Kingston there. So, um, yeah, I guess, I guess, uh, Kingston is where you were born and raised in.

[00:00:48] **Sue Smallwood:** I grew up in East Molesey but I went to school in Kingston. Um, my dad worked in, uh, Hawker Siddeley in, um, in Ham. My brother went to Rivermead next door. So Kingston was a, a [00:01:00] kind of hub for school every day. And also. the music scene. So, uh, you know, that was the centre of everything. Certainly not East Molesey.

[00:01:13] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, so one, one thing just, uh, with these mics is just avoid hitting the table in any way. I know it's, it's, it's easily done. It's like, it's, it's, it's. Yeah, yeah, you do have to kind of straitjacket yourself just to make sure. Um, yeah, they just pick up everything is all. Um, yeah, so, um, but were you fond of Kingston?

[00:01:32] **Jarek Zaba:** Did you, did you like visiting there?

[00:01:34] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, not necessarily. It was just a, you know, a practical thing of going there to school. And, uh, and that's where most of the venues were. But apart from that, I didn't really have any, you know. Particular fondness for it. My family goes back a long way in Kingston. But I, I wasn't as conscious of that then really, um, when I was younger.

[00:01:58] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, but I found it more interesting, [00:02:00] you know, now, now I'm older and I found out some more history about my great grandparents. Um, but no, not really.

[00:02:08] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, did you say your dad worked for Hawker Sydney?

[00:02:10] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. Which became British Aerospace.

[00:02:13] **Jarek Zaba:** Would he have worked on the, the, um, Hawker Hurricane and all that, all that sort of stuff?

[00:02:17] **Sue Smallwood:** No, he was, he was just, um, in the accounts department.

[00:02:20] **Jarek Zaba:** Right.

[00:02:20] **Sue Smallwood:** But we did go every year to the, uh, the family outing, the, the, uh, they used to, um, do a big thing at Dunsfold Airfield. So we did see the, uh, um, the first ever public, um, showing of the Hawker, the jump jet taking off. Which is amazing and you know in the 60s

[00:02:39] **Jarek Zaba:** and it's all a big team effort, right?

[00:02:40] **Jarek Zaba:** You need the people in accounts to make the planes as uh, as much as you need the designers But was there much music in your household growing up?

[00:02:49] **Sue Smallwood:** Um not on my mom and dad's part, but my brother was my kind of Um, a pivotal point really for music and he, he just played [00:03:00] music to me all the time, which originally would have been, uh, bands like, um, you know, Pink Floyd, um, um, Kevin Ayres and sort of English eccentric kind of music and, uh, psychedelic music like Gong.

[00:03:18] **Sue Smallwood:** And he really guided me, and I really liked everything that he played, pretty much. And he still is, he's like my kind of, my John Peel. He's always saying what's new, what's going on, and saying you should listen to this, listen to that. He never looks back. He's amazing. So, he was a really, a brilliant music guide.

[00:03:37] **Sue Smallwood:** And he was the first person that got me playing in bands. Because he, um, he wanted to start a band. And be the singer and the bass player. And he bought a bass from, uh, Woolworths in East Molesey but he realised he couldn't sing and play the bass at the same time, so I kind of toddled along with that. Have we got any water?

[00:03:57] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, yeah, I can go get some.

[00:03:59] **Sue Smallwood:** Sorry.

[00:03:59] **Jarek Zaba:** That's fine. [00:04:00]

[00:04:00] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh no, I messed it up.

[00:04:01] **Jarek Zaba:** No, not at all... Yes. Sue, you were saying about your brother introducing you to playing music.

[00:04:07] **Sue Smallwood:** I was, yeah. Um, and I was gonna say before that, um, there was a guy that used to... I used to go around all the schools in Kingston teaching everyone guitar.

[00:04:18] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, and he was called Chris Berry. I don't know whether anyone's ever mentioned him.

[00:04:23] **Jarek Zaba:** I don't think so.

[00:04:23] **Sue Smallwood:** But he was, uh, I don't quite know how this was organised around all the schools, but, um, most of the people that played in bands in Kingston, at least one of them would have been taught guitar by this guy Chris Berry.

[00:04:35] **Sue Smallwood:** And so, I don't know what happened to him. But, um, thanks Chris Berry. He taught a lot of people how to play guitar.

[00:04:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay.

[00:04:43] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, so yes, so my brother started a band and he brought in some of his friends from school who were amazing musicians. Harvey Penn, who's a great drummer, Mark Sheehan. Um, guitarist, [00:05:00] um, Paul Norman, who's an amazing guitarist.

[00:05:04] **Sue Smallwood:** And so, they kind of took me under their wing, because I was only probably 13. They were a bit older than me, and so... Yeah, just started really enjoying playing in bands that way. And then, um, my brother introduced me to Chris White. I don't know whether you've, um, anyone spoken about him, but he was... A very influential, um, performer and songwriter in Kingston, who's sadly no longer with us, but a really prolific songwriter.

[00:05:35] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, uh, so I used to hang out with him, and through him, uh, I was introduced to, um, Pete and Derek. Um, because, uh, well, Peter Tagg and Ralph Cade had been in Cardiacs or Cardiac Arrest and they'd just left and they wanted to start their own band and they wanted a bass player. So through this guy, Chris White, I [00:06:00] then met them and that's, that kind of went on to that phase, which was really fun.

[00:06:04] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And so in these early years, your brother, I assume is an older brother, by the way.

[00:06:10] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, he's a year and a half older, Nigel.

[00:06:12] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. And, um... So in these early years of you playing, are you very much influenced by those Pink Floyd British eccentrics as you mentioned?

[00:06:24] **Sue Smallwood:** Probably, and also, you know, the Stooges and sort of that type of garage music I suppose.

[00:06:32] **Sue Smallwood:** We just wrote our own stuff though, we didn't play any covers as far as I remember.

[00:06:42] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, maybe we did a few, I can't remember. Um, I guess we probably were, yeah. And I'd started getting into Bowie as well. Um, I would have been around then, yes. There were lots of influences really.

[00:06:58] **Jarek Zaba:** What are your earliest memories [00:07:00] of sort of live music? Like, was it going to see bands locally in Kingston?

[00:07:04] **Sue Smallwood:** Kingston Poly yeah. I think my first gig my brother took me to was Kingston Poly uh, and I think it was, I think it was the Curse of Flyers, I think. I remember the support band that were called Dust on the Needle. And I've never heard of them since. And I think it's just because it was the first band I, I saw that, I just remembered who they were.

[00:07:30] **Jarek Zaba:** you've given me all sorts of uh, yeah. Obscure research.

[00:07:33] **Sue Smallwood:** No, I, they probably never existed. I've probably made that up.

[00:07:37] **Jarek Zaba:** Dust on the - I like the name.

[00:07:38] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah,

[00:07:38] **Jarek Zaba:** I like the name. I mean, what, what are your memories of the, the Poly as a venue? 'cause we, we, we, we are kind of looking at the Poly quite a lot because, um, there were a number of high profile musicians who, who played there.

[00:07:50] **Jarek Zaba:** And there's a sort of period in the seventies where, you had Queen and Elton John and, uh, Yes and Pink Floyd and, um, yeah, what do you remember about?

[00:07:59] **Sue Smallwood:** [00:08:00] I didn't see anyone that famous. Um, we went, you know, every couple of weeks, I'm sure, or at least easily once a month to gigs, but I, um, I, uh, Marine Girls was one band that I really loved seeing there.

[00:08:19] **Sue Smallwood:** Uh, but that, I think that was a little bit later.

[00:08:22] **Jarek Zaba:** And these have been in the main hall on Penrhyn Road?

[00:08:25] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. Yeah. Um, but yeah, I'm afraid I, you know, it all merges into one really. Yeah. I can't think of anything other, any other specific bands at the moment that I saw there.

[00:08:37] **Jarek Zaba:** And just so I've got the, um, the sort of timeline right in my head.

[00:08:41] **Jarek Zaba:** So when you start playing music, how old are you when you get that bass guitar?

[00:08:46] **Sue Smallwood:** Well, I think I was about 13.

[00:08:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay. And at this time, are Cardiac Arrest already going as a, as a band?

[00:08:53] **Sue Smallwood:** I, I think they, I feel that [00:09:00] they started around the same time. Well, no, of course, a little bit before the, the Trudy because Peter and Ralph were already in.

[00:09:08] **Sue Smallwood:** So maybe a couple of years before. So that would have been about 75 or something. I'm not entirely sure of the history. Um, but I know that once we started, um, getting our songs together. Um, we all used to rehearse in um, well it was kind of like a rehearsal, a giggy rehearsals, in the Dolphin pub, which I think was next to Kingston Grammar School.

[00:09:36] **Sue Smallwood:** That's my memory. And we used to play at Saturday lunchtimes. So it would be Cardiac Arrest in their dungarees. You know, everyone's just kids and having a great time. I can't even remember whether there was an audience. I think we just used the space, and I think the Three Fishes as well.

[00:09:56] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, so these, these, these names have cropped
[00:10:00] up.

[00:10:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, the Dolphin, the Dolphin I had down as Fife Road I think, next to where the Bentalls Centre is now, but maybe I'm confusing it with another one. Um, Three Fishes is, I can't remember where that one was, but yeah.

[00:10:14] **Sue Smallwood:** Three Fishes was next to Kingston Station.

[00:10:17] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:10:17] **Sue Smallwood:** Um. Which was quite a hardcore pub, kind of Hell's Angel pub.

[00:10:23] **Jarek Zaba:** Right.

[00:10:24] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, but obviously there were, once we'd started gigging, um, The Grey Horse was one of the most, uh, popular. And that's probably one of the places I used to go to most to see bands.

[00:10:35] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:10:35] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, yeah, what other pubs? Oh, and, you know, The Swan. Um, and... Is there one called The Cocoanut?

[00:10:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, well, The Cocoanut on Mill Street.

[00:10:48] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, that's right.

[00:10:48] **Jarek Zaba:** The Cocoanut still exists. It's not a music venue. It's mainly known for its Thai food these days.

[00:10:55] **Sue Smallwood:** Not for its coconuts.

[00:10:56] **Jarek Zaba:** No. No, um, The Swan [00:11:00] is an interesting one because, uh, on Monday I interviewed someone who played in a band that had a residency at The Swan on a Sunday night and they had these kind of legendary rock and roll nights in the 60s.

[00:11:12] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, so, um, yeah, yeah, no, no, all these venues are... Yeah, it's just interesting to think of this tapestry of venues that no longer exist.

[00:11:22] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, I mean, I know the Grey Horse is still there. Um, not the, well, I think the Ram Jam at the back is now the venue. Um, so it's changed a bit, but at least it's still there.

[00:11:33] **Jarek Zaba:** Yep. And yeah, in the exhibition, we were sort of keen to celebrate those that are still going as well as mourn those that are no longer with us. You know, spaces like this, I think are an important evolution of, of, you know, where people can perform.

[00:11:48] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, oh, of course there was the Grove Tavern as well, which, so, so my brother's band, we ended up having a band called Pork.

[00:11:55] **Sue Smallwood:** Well it was his band.

[00:11:56] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, you were saying about a band called Pork

[00:11:59] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, that was my, [00:12:00] my brother's, one of his bands. And, um, we, the premise was you got on, well, this is what we did. We got onto the stage and then we all swapped. So we all played things that we couldn't really play. I remember Emrys Baird. Do you - have you heard of Emerys?

[00:12:14] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh, he, he was, his band was the Wardens. Yeah. Um, he's amazing. He still plays. He plays at Ronnie Scott's now. Amazing guitarist. Um, but yeah, the, the Grove, uh, that was in Cambridge, kind of part of the Cambridge Estate. So it was a little bit, a little bit dodgy. Um, but it was great. And, uh, yeah, Trudy played there a lot, um, and uh, yeah, the Peel, that's not there anymore, is it?

[00:12:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Yes, yes, no, no, that's, uh, that's no more. Um, so, yeah, so these, so you, so you were playing with Cardiac Arrest, is-

[00:12:52] **Sue Smallwood:** no, no, we, we, no, I played in the Trudy.

[00:12:55] **Jarek Zaba:** Right, okay.

[00:12:56] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, so that was, um, Peter Tagg and Derek
[00:13:00] Tagg, Ralph Cade was the singer and so Peter and Ralph had come from Cardiac Arrest and, uh, and me on bass.

[00:13:08] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:13:08] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, but that band changed, like, personnel quite, quite quickly and, um, I kept coming and going and there were different singers and they're still playing.

[00:13:18] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, so Peter tells me, yeah.

[00:13:22] **Sue Smallwood:** I mean, I did play on a track with them a year or so ago that they just recorded and yeah, they've just brought out another single which is, which is fabulous.

[00:13:30] **Sue Smallwood:** So yeah, they keep going. They don't perform as much, but um, still going. So yes, we, so there was a Trudy and Cardiac Arrest and just because everybody was mates. Um, that we'd sort of...

[00:13:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Kind of fluid, fluid membership.

[00:13:47] **Sue Smallwood:** One, yeah, yeah. I mean, we didn't... Playing each other's bands, but we always played at the same venues or rehearsed it.

[00:13:55] **Sue Smallwood:** I'm sure that these Dolphin, um, little slots
[00:14:00] we did were just rehearsals rather than actual gigs, but I can't remember.

[00:14:05] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, fair enough. Um, and, you know, we, we know about the later success of Cardiac Arrest who became Cardiacs and, and, and then... You know, people like Radiohead and Blur have kind of cited them as, as, as inspirations.

[00:14:21] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, did you see something special in, in, uh, Tim Smith and, um, and what he was doing there?

[00:14:28] **Sue Smallwood:** Absolutely, yeah. He's, he's just a genius. And I, and I loved the music then and I still love it, yeah.

[00:14:36] **Jarek Zaba:** What, what was it about Cardiacs that you think made them special?

[00:14:39] **Sue Smallwood:** Well, it was just... What he was playing was really unique.

[00:14:43] **Sue Smallwood:** Sometimes when I listen to, uh, I was listening to something the other day. It might have been Gong or something. Sometimes you can hear, you know, where he's derived some of his music from. But, um, he was just a brilliant musician. And he had with [00:15:00] him, like, people like, um, um, William Drake. You know, some amazing, um, musicians.

[00:15:06] **Sue Smallwood:** And, um, Yeah, I mean, the songs became so complex and sort of, uh, Sorry, I've just gone vocabulary dead now.

[00:15:19] **Jarek Zaba:** That's alright, that's alright.

[00:15:23] **Sue Smallwood:** Just the kind of, um, different rhythms and chord changes and they were just amazing songs, so. And visually they were great. Tim was a great front man. Very funny. And, um, yeah, just amazing.

[00:15:37] **Sue Smallwood:** Did you ever see them?

[00:15:39] **Jarek Zaba:** No, no, no, and, and, and, and I must confess, like, before this project, I wasn't, I wasn't even that familiar with, with Cardiacs, but then it became very clear when I interviewed... Anyone who was sort of around in that 80s period, they would, they would say, Oh, well, you must know about the Cardiacs and, and the success they had.

[00:15:55] **Jarek Zaba:** And, and, and so, yeah, I'm learning more, um, with, with each of these [00:16:00] interviews, I'm learning more about Cardiacs.

[00:16:01] **Sue Smallwood:** They were kind of a cut above everything that was going on. I mean, Sarah, Tim's wife at the time who played sax, she was an incredible saxophone player. I think she used to go and do weekends at Johnny Dankworth's and things like that.

[00:16:13] **Sue Smallwood:** She was an amazing player. So they were, they were all really accomplished. They had to be. I think Tim scored all of the songs as well. Um, yeah. Amazing.

[00:16:24] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, um, uh, I think, yeah, Peter said, um, I think he knew Tim from school. And, um, And there wasn't sort of the indication in Tim's personality that he would be this sort of eccentric frontman, uh, in terms of his offstage personality.

[00:16:41] **Sue Smallwood:** No, he's just a very sweet person, yeah. He's just larger than life on stage, amazing. And their last sort of gigs they used to do annually were at the Astoria, and they just could hold that stage. I just had such command, you know, it was amazing.

[00:16:57] **Jarek Zaba:** Were you there at the Astoria?

[00:16:58] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, yeah, I used to go and see [00:17:00] them, yeah.

[00:17:00] **Jarek Zaba:** Did they play regularly there, did they?

[00:17:04] **Sue Smallwood:** I can't remember how many times, but it used to be around Christmas they'd do a sort of annual gig there.

[00:17:09] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, okay, and then in terms of the Trudy, so they're formed in 79, I think you said?

[00:17:15] **Sue Smallwood:** Yes.

[00:17:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, and were you, were you part of that founding group?

[00:17:18] **Sue Smallwood:** Yes, yeah, yeah. Because, because Peter and Ralph had just left Cardiac Arrest so that they wanted to do their own band.

[00:17:26] **Sue Smallwood:** So then it, so it was Peter's brother Derek. On guitar, Peter on drums, Ralph singing, and I was playing the bass. So that was just the four of us, yeah.

[00:17:38] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah. Um, and yeah, so what were, what was sort of those early years like? I mean, were you, I mean, did you have sort of an idea of what you wanted to achieve?

[00:17:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Like, were you looking to... become a success in the music industry or did you just want to play a few gigs locally? Was there any sort of ambition?

[00:17:56] **Sue Smallwood:** Uh, I think we were all, um, just really, [00:18:00] really enjoying ourselves. And, uh, we were, we were kind of doing, we always had lots of write ups in the, you know, the Surrey Comet and papers like that.

[00:18:08] **Sue Smallwood:** And, um, uh, we were kind of doing... We were quite successful around Kingston. I mean, you know, looking further afield, um, I don't know whether we, I didn't really think, oh, I'm going to be a pop star. I mean, it was really exciting when, um, John Peel played a few tracks from, we made, we made an album. Half, half, one side was the Trudy and the other side was Magnificent 7, which was Chris White, who I mentioned earlier, his band.

[00:18:37] **Sue Smallwood:** And, um, yeah, John Peel played a few of our tracks, which I thought, this is it.

[00:18:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:18:45] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, but, you know, it wasn't. I think what happened was just sort of various personnel changes. After I'd sort of left the Trudy, um, they did it, they did really well. Once I'd gone! [00:19:00]

[00:19:00] **Jarek Zaba:** All a coincidence, I'm sure. Um, what year was it that you left?

[00:19:06] **Sue Smallwood:** I can't remember. I probably was only in it for four or five years. Then went back again. I mean, it was really sporadic. And we all remained friends all the time, but I just kind of popped in and out. I think I left playing the bass, then John Bastable, who's an amazing bass player, took over from me. Um... And then I think I left and came back and played the saxophone, left again, did some go go dancing, came back and did, um, rototoms and go go dancing and, so it was just sort of popping in and out really and wearing, um you know, ridiculous costumes.

[00:19:43] **Jarek Zaba:** Was there any particular venue that you enjoyed playing, uh, in Kingston or beyond?

[00:19:48] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, I just enjoyed playing everywhere. I loved playing in the Grey Horse. It was always a really great crowd. All your mates would turn up and, uh, Um, we did end up, we did do a gig at the [00:20:00] Astoria. Oh, and, um, we played at the Marquee actually.

[00:20:04] **Sue Smallwood:** That was exciting. We did play quite a few small London gigs and some university gigs which were always great because you get really looked after and actually fed. Sometimes paid, sorry.

[00:20:21] **Sue Smallwood:** It's coming back to me now.

[00:20:23] **Jarek Zaba:** Good point actually, I don't often think to ask about money. But were you making money from the Trudy? Was it a living or was it very much a hobby?

[00:20:34] **Sue Smallwood:** No, we weren't making a living at all. We all had jobs anyway. I think Wimbledon Theatre, we got... I seem to remember getting £6. You know, you could buy your chips after the gig or something.

[00:20:49] **Sue Smallwood:** I mean, no, we didn't, didn't really make money.

[00:20:52] **Jarek Zaba:** What were you doing for work at the same time?

[00:20:54] **Sue Smallwood:** I'm a graphic designer, so I've, I've done that, um, 40 odd years now. So, I, [00:21:00] yeah, I, I'd already, when did I start working? Eighty, eighty one, I think. Um, so I was still in the band then because, um, where I worked we had, um, a sort of industrial photocopier, and that was it, you know, because I love producing things and, um, I'll show you in a minute, we've got, we used to make programmes for the band every time we did a gig, and, um, so I could just run out posters, programmes, everything at work, just go in early and, uh, use the machines, which was, uh, really good.

[00:21:36] **Sue Smallwood:** That was, that was a big part of everything really, all the graphics and the posters. It was really good fun. Because Trudy in particular had a quite, sort of, individual sense of humour and that comes across, you'll see some of the programmes.

[00:21:52] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, I'm glad you said that actually, because we're, we're sort of, so this project is called AMP, which stands for Art, Music, Pop, [00:22:00] Fashion, and although it's sort of centered on music, those two other elements, art and fashion, that peel off music.

[00:22:06] **Jarek Zaba:** I think we're really keen to explore how those have evolved over the years. Um, and so I'm interested in how... Within the exhibition, we actually had some posters from local bands and it always struck me how, uh, how much craft had gone into these, these things. So, was that, um, yeah, was that an important part of your band?

[00:22:27] **Jarek Zaba:** You know, the, the aesthetic, the artwork, the, the, the posters?

[00:22:31] **Sue Smallwood:** Absolutely, yeah. I mean, um, you know, that, this was the height of DIY, wasn't it? You know, early punk, everything was done yourself. Um, uh, and, well, with the Trudy it was, yeah, visually, we all made our costumes and like, you know, the premise was that we'd all landed from, you know, the planet Myron and landed in the Bijani supermarket in Worcester Park and, uh, there was all this kind of backstory, so, and we, we had sort
[00:23:00] of, you know, quite a sixties look.

[00:23:02] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, I used to buy, you could buy wet look vinyl from Bentalls really cheaply on the rolls. I used to buy rolls of that and make dresses and, uh, Ralph used to make his costumes. And, uh, yeah, so it was the, the visual aspect was, was, yeah, it was important. We put, we did put on a show, you know, Cardiacs put on a different kind of show completely amazing, you know, amazing musically and, uh, . Yeah, The Trudy, the music was, was really good too. It was really good pop songs. Uh, um, but yeah, we did, we did a lot of, uh, costumery. Wigs.

[00:23:42] **Jarek Zaba:** Were you playing outside of Kingston much or was it largely just Kingston gigs?

[00:23:46] **Sue Smallwood:** We did do quite a few London gigs, yeah. And as I say, when I wasn't there, they did start touring quite a lot, which I'm sure Peter would tell you about.

[00:23:56] **Sue Smallwood:** My partner Hawley also hung out with them a
[00:24:00] lot of the time, so he remembers a lot of the tours. And, um, Jeff, uh, my mate Jeff Dreja was the manager, so he, his... He's, he's got some excellent stories about, about the Trudy and the touring and everything.

[00:24:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Is that Dreja- is that a relation to Chris Dreja there was a Yardbirds member-

[00:24:20] **Sue Smallwood:** No, I don't think so.

[00:24:21] **Jarek Zaba:** No?

[00:24:22] **Sue Smallwood:** His brother's Martin. He's got a brother called Martin, but...

[00:24:25] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, were there any, are there any particularly memorable gigs, nights, stories that, that, that come to mind when you think of the time with the Trudy?

[00:24:35] **Sue Smallwood:** The Trudy ones. Uh, probably only when things go a bit wrong. I mean, we all had to leg it from one gig in, uh, I think it was called Club Dog.

[00:24:45] **Sue Smallwood:** And it was in Croydon or somewhere and, uh, a fight. It started breaking out and uh, Lorna, our friend Lorna was singing at the time and we just basically legged it off the back of the stage and I look round and she's still singing. [00:25:00] I can remember that and we just jumped in the van and, and legged it, um.

[00:25:05] **Sue Smallwood:** She turns around and the band's gone. Yeah, um, yeah, mostly things just went really well and those are the sorts of things you kind of don't remember. You just remember the, uh, kind of, uh, dramas, I think, really. Just, we just had a really great time, and we all got on with each other really well. We used to go on holidays together, and, um, yeah, really tight.

[00:25:28] **Sue Smallwood:** And we still are, we're still all really good friends.

[00:25:30] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah, it sounds like it was a really, um, enjoyable part of your life. Um, so I guess, uh, the question would be, why did you decide to leave the band? Was it just because other commitments meant you couldn't quite manage it?

[00:25:46] **Sue Smallwood:** I can't really remember. It wasn't anything, you know, sinister. I think I just kind of flitted around doing this and that. Um, and then I didn't, I didn't really play anything for about another [00:26:00] 20 odd years. And then started playing in a friend's band and then, uh, yeah, I did, did more playing really. Um, I played, um, in a band called Rubella Ballet, which is a sort of, a day glow anarchic sort of punk band that come from the Crass stable, Poison Girls and all that lot.

[00:26:22] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, I think I did that for nine or ten years and then started my own band, so, which is still, we're still playing now called Slapper.

[00:26:31] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay. Um. In terms of your tastes over this period, did you get into the punk scene and that sort of thing?

[00:26:42] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, I mean I enjoyed all the, you know, Banshees, all the sort of...

[00:26:47] **Sue Smallwood:** great punk bands that were around, even early Human League. There was a venue called, um, the Nashville in West Kensington, which is, I don't think it's called that anymore, but the pub's still there. [00:27:00] And they'd have the most amazing bands there, you know, the early Human League and um Stranglers and I think, I think The Police played there and uh, we used to go there a lot.

[00:27:10] **Sue Smallwood:** My brother, Nigel used to take me and I, and I barely ever knew where I was. I just kind of go along with him, you know. Hammersmith Odeon, loads of gigs there, and the Palais, the Clarendon.

[00:27:21] **Jarek Zaba:** So, um, you know, this world of rock bands, I think, is seen as quite a male world, typically. Um, and certainly a lot of performers that I've spoken to are men.

[00:27:32] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, were you, did you feel unusual as a woman in this world? Were you a novelty, or was it just normal?

[00:27:39] **Sue Smallwood:** No, it was just normal for me. Um, I've played in I don't feel like that, but I've always been a tomboy, and I think, again, that's down to my brother, and always hanging around with his mates, you know, playing music and going to gigs, and I just felt like [00:28:00] one of the lads, really, and I certainly think the punk era, um, You felt that you could, you could, maybe it's because of your, if your hair was like, sort of your armour in a way, or you had make up on, dressed in a kind of, uh, not aggressive, but you know, in a kind of forceful way.

[00:28:20] **Sue Smallwood:** I never felt any way about, say, going into a pub on my own. Um, I just felt that was absolutely fine. A lot of women... Probably wouldn't, but I think that, that, that sort of punk phase really kind of helped level out in that respect and I've never felt that it was, um, held me back in any way.

[00:28:42] **Jarek Zaba:** Probably, probably depends on the company of the men you, the, the, the, the, the, the, yeah, the character of the, uh, of the men whose company you keep, I guess.

[00:28:49] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, true, that's true. I mean, yeah, I have sort of in later years, uh, I've played with, uh, some, uh, male musicians who [00:29:00] have probably been a little bit condescending to me, but I just didn't hang around in that environment, but, um, um, no, I've, I've never felt any way, and I was like, had heroes like Patti Smith and, you know, later on PJ Harvey and people like, women who are just, inspire you, you know, and like, they can do it.

[00:29:22] **Jarek Zaba:** And you're still playing today, you say, with, uh... is...

[00:29:24] **Sue Smallwood:** Slapper,

[00:29:25] **Jarek Zaba:** Slapper. Um, yeah, so is that mainly a live project, or are you recording? Uh, what's the...

[00:29:31] **Sue Smallwood:** We, uh, we've just been looking for a drummer, which we've just found, hopefully. So, uh, yeah, we're just getting back to gigging. And we only gig about once a month because it's quite theatrical again.

[00:29:43] **Sue Smallwood:** There's lots of, uh, props. More wigs and more makeup involved. But, um... And so it's quite a show, so generally once a month we play and that's enough. We don't record enough, we need to do a bit more of that, but uh, yeah, that again, it's, we're all ancient now and [00:30:00] it's, you know, we're not under any illusions that we'll be, get anywhere, we just do it for a laugh.

[00:30:06] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, fair enough, and um, which sort of brings me on, I mean, the last couple of questions I was just going to ask are sort of how things have changed over the years, and first of all, just to speak about live music and performing, and you know, we've mentioned a lot of venues that Kingston has lost over the years, um, the same will be true of towns all over the country, um, uh, do you think it's, do you think it's harder for young performers these days or do you think just the landscape is different?

[00:30:33] **Sue Smallwood:** In terms of gigging?

[00:30:35] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, in terms of getting yourself out there and having venues to showcase your stuff, I guess.

[00:30:43] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, I mean, it's quite oversaturated now. I mean, there's so many bands. I mean, so many really talented young musicians as well. Studying drums at school and things like that, it's just unbelievable.

[00:30:57] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, I mean I think younger [00:31:00] people are quite entrepreneurial really and uh, so I see, you know, I, I'm, see a lot of gigs say in places like Peckham, which is sort of a lot of underground venues, but there's some amazing bands playing. Um, who did I see recently? I forgot their name.

[00:31:19] **Sue Smallwood:** Doesn't matter, cut that bit.

[00:31:21] **Jarek Zaba:** That's alright, yes I know.

[00:31:22] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, I mean I suppose getting yourself out there now is just, is doing, getting onto all the streaming platforms really, which we don't, like our band don't really do because we just haven't got the hang of it, but um, you know, if you, if you, um, can get onto all the platforms, I think that's a really good way of getting, say, just one of your songs suddenly heard and played and played and played.

[00:31:48] **Sue Smallwood:** And, um, yeah, maybe we're, we're, we're getting really behind now, the, the older generation. Um, and so you need to kind of keep up with all of [00:32:00] that, um, technology, I think.

[00:32:02] **Jarek Zaba:** Did, did, did the, um... Yeah, just, just, just sparked another question in my mind. Did the Trudy, um, record much while you were playing with them, or were they, were they mainly just live, live band?

[00:32:13] **Sue Smallwood:** Well, when I was there, I, yeah, we did quite a lot of recording, actually. We did that, this, that album where we did half and half with Mag7, um, fairly quickly, we'd only been playing a few months I think, so that's quite rough and ready, but it's, it's sweet.

[00:32:28] **Jarek Zaba:** And was a lot of thought put into album artwork and that sort of stuff?

[00:32:31] **Sue Smallwood:** Ralph, I think Ralph did the cover artwork for that.

[00:32:35] **Sue Smallwood:** Uh, it's called Volcano Fo Lé Ferret.

[00:32:37] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay.

[00:32:37] **Sue Smallwood:** And it's just kind of got... ants and jam on it. I think, sorry, Ralph, I think that's what it is.

[00:32:45] **Jarek Zaba:** I'll look into that. I'll look into that. Excellent. And yeah, just the final question in terms of how things change. You might not be able to speak to Kingston's music scene that much because I know you're in, you're further into London these days.[00:33:00]

[00:33:00] **Jarek Zaba:** But you do still visit the town. I mean, how do you reflect on how the town has changed since you were growing up?

[00:33:05] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, well, this is the hideous one way system. Just that there aren't so many venues really. I mean, I've been to a few gigs at PRYZYM, um, which a lot of bigger bands now use as a kind of stepping off point when they start.

[00:33:22] **Sue Smallwood:** And there was, what's the venue round by, um, where the swimming pools were? What's that?

[00:33:30] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, they're, um, like on Fairfield Park. Or

[00:33:35] **Sue Smallwood:** no ra- it near the old post office? There's, that was a really good venue. I saw Savages there. Um, I can't remember what it's called though.

[00:33:46] **Jarek Zaba:** Uh, there was the, the Hippodrome, which has since been knocked down, um, which was sort of both in nightclub and a gig venue.

[00:33:54] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, you've got the Fighting Cocks on the other side of town.

[00:33:57] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh yeah. That's, that's s still, that's [00:34:00] good. Yeah, I've been there.

[00:34:00] **Jarek Zaba:** That's still going strong. Um, but yes, uh, you had the Cricketers on Fairfield Park, um, but, yeah.

[00:34:08] **Sue Smallwood:** There's another, I can't remember it, um, no I guess there are, I mean, I don't come here as much.

[00:34:14] **Sue Smallwood:** I did go and see, uh, Psychedelic Furs doing a talk in the church round the back of the Fairfield a couple of years ago.

[00:34:20] **Jarek Zaba:** They're, yes, they're local as well. Yeah.

[00:34:27] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, great. Let's have a, let's have a look at some of these, um, just these items that you brought.

[00:34:33] **Sue Smallwood:** Do you want to do that here?

[00:34:34] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:34:35] **Sue Smallwood:** This, I keep talking about, uh, I can't sort of stress how important Chris White was to the Kingston music scene in the sort of late 70s and early 80s. But this would, I'm sure this is one of his flyers.

[00:34:50] **Sue Smallwood:** Um, because he was always used to call everything a Van Pig Mr. Jakey production.

[00:34:56] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay, what does that mean?

[00:34:58] **Sue Smallwood:** Nothing. [00:35:00]

[00:35:00] **Jarek Zaba:** He wasn't Mr. Pig or anything?

[00:35:01] **Sue Smallwood:** No, no. So, I like this flyer because it's photocopied but, um, obviously they put Cornation Hall instead of a Coronation and so you probably went through all the posters and corrected those.

[00:35:16] **Jarek Zaba:** So for the benefit of anyone listening, so this is a poster that says at, uh, yes, it originally says Cornation Hall with an I sort of, uh, stuck in the middle.

[00:35:25] **Jarek Zaba:** Um, Coronation Hall. This was a venue that was also a swimming baths, I think. Is that

[00:35:31] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh, I think you're right.

[00:35:32] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Slightly, slightly strange. And then at the bottom it says The Dials, The Wardens Cardiac Arrest. And Magnificent 7 As Seen on Tv. And it's written within a television set. Um, is that, is, is that just a lie or was it, was it, was there a television?

[00:35:46] **Sue Smallwood:** I think it's a visual pun. .

[00:35:47] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay. Very good. Oh yes. As seen on tv. No, that's actually quite clever.

[00:35:52] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. Yeah, he's great. He was great, Chris. Really really funny. And that's Manor Park. I'm just dragging [00:36:00] out these things. So

[00:36:01] **Jarek Zaba:** Granny's New Intentionz is another band that I've, whose name has come up. Did you know those guys?

[00:36:06] **Sue Smallwood:** Uh, only, not really. I didn't know them personally. No, just that we did a couple of gigs with them. Gigs with them, yeah.

[00:36:12] **Jarek Zaba:** Where's Manor Park Pavilion?

[00:36:15] **Sue Smallwood:** That's, uh, I think that's near Worcester Park. I think. Spelled pavilion wrong. Says, okay everybody, lie down on the floor and shout chocolate pudding. Trust me, I'm a doctor.

[00:36:29] **Sue Smallwood:** So Bex Bissell is the imaginary manager of the Trudy. Okay. So, um, I guess we did those tickets.

[00:36:36] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay, I like, I don't think, when I interviewed Peter and Derek, I don't think they gave, they conveyed to the extent to which the Trudy had this whole sort of narrative You know the aliens from another planet and and and the invented manager.

[00:36:50] **Jarek Zaba:** I don't think they mentioned any of that.

[00:36:51] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh, there's a lot of Bex Bissell going on in this box So this is a, just a ridiculous Trudy poster, just a [00:37:00] really badly, I mean bad photocopies are also really fabulous. You can't really, um, um, emulate them today. I've tried to do it a lot, but...

[00:37:09] **Jarek Zaba:** This looks like a photo of maybe a father and his son walking through war ruins or something.

[00:37:13] **Jarek Zaba:** And it says, come on son, show me where they are, I must see them. Uh, the Trudy, a very nice little pop group. Um, yeah, these are, these are really... Unique .

[00:37:25] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah,

[00:37:25] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean,

[00:37:26] **Sue Smallwood:** um,

[00:37:27] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, um,

[00:37:28] **Sue Smallwood:** I think this may have been our, our very first gig was at Snoopy's in Richmond. I dunno whether this was the first one, but yeah.

[00:37:37] **Sue Smallwood:** Loads of the posters were just hand done with felt tip pens in our rooms. We just sat there and did loads of them, you know, and yeah, all different colors. And this is the Mag 7 and The Wardens at the Grove?

[00:37:50] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, the Grove.

[00:37:52] **Sue Smallwood:** This is, uh, Um, I don't even know what this is. I guess it's just a general Trudy [00:38:00] poster.

[00:38:00] **Sue Smallwood:** Completely badly done, uh, collage.

[00:38:04] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:38:04] **Sue Smallwood:** With a picture of Joe 90 on I'll just get the,

[00:38:14] **Sue Smallwood:** I'll try and get the handmade ones because they're more fun really.

[00:38:17] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:38:18] **Sue Smallwood:** Transmitters, they were an amazing band.

[00:38:20] **Jarek Zaba:** When I was looking through them as well, there's a few that have... Sort of like comic book style speech bubbles, people talking about how much they want to see the Trudy.

[00:38:29] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh, there you go. Manor Park Pavilion, near New Malden Roundabout.

[00:38:33] **Jarek Zaba:** Monochrome Set is a name that's come up a couple of times as well.

[00:38:35] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, we played a couple of times with them. Oh, this is, uh, okay, this is the gig I mentioned, Pork, which is my brother's band. So that was with Mag7, Chris White's band, and Cardiac Arrest. And New Architects. We never put the years on anything.

[00:38:54] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, I think, typically, you don't for gigs, which is kind of annoying as [00:39:00] an archival researcher, because you come across all this stuff but you can't year them.

[00:39:03] **Sue Smallwood:** I've started doing that now actually.

[00:39:05] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah, it's good, it's worth doing just for, um,

[00:39:08] **Jarek Zaba:** So this is

[00:39:09] **Sue Smallwood:** Chris again, another Jakey Van Pig.

[00:39:13] **Sue Smallwood:** Yes. Uh, spelling curtsy of Oxford Dictionary.

[00:39:17] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, there's certainly a lot going on on these, uh, on these posters, isn't there? You know, there's, there's...

[00:39:23] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh, maybe that, that, that might have been the first. So this is another Trudy at Snoopy's, uh, spelt differently from the other Snoopy's.

[00:39:31] **Jarek Zaba:** Okay.

[00:39:31] **Sue Smallwood:** And that's all done in Letrasette.

[00:39:33] **Sue Smallwood:** And the sellotape's gone all brown, which makes it look really great. It's just all collage and...

[00:39:40] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean, the penny's only just dropping that you, you, you were starting off your career in graphic design at this time whilst, what, what, what, I mean, I mean, was your graphic design career inspired by this or vice versa?

[00:39:49] **Sue Smallwood:** Well, I don't think I would have got a job if I'd shown

[00:39:54] **Sue Smallwood:** anyone this, you know, to, you know, these, so, this is Peter Tagg's writing, so these are, you know, he just spouts on [00:40:00] about, you know, uh, here we go. For a really thrilling night out, Doris at the Laundrette recommends a visit to Snoopy's at Richmond.

[00:40:08] **Jarek Zaba:** I mean these, these posters. So yeah, I mean there, so, so that goes on two sheets of A4, which basically says Tuesday the 30th of January, particularly smashing young band who go by the name of the Trudy you'll be playing for, for your entertainment, et cetera, et cetera.

[00:40:21] **Jarek Zaba:** If I, if I saw this, I would stop and read it, you know?

[00:40:24] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah.

[00:40:24] **Jarek Zaba:** If I saw it stuck to a lamppost or something.

[00:40:26] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. So this would've been all separate posters, so all different ones would've gone up.

[00:40:30] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah. Yeah. But it's, yeah, it's, it's, um, Yeah, I think there's a real effort and a craft that's gone into it.

[00:40:40] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh yeah, and it was fun, you know, it was just silly.

[00:40:43] **Sue Smallwood:** There's another one, that's at the Swan Mill Street. So that's a representation of the album cover I was trying to explain.

[00:40:51] **Jarek Zaba:** Right, yeah.

[00:40:53] **Sue Smallwood:** The ants on. Oh, I see, yeah. This is just some Cardiacs, uh, I like this one because [00:41:00] this was the poster, which is just a plain black, um, Um, poster for their single, which probably was, I don't know, maybe A Bus for a Bus on the Bus, I'm not sure.

[00:41:10] **Sue Smallwood:** But they used to use the poster to advertise the gigs with chalk, so that was the gig with Dangerous Girls.

[00:41:18] **Jarek Zaba:** I see, they had a template that they drew around, yeah.

[00:41:21] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah.

[00:41:21] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah

[00:41:22] **Sue Smallwood:** um, I've got loads of, like, newspaper.

[00:41:27] **Jarek Zaba:** Right, you've got newspaper clippings. Yeah. Yep, yep. Yeah, you said you got a bit of coverage from The Comet and...

[00:41:34] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, that's, uh, I don't know what that one is.

[00:41:39] **Sue Smallwood:** Midweek Comet.

[00:41:43] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh, that's Ralph. And that's Tim Hills, who used to be kind of a...

[00:41:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Cheer up, Trudy fans, is the headline. Worcester Park Funsters, the Trudy Funsters.

[00:41:54] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh look, this is when I left, then the band reaches for the stars.

[00:41:58] **Jarek Zaba:** There you go.

[00:41:58] **Sue Smallwood:** She's gone, she's gone, let's go for it. [00:42:00] Um, yeah, loads of, loads of clippings

[00:42:02] **Sue Smallwood:** I can...

[00:42:09] **Jarek Zaba:** No, great stuff.

[00:42:10] **Sue Smallwood:** Oh look, Trudy play at The Marquee.

[00:42:12] **Jarek Zaba:** I'm coming, I'm thinking what might be a nice thing to do, so we're um... As part of this heritage trail, one of the things that we are thinking of doing is playing to young people videos, like pop videos of the time, or live performances from the time, and just to sort of get a young person's reaction to these performances of old.

[00:42:34] **Jarek Zaba:** But what it might be nice to do is also get some reactions to some of this artwork, um, just because So we have, we have young graphic designers working with us here at Fusebox and, you know, obviously all of their work is digital, um, and, and, and something like this is probably, you know, almost unheard of for them.

[00:42:52] **Jarek Zaba:** So it'd be, it'd be great to get that.

[00:42:53] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. I mean, Lorna, this was one of our singers, um, for a while. Uh, uh, that's me there. [00:43:00] Um, Pete and Derek. And Ralph, um, . Derek's said . I know he had had, um, so Lorna's son now Alfie, he's studying at college and recently he, uh, asked me if I'd help him with the project and, uh, it was something about his, his punk avant garde or something like that.

[00:43:21] **Sue Smallwood:** So he wanted to ask me about all, how I did all the artworks for everything and, not these things, but things that actually got printed, because how did you print in those days, you know?

[00:43:30] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah.

[00:43:31] **Sue Smallwood:** Uh, before computers. And, uh, he was great and he actually ended up doing his, um, , uh, his essay in the style of one of the programmes.

[00:43:42] **Sue Smallwood:** These programmes. Uh, which was really sweet. So he used that, that sort of graphic language to

[00:43:48] **Jarek Zaba:** Yeah,

[00:43:48] **Sue Smallwood:** to put his, his sort of findings across, which was, which was brilliant. Yeah. Yeah. Lots of hair. Look, we all had hair, I was the shortest. So this isn't like, these are the kind of [00:44:00] dresses we used to make me and Ralph and,

[00:44:02] **Jarek Zaba:** yeah.

[00:44:02] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. So it was quite a visual

[00:44:04] **Jarek Zaba:** so you would make the dresses yourself with the outfits?

[00:44:08] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah. Not that one. Oh yeah, I made that one.

[00:44:15] **Jarek Zaba:** Amazing stuff.

[00:44:16] **Sue Smallwood:** Yes, some nice... And you found these the other day. Oh yeah, that's Tony Williams who was another, um, He was a sax player. He's a great, great fun musician. All, all the boys are like Rivermead boys and not, not the Trudy, but um, like Paul Norman and Keith Norman.

[00:44:37] **Sue Smallwood:** All, they're all amazing musicians.

[00:44:40] **Jarek Zaba:** And did you make a, did you make a conscious decision at the time that you were just gonna collect all, all this stuff or did you just,

[00:44:45] **Sue Smallwood:** I'm just a hoarder.

[00:44:46] **Jarek Zaba:** You're just a hoarder.

[00:44:47] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh, I've got, there's masses here -or this is, you know, a little bit .

[00:44:52] **Jarek Zaba:** Well, the, um, Yes, hoarders may get a lot of slack, but, um, but, uh, they're very much like goldust to, [00:45:00] um, archival researchers.

[00:45:03] **Jarek Zaba:** People say they have a box up in the loft, it's perfect.

[00:45:05] **Sue Smallwood:** Absolutely, yeah. Smells a bit musty, but lots of lyrics, you know.

[00:45:11] **Jarek Zaba:** Amazing stuff.

[00:45:12] **Sue Smallwood:** Yeah, hundreds.

[00:45:13] **Jarek Zaba:** Good stuff. Um, Right Sue, um, I'm conscious of time because they had to shut up, uh, this place at six, um, so I will thank you for your, for your time.

[00:45:22] **Sue Smallwood:** Pleasure.