

Mill Valley Oral History Program

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DORE COLLER

**An Oral History Interview
Conducted by Debra Schwartz in 2017**

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In this oral history, musician and songwriter Dore Collier recounts a life that brought him from the Hudson River Valley, where he grew up, to Mill Valley, where he found his home. Hailing from a musical and theatrical family with Eastern European-Jewish roots, Dore describes the centrality of music in his life as he was growing up. As a teenager in 1969, he came out to California for the first time on a spring break trip with his cousin's family and stayed in San Francisco where, among many other adventures, he saw The Grateful Dead perform at the Avalon Ballroom. Dore recalls driving over to Marin one day on that trip, and how he waded in the surf at Stinson Beach, looked up at Mt. Tam, and knew that he felt a strong sense of wellbeing and connection to this place. Four years later, in 1973, he made the permanent move out West. Dore recounts the many musicians he has known and played with over the course of his career, his extensive community involvement, including 15 years working with the Mountain Play, and his collaborations with Gary Yost and others to raise awareness about conservation and restoration projects on Mt. Tam. Dore concludes this oral history with a performance of "The Old Railroad Grade" and "The Way It's Supposed to Be," two songs he composed as a way of giving back to the community and paying homage to Mt. Tam.

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Oral History of Dore Coller
August 7th, 2017

Editor's note: This transcript has been reviewed by Dore Coller, who made minor corrections and clarifications to the original.

[music]

0:00:06 Debra Schwartz: Today is August 7th, 2017. My name is Debra Schwartz, I'm with the Mill Valley Historical Society and the Mill Valley Library. And today, I am interviewing musician Dore Coller, also a member of the health food industry. Husband, father, grandfather and performer and the man who just gave me my first musical intro. [chuckles]

0:00:35 Dore Coller: That's right.

0:00:36 Debra Schwartz: Dore, thank you for taking time out of your busy day to sit down and talk with the Mill Valley Historical Society.

0:00:45 Dore Coller: My pleasure. It's a pleasure to be here.

0:00:48 Debra Schwartz: Oh, thanks. Very nice intro.

0:00:51 Dore Coller: Mississippi blues.

0:00:54 Debra Schwartz: Dore, you and I are friends.

0:00:57 Dore Coller: Absolutely.

0:00:57 Debra Schwartz: And it's a delight to interview a friend. I'm really excited to have you here today finally. It's been a year coming for our interview and so much has happened in that year, musically and with the community, so I'm really glad it took a while. People around Mill Valley know that you are a musician and have seen you perform a lot. But perhaps they don't know that much about what brought you to Mill Valley. So this is our opportunity to learn a bit about you and your family, and we'll start with some contextual information. If you could just tell me about your name, tell me about your people, where your relatives came from, and what brought you to Mill Valley?

0:01:47 Dore Coller: Well, I'd be happy to, Debra. It's such a humbling honor and privilege to be asked to do an interview like this for little old me. [chuckles] I've been here pretty much steady since the early 1970s in California, Northern California. I grew up in the Hudson River Valley about 40, 50 miles north of New York City. My family was all from New York. I guess my great-grandparents came over from Eastern Europe. I think I have mostly Eastern Europe in my ancestry, from one great grandparent or another. So all of my grandparents were actually born in this country. They got out fairly

early and they were all here by the 1880s, I guess. On my father's side, they were involved in the theater. Actually, I have a great-grandmother who was part of a family that was pretty much the Barrymores of the Yiddish-Jewish theater. At the turn of the century, there was a family, the Thomashefskys, Boris and his family, that pretty much started many, many things that we take for granted in the entertainment industry. Many, many people started by working with him on the Lower East Side.

0:03:09 Debra Schwartz: And was this your great-grandfather, your grandfather?

0:03:11 Dore Coller: This is the great — I guess, a great-great-uncle, a great-uncle perhaps. My great-grandmother was in the theater with him and it was his sister.

0:03:20 Debra Schwartz: Do you remember your great-grandmother's name?

0:03:22 Dore Coller: Mary.

0:03:23 Debra Schwartz: Mary.

0:03:23 Dore Coller: Nice Jewish name. [chuckles] Mary Thomashefsky.

0:03:28 Debra Schwartz: Oh, Thomashefsky.

0:03:29 Dore Coller: And actually her husband, Leon Epstein, was the treasurer for the theater.

0:03:34 Debra Schwartz: Oh, so it's in your blood for real.

0:03:37 Dore Coller: I come by it really honestly, yes, pretty honest.

0:03:40 Debra Schwartz: Yes, this is a family in it.

0:03:42 Dore Coller: It was a small step. It was kinda there.

0:03:45 Debra Schwartz: So you're in New York and you come from a Jewish family.

0:03:50 Dore Coller: Absolutely. Russian, Romanian, Czechoslovakian, Hungarian — like I say, most of Eastern Europe. I was told as a child that they were from some place outside of, that was, I think, part of Ukraine or Belarus now. And another thing that was part of the Austria-Hungarian Empire that's probably part of Poland now. And then I have other relatives that were from Moscow. It's a wide range of the whole of Eastern Europe.

0:04:21 Debra Schwartz: Do you remember the names of both sides? If you don't, that's fine.

0:04:26 Dore Coller: Oh, God. The elders, there were Thomashefskys and Berliners and Kelmans and Banners, my four grandparents' names.

0:04:39 Debra Schwartz: And then how about your parents? Tell me a little bit about your parents, starting with their names, when they were born, and where they were born.

0:04:44 Dore Coller: My mother was Sandra Coller. She was born in February 6th, 1928. My father was Frederic Coller, I guess my mother was Sandra Kelman, she wasn't Coller yet, not at birth. And my father was Frederic Coller, he was born on Armistice Day, November 11th, 1925. And she was the youngest daughter of two sisters in her family. Father was also the youngest. He was the baby boy and he had two older sisters.

0:05:19 Debra Schwartz: They were born in New York as well?

0:05:21 Dore Coller: They were both born in Brooklyn, born and raised in Brooklyn, New York.

0:05:23 Debra Schwartz: Oh, what an interesting life they must have had there in the community.

0:05:28 Dore Coller: Yes, they did. It was certainly culturally active in the time they were there growing up in the Depression years. And I think my father felt the Depression more than my mother did in his family. Actually, my father's father — talking about coming by and honestly — my father's father was, obviously in the Thomashefsky family, was actually a conductor and a pianist and an orchestral arranger who played the piano. He played the Mighty Wurlitzer in silent movies in the '20s and was actually part of the WPA Mercury Theater work project. He worked with Orson Welles and Joseph Cotton, and was one of the founding members of BMI, the copyright musical agency group. He died young, died at the New York World's Fair in 1939, so I never got to meet him.

0:06:22 Debra Schwartz: He died at the fair?

0:06:24 Dore Coller: He had a heart attack, very young. It's unfortunate. So I never got to meet him, but obviously I got the bug pretty directly from him.

0:06:34 Debra Schwartz: You did?

0:06:36 Dore Coller: My father was a child prodigy on the trumpet, actually. But his father wouldn't allow any of his children to go into music more seriously 'cause you couldn't make a living doing that.

0:06:49 Debra Schwartz: So you're from the East Coast but worked on the West Coast here. We're sitting in California.

0:06:55 Dore Coller: Good point. Yes, let me say right now that I think the East Coast is a fantastic place, and it's a wonderful place to be from. A great place to be from, but when I was about, I don't know, about 12 or 13 years old, it was the mid-'60s and I had an aunt and uncle and a cousin who was about my age that were going to come to Northern California for Easter vacation and spring break. And I was asked if I wanted to accompany them and I said, "Are you kidding me? Absolutely." I was already listening to the music — I was already aware of what was going on in San Francisco musically. And I was into those bands and the happenings —

0:07:40 Debra Schwartz: And you were playing already?

0:07:41 Dore Coller: I was playing already. I was singing. I don't remember breathing without singing. I was singing and writing songs as a child, all my life. I was in chorus in the fourth grade. I took up trombone in the fourth or fifth grade. I switched over to bass guitar 'cause I could read bass clef when I was about in the seventh grade. I switched over to guitar, and I've played guitar from then on, I guess, but I didn't really switch over to guitar until I was about 16. So I was totally involved and interested and absorbed, and listening to music is all I really ever paid attention to.

0:08:20 Debra Schwartz: What kind of student were you? Good and bad?

0:08:23 Dore Coller: Okay, I was an okay student.

0:08:27 Debra Schwartz: A person can get a little —

0:08:28 Dore Coller: There were so many other things that were more important.

0:08:31 Debra Schwartz: You could be distracted. The music was really popping in the '60s.

0:08:35 Dore Coller: Yeah, well, the music got me out of high school early, actually. I graduated early because I had so many music and humanities and arts credits that I could have gotten out a year early. I wasn't allowed that, but I got out a half-year early.

0:08:49 Debra Schwartz: You describe yourself as sort of sponge-like, with a voracious appetite for anything. Is that how you would describe yourself?

0:08:57 Dore Coller: I seem to be pretty receptive. I seem to have a propensity for absorbing my surroundings and adapting to them fairly quickly and getting a whole lot out of them, I guess, without taking advantage of them. People all my life have always just opened up to me. People tell me their life stories, and I've never met them before. When I was hitchhiking around the country, people would just naturally open up to me, and I don't know why.

0:09:27 Debra Schwartz: Do you think as a songwriter that's impacted your writing?

0:09:32 Dore Coller: Oh, absolutely.

0:09:33 Debra Schwartz: The stories that you hear along the way?

0:09:35 Dore Coller: Absolutely, well, when you're writing a song, you're basing it on some sort of experience and then as you become more experienced as a songwriter, you're basically harvesting what you've taken in and trying to express it in a certain way, absolutely.

0:09:55 Debra Schwartz: Did you ever hitchhike, get in a car and while you're riding with some stranger, say to yourself, "This would be a good song"?

0:10:04 Dore Coller: Many is the time and situation that have been duly noted [chuckles] and maybe used and employed in certain songs, in certain aspects. 'Cause I had many adventures when I was at that age, traveling, doing all that.

0:10:20 Debra Schwartz: So when you came with your relatives over to Northern California, what part of Northern California did you come to?

0:10:28 Dore Coller: San Francisco.

0:10:29 Debra Schwartz: You came to San Francisco.

0:10:30 Dore Coller: We came to San Francisco. It was 1969. It was March, April 1969.

0:10:34 Debra Schwartz: So you came with your relatives in 1969 to San Francisco. How fortuitous.

0:10:39 Dore Coller: I was 14 and I was already into the music scene, kind of knew what was going on, and actually I think Jefferson Airplane was probably my favorite band at that point. And my cousin and my aunt and uncle, they were from Long Island so they were a little more conventional or straight. He was kind of a jock, and well he was hanging around. We stayed at the Jack Tar Hotel, which was Cathedral Hill right there on Van Ness, and right across from Tommy's Joynt. While he was hanging out at the hotel trying to pick up chicks at the pool, I was all over San Francisco. I was walking up to Haight Street, going to Hippie Hill, hitchhiking, just roaming around as much as I could.

0:11:27 Debra Schwartz: You're just 14, though.

0:11:29 Dore Coller: What's your point? Remember, I grew up an hour north of New York City, and my parents being from New York City, basically had an image of New York City as the place that they had grown up in 30 years ago where you could basically take the train and take the subway any place. My father was from down by Coney Island and he would go to the doctor's office which was in Rockefeller Center, Radio City, in that area. So he'd take a 90-minute subway ride by himself when he was 7, 8. So my

parents thought nothing of letting us go down to the Fillmore East to see a concert, just go to see music, march in a Vietnam rally, or whatever it was. So when I came out here, basically that was my perception of how things are done: you just do them.

0:12:17 Debra Schwartz: And what did you see on your little sojourn out in San Francisco at 14 years old in 1969?

0:12:23 Dore Coller: Well, like I said, Haight Street in 1969 was not a very nice place. Speed had already happened, it was mostly speed freaks. A lot of the buildings and store fronts were boarded up. It was pretty funky on Haight Street itself. Hippie Hill was happening.

0:12:41 Debra Schwartz: Where is Hippie Hill exactly?

0:12:42 Dore Coller: Hippie Hill is if you walk Haight Street and you cross down and you go into the park and you go under the little tunnel and before you get to the carousel area, over to the right there's just this very slow incline of grassy hillside, and that was Hippie Hill. And there were people, hippies, running around there and throwing frisbees and just hanging out, and somebody said Frank Zappa was there when I was there, but I don't know if that was true or not. So I just roamed around, I walked up Haight Street and then Lower Haight from Market to Masonic was the Fillmore District. It was basically a black ghetto, as much as they have one out here. It was pretty skeezy-looking. But I had grown up in my early teens going to Manhattan all the time in New York without any parental supervision, so I didn't really think much of it.

And so, Hippie Hill and then I came back down Haight and went the wrong way on Ashbury, ended up in Ashbury Heights, and then ended up hitchhiking back down to Market Street, and some people picked me up in a Volkswagen bug. I was having a good time. I was going back to the Jack Tar, to reconnoiter, and some hippie with hair down to here, like almost to his shoulders, almost to his shoulders, would hit me up for some spare change. He said, "Hey, I'm trying to get some money. The Grateful Dead are playing at the Avalon tonight." The Avalon Ballroom was about a block and half away from our hotel and so I said, "Oh, Avalon Ballroom and Grateful Dead, I have certainly heard of them. I don't know their music that well and I should go." And I went.

0:14:29 Debra Schwartz: You said to the hippie kid, "Let's go"?

0:14:30 Dore Coller: No, I said it to myself. I gave him whatever I had, a nickel or quarter.

0:14:35 Debra Schwartz: You didn't go with him, you just said —

0:14:36 Dore Coller: I did not go with him.

0:14:36 Debra Schwartz: "I'm going."

0:14:37 Dore Coller: I didn't say, "Can I go?" because I'm still a good little boy of 14. Well, I went to bring my cousin. I wanted to turn him onto it, and I did pop by the Avalon to check it out 'cause it was only a block and a half away, and you needed parental permission, you needed some adult to say it was okay. So I went and asked my uncle — my uncle Marvin was in the furrier business, he was in the textile biz — and I asked him if it was okay, if we could go, and he said, "Whatever." It's like 8:00 when he's walking us down there, and he was gonna go to sleep at 8:05. [chuckles] And he walked us down there and he basically paid — I think it was \$5 each — paid the \$5 each and said, "It's okay with me for them to go in here," and just left us there.

And the Avalon Ballroom, I don't know if you ever got to go there, the Avalon Ballroom was — the entrance was on Sutter Street, not kind of where the Regency is now on Van Ness, and there was a little ticket office, a box office, and then you went up these little stairs to the ballroom itself. And in the ballroom, there was a light show on the wall, on three sides, screens and a light show on three sides. Fillmore East only had the one screen behind the stage. And it was this huge open space with no seats, and at the very back upstairs in the balcony was a Chinese restaurant. And you know we're these two 14-year-olds and suddenly we're in the middle of this incredible melee of just extremely wild, extremely crazy, extremely free people. The Flying Burrito Brothers with Gram Parsons was one of the opening acts, in their Nudie western suits, the full-on Burrito Brothers. I wasn't that into country, and I was kind of down on Dylan and The Byrds for going that way at that point, but I knew who the Burrito Brothers were and I was glad that to see them. So I was at a Grateful Dead concert the first time I was out here and that just blew me away. And then while we were staying in San Francisco, we were in Yosemite and we were in Carmel, those were the three places we stayed.

0:16:43 Debra Schwartz: Beautiful places to visit.

0:16:44 Dore Coller: And so, naturally we were in San Francisco, and it's the end of March, early April, so it's spring time and back east it's winter still, everything's gray, you come out here at spring time and the hills are all that emerald green, everything is just vibrant and alive. And San Francisco, because of the wind, San Francisco still is a very clean city air-wise, certainly in the late '60s compared to anything on the eastern seaboard. And so we went to Muir Woods — I can remember that we drove through the Waldo Tunnel, it was just when they were building, replacing the old Redwood causeway that went across Richardson Bay, not that I knew that at the time 'cause I just remember we went through the tunnel and then it just was construction all the way down to Tam Junction. And we drove out to Mill Valley, winding through these velvet green hills and these eucalyptus groves. The vegetation is so different here from the East Coast. So you're looking at all of these exotic plants really as you're driving along. Again, remember it's 1969, the Summer of Love had already happened two years ago. I was really into what was going on there, had already gotten high, already taken LSD, already taken anything I got my hands on.

0:18:01 Debra Schwartz: At 14? Wow!

0:18:02 Dore Coller: Yeah, absolutely. I think we were probably the first class that came into our high school, doing everything. Of course, that year '68, '69, regardless of age, that's sort of when everybody turned on. Everybody who was three years older than me in high school were turning on that year. I speak to other people who were in college, that was kind of when it really spread out, and so yeah, I was into what was going on. And I'm seeing these people just on the side of the road, like if you're walking the Dipsea and you come down and you're coming down towards Muir Woods and there's these people just hanging out looking like hippies with flutes and strange clothing on and just kinda looking with a twinkle in their eye, I remember that. It's like the first thing I remember, really, of driving through the hills around Mill Valley.

We went to Muir Woods and we hiked a ways up in. My cousin was not into hiking any further. I'm like, "Hey," — 'cause the next place we were going was Stinson Beach — I said "Well, look, it says here this trail goes to Stinson. We'll go to Stinson and we'll call up your parents from Stinson," not realizing it was five, six miles and they'd probably be freaking out by then, but we got about halfway up and we stopped in a rest area and some woman hiker came by and told us it was a long trip and he said, "No way." We went back down. I would have gladly hiked over there.

And so then we went to Stinson. It was warm enough, and it was really my first experience with the Pacific Ocean, so I rolled my elephant bell-bottoms up as far as I could and waded out into the Pacific Ocean at Stinson and turned around and looked up at Tam, at Mount Tam, from Stinson, all vibrant and green and just gorgeous-looking, and I kinda looked and I went, "Yeah, yeah, this is more like it. I didn't know this is what I had in mind, but this is what I had in mind. This suits me just fine. I like this place." And so that was my experiences. Then we went to Yosemite, buzzed around there, and then we drove all the way through Fresno, all the way down, went to San Simeon. We went to Big Sur, stopped at Nepenthe and the Phoenix and hung out and —

0:20:15 Debra Schwartz: Got your California tour.

0:20:17 Dore Coller: Got a nice Nor Cal tour.

0:20:18 Debra Schwartz: How interesting to hear you describe these first impressions, your first visit. I don't want to ruin what will come, but the fact is this is a bit of foreshadowing because, as we're gonna get to it, you just created a music video and Bobby Weir is in it and it's all about Mt. Tam.

0:20:44 Dore Coller: Maria Muldaur and many other folks.

0:20:46 Debra Schwartz: And many other performers, and so it's really nice to hear what an impact this area had on you right from the beginning and how that impact has lasted, how whatever touched you then has touched you for life. But we'll get to that in a little bit.

0:21:00 Dore Coller: Absolutely. Yes, I have often been described as touched. So, touched, yeah. [laughs]

0:21:09 Debra Schwartz: So when is it that you finally moved here?

0:21:14 Dore Coller: That was '69, I got out of high school early in '72, and came out here. Actually, I was in Southern California, tried to get up here to Davenport where a friend of mine was living in a school bus, but didn't quite make it that time. And then my parents begged me to go to college, said they would pay for it, so I went to Hobart and William Smith College in Western New York State out in the Finger Lakes region for a year. Hitchhiked all over that area, I was basically playing all the coffee houses from Buffalo to Boston while I was in college.

0:21:50 Debra Schwartz: What kind of music were you playing?

0:21:52 Dore Coller: I was transitioning. Well, I didn't have a car so I couldn't tote around an electric guitar or a bass or anything, so I was playing acoustic. I had learned how to flatpick, so I just learned how to fingerpick. I had just learned how to play slide around about that time, so I was doing a more folk, country, bluegrass, blues, more acoustic idioms, as it were.

0:22:22 Debra Schwartz: Do you remember a single song? Can you give me a little snippet of something you would have played then?

0:22:26 Dore Coller: Well, I was really into Leo Kottke. He was a fingerpicking monster at the time.

[music]

0:23:03 Dore Coller: I was playing that. I was learning how to flatpick. I was playing bluegrass for the first time probably a little bit, learned some fiddle tunes, and playing slide in a little folk group. I learned my first Little Feat tune, "Willin".

0:23:21 Debra Schwartz: How's that song go, "Willin"?

0:23:23 Dore Coller: Just a tiny bit.

0:23:26 Debra Schwartz: Tiny bit.

[music]

0:23:36 Dore Coller: [sings] And I've been from Tucson to Tucumcari, Tehachapi to Tonopah. I've driven every kind of rig that's ever been made, driven in the back roads so I wouldn't get weighed.

0:23:54 Debra Schwartz: I remember that song. That's a good one. That helps put me there with you. I'm glad you played that.

0:24:03 Dore Coller: I've always been a musical sponge. I love music. I love playing it. I seem to have some sort of faculty for hearing something and being able to reproduce it. I've always been extremely gregarious. I've always wanted to be everybody's friend and be part of every social group and basically interact with everyone and have some common denominator with whoever I run into. In music, back probably that year, I decided I was just gonna work on learning pretty much every style of music I could so I could communicate and play music with whoever I happened to run into.

0:24:40 Debra Schwartz: So music is the way that you connect with your community? Is that how you would describe it?

0:24:47 Dore Coller: Absolutely. It's my best way of connecting. [chuckles] Yeah, absolutely. About that time, I learned to play all these different instruments. And about halfway through that school year, I was asked to leave that school because they needed some money from somebody, so I took a couple of loans out and finished the school year. I said to my parents, "Thank you very much. I went to college like you wanted me to for a year and now I'm moving to California to play music." [chuckles] I came out at spring break, so this would have been late winter, early spring 1973. A couple of my friends at college were going on a skiing trip. There were plenty of entitled people at Hobart and William Smith College; it was sort of a safety school for Ivy Leaguers that didn't have the grades. There was enough ivy on the walls to be respectable enough. I think most of these people were called preppies in a year or two after that.

0:25:52 Debra Schwartz: Back then, yes.

0:25:53 Dore Coller: Just starting to become preppies. A couple of guys were going to Taos to go skiing for spring break. I said, "Well, that's three-quarters of the way, I'll catch a ride with them." So I caught a ride with them, hitchhiked the rest of the way from Taos, New Mexico out here.

0:26:06 Debra Schwartz: And this is back to San Francisco area?

0:26:08 Dore Coller: Yeah. I had some friends in San Francisco, had a bunch of names on pieces of paper of friends of friends in various places. I had one person, one classmate of mine was living in San Rafael. I had a name of somebody in Point Reyes Station. I had the name of somebody in Westport, California as well. And I had some friends in Santa Cruz.

0:26:29 Debra Schwartz: So you had contacts. And did you begin playing with bands in this area right away when you arrived?

0:26:37 Dore Coller: Pretty much.

0:26:38 Debra Schwartz: How were some of the people that you played with? I've interviewed a fair number of musicians and it seems to me there's a pretty cozy group, especially in Mill Valley, but in San Francisco as well, so like many of them have played with each other.

0:26:53 Dore Coller: Oh, absolutely. People in Mill Valley — obviously I've been here for a long time, so I've played with pretty much everybody. I do a lot of work with Lorin Rowan, sometimes with Chris Rowan. I've done stuff with Audie de Lone. In the video, I have Bob Weir join us for that, as did Maria Muldaur, who I play with a bunch in the bluegrass community. In the past, I've had contact with people like Marty Balin and Bill Champlin. Way, way back then, when I was about 19, I did get a chance to play with Jerry Garcia once. I worked for Bill Graham for about a dozen years in the '80s, early '90s.

0:27:37 Debra Schwartz: What did you do with them?

0:27:38 Dore Coller: Mostly security, backstage stuff, security and production. Mostly, I was running the security crews. I was a bluecoat. That's what it's called.

0:27:50 Debra Schwartz: Hard to imagine you doing that now.

0:27:53 Dore Coller: That's good. [laughs]

0:27:54 Debra Schwartz: How was it? Here you are, you moved to Mill Valley directly in the —

0:28:00 Dore Coller: Well, when I came out, I was here in that spring and had some amazing experiences, like going backstage at one of the first "Old and in the Way" shows at the Lion's Share, which is actually where I met Lorin, and that's where I got to meet Jerry and Vassar Clements and a lot of people like Peter.

0:28:16 Debra Schwartz: That was in San Rafael?

0:28:17 Dore Coller: That was in San Rafael, at Miracle Mile. So I'm here, I spend the night with my classmate who's in San Rafael, but he's not feeling well, so I just hitch hike out to Point Reyes Station. I have a name on a piece of paper of somebody in Point Reyes Station, so I go see what that's all about. So I'm hitchhiking through San Rafael and San Anselmo, I'm on Center and I'm at about where Lansdale Station, which is where David Kessler had the Church Recording Studio, just up the hill from there, just about a half a block from there. I'm hitchhiking and this beat up old 1960 Mercury Comet pulls up to pick me up and there's this grungy old-looking hippie guy with the long hair and a long beard, kind of a tall, skinny guy picks me up and three cars pull up right behind him and they say, "No, we wanna pick up the hitchhiker!" The upshot of it was that the first one who stopped was Bill Champlin.

0:29:28 Debra Schwartz: Of Sons of Champlin.

0:29:30 Dore Coller: Of Sons of Champlain, local boy, and they were just recording *Welcome to the Dance*. They were recording at the time at the church and he lived in Inverness and he was heading home, just picking up a hitchhiker. The Sons weren't a really big band in the East Coast at that point.

0:29:48 Debra Schwartz: Very big here.

0:29:49 Dore Coller: Super big, huge here. But I had heard of them, I had seen their names on the Fillmore posters and the handbills and stuff, and so I was aware that they were part of the scene. He's talking to me and we were talking, and just like everyone I ever met in Northern California who was a musician at the time, he had amazing pot, [chuckles] just cartoon land psychedelic color pot. I don't know what these guys had. It was a lot better than almost anything I'd ever gotten back east at the time. So getting high and driving, that's a long drive, you know?

0:30:20 Debra Schwartz: Yes.

0:30:21 Dore Coller: And I'm asking him about the Sons and what's going on with that and I said, "How would you describe the Sons?" And he said, "Well, we're kind of a cross between James Brown and The Grateful Dead." [chuckles] He said, "My favorite vocalist is Lou Rawls. But we are definitely a cosmic San Francisco scene band." I said, "Well, that sounds awesome. I'm definitely gonna have to check you guys out when I get a chance." I told him I was a musician and I was planning to move out to be a musician, that was my thing.

You know, it was 1973 when every other person wasn't from the East Coast. When I first came out here, you had to like blend in. I had to learn how to say "water" and "quarter" and "far out" and "for sure." [chuckles] All my vowels had to flatten just to blend in. But Bill Champlin said, "You know, people who come out from the East Coast, they tend to be a little aggressive and pushy when they come out. It's mellow around here. You have to come off," he said, "You have to come off, you have to just kinda come off much mellower. But don't stop pushing." That was his advice to me. He said, "Don't slow down." Of course, I didn't take his advice. I got totally mellow —

He dropped me off in Point Reyes Station. He invited me to come over to his house, but I was on a mission with this piece of paper I had. So he dropped me off, turned off towards Inverness, and I walked into Point Reyes Station, which in the rain in 1973, same as it is now, it looks like the James Gang could ride in on horses and rob the local bank or whatever. And I was really high. So I was wandering around Point Reyes Station late in the afternoon looking at the wrong piece of paper with the wrong person's name, and not really connecting. I went to the local bookstore, with the free box in front of it, which was where the person was supposed to be, but I was asking for the wrong name. And I was like, "It's getting dark out here and it's like winter time and it's kind of misting. I should just turn around and go back to my friend's and see if I can stay there another night." A VW bus picked me up heading back south to Olema to get back to Sir Francis Drake.

And we rode for a little bit and the fellow, Herby Gupta, who picked me up, Herby and Beverly, riding along. He was a drummer in a band. [chuckles]

We were driving along a while and he said, “You don’t really have a place to stay tonight, do you?” I said, “Well, no, not really.” He said, “I’ll tell you what, we’ll stop at Olema, go back to Point Reyes and go to 55 Manana Way, that’s where I live and just knock on the door and tell them that I said you could stay there. We’re going to Fairfax.” They actually worked at the Good Earth, doing baking and stuff. So I did that and it turned out it was a band that lived there, most of the people were musicians. Steve Hirschenhaus and Scott Trayllor and Jeff Tanzer, great songwriter. Most of these people were from the East Coast originally, but they were living in, and they had a band called Manana Way. And they had a gig at a place called Mr. Lee’s, which was this funky little bar. There used to be that place right before you cross the causeway where there was always Redwood Burlow and there was this little shack in the middle of it. Well, that was the last standing building of the original Marin City Business District. And there was an old black guy named Mr. Lee who had a bar there. And so, literally, the first week I was in California I had a gig playing bass with this band from Point Reyes Station.

0:34:12 Debra Schwartz: Did you feel at that time that you, things had, well, that you were meant to be where you were? Did you have a sense?

0:34:24 Dore Coller: Well, I hadn’t thought it before. [chuckles] Things were kinda working out for me here. I was like, “Wow, I can’t believe this.” I definitely felt that way. It was fulfilling all of my expectations as far as I was concerned.

0:34:39 Debra Schwartz: So you went on to have a career in music, then?

0:34:42 Dore Coller: I did the best I could.

0:34:44 Debra Schwartz: Yeah.

0:34:45 Dore Coller: To have a career in music.

0:34:47 Debra Schwartz: Yeah. And raised your family here in Mill Valley.

0:34:50 Dore Coller: I lived in Santa Cruz for the better part of nine years. First couple of years, I bounced back and forth between there and here. And left for the Caribbean for a while and then the early ’80s, came back to San Francisco. And then in the later ’80s, as kids were coming along, we moved back up to Marin.

0:35:08 Debra Schwartz: Some people may know your wife, Debbie, from when she worked as a manager.

0:35:09 Dore Coller: Deborah Coller, absolutely, she’s way more famous than I am in this town. She was taking care of everybody’s health and medical needs for a long, long time.

0:35:17 Debra Schwartz: At Pharmaca.

0:35:18 Dore Coller: Well, she was at Whole Foods for about six-and-a-half years, down there on Miller, before Pharmaca. And then she was the manager of Pharmaca and opened that and worked there for 11 years.

0:35:27 Debra Schwartz: For a very long time, right. So let's go forward a little bit. You're here, you're raising your children in Mill Valley.

0:35:40 Dore Coller: Yes, my son Logan and my other son Evan. Both Tam grads. I think one graduated in '04 and one graduated in '06.

0:35:49 Debra Schwartz: And you're playing your music and you're traveling around. Actually, I met you because my sister plays with Toby Gray in Santa Cruz.

0:36:00 Dore Coller: Yes, this all happened because of Jen. Thank you, Jen.

0:36:02 Debra Schwartz: She felt we should be acquainted. And you're a bit of a traveling minstrel.

0:36:08 Dore Coller: I do get around.

0:36:09 Debra Schwartz: You get around, and you go from place to place. But you, in your own unique and wonderful way, have done some things in our music community in this last year — basically, I would say, it punctuates your connection to Mt. Tam and your love of history. So, let's talk about that a little bit.

0:36:34 Dore Coller: Well, sure. As long as I've lived in Mill Valley — I've been in Mill Valley steady since 1990 — I have been involved with many, many different community events. I wasn't just playing at the Sweetwater or whatever. I had a lot to do with raising money for Kiddo!. I've played at Little League things, I've played at, like I said, Kiddo!. I've been in the Mill Valley Memorial Day Parade for one non-profit or another, the most recent one, of course, was for the Historical Society with the Millbillies.

0:37:09 Debra Schwartz: Dore Coller and the Millbillies playing.

0:37:11 Dore Coller: I definitely tried to get as involved and share what I have, which I think is mostly music, with the community. Aside from music, I've done acting and performance stuff. I had a taste for theater and then I worked for Bill Graham behind the scenes for those years. In the late '90s, I was at the Mountain Play and asked if they needed anybody and ended up running security and cleanup and running the whole restoration crew up there on the mountain at the Cushing Theater for about 15 years.

0:37:47 Debra Schwartz: That's quite a long time to be involved with the theater.

0:37:50 Dore Coller: Yeah, and I just stopped doing that a year or two ago, just to leave space for other things. I've always had a very, very strong interest in history and where things come from. And obviously I spent a lot of time on the mountain, involved with the Mountain Play. I'd be there from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM every show, before and after. And so I have a strong feeling for that place. But it was really music that took me into this later thing. I had a little bluegrass riff that — it was obviously a bluegrass riff, and it was a good riff and I had sort of a stock riff that I really hadn't used for anything. I said, "I should write a bluegrass song." And then I said, "Well, what do you write bluegrass songs about? Drowning your girlfriend into the river, murder, death, mom, prison, trains! I'll write a song about the Old Railroad Grade." 'Cause I thought, there's all these place names, give back a little to the mountain by doing it. I spent about 25 minutes on Wikipedia and a couple other websites, Googled it and got all I needed. There was even a death, so it really made it a bluegrass song.

0:39:14 Debra Schwartz: A dramatic death.

0:39:15 Dore Coller: Dramatic death, so that helped. A train wreck really helped. For a bluegrass song, you've gotta have something like that going on. That's what inspired me to write that song. I wrote this song called the "Old Railroad Grade." We had already met through your sister and I just took a little video of me on my phone playing it and sent that to you and the rest, as they say, is history.

0:39:39 Debra Schwartz: Yes, I heard that song — poorly recorded, the video, from down below, so it was all chin — and you sang that song and I thought, "Wow, that's a great song," and showed it to a good friend of mine, Gary Yost, the filmmaker, and I asked if you might bring in some other performers to play the song. Gary and I came over after you practiced for about an hour, I believe.

0:40:07 Dore Coller: Yeah, we hadn't practiced for more than an hour at that point. We were just about ready.

0:40:10 Debra Schwartz: Yes. And Gary made a film of it and now we have this beautiful film, *The Old Railroad Grade*, which he infused with footage from the old scenic railway.

0:40:21 Dore Coller: Gary is a remarkable man. We were just making a better audio version for you to bring to the Historical Society. You asked me if it was okay if Gary came by and joined us just to hang out and I was like, "Sure." Gary held his cellphone and did a video on one side and held his cellphone and did a video on another side and basically got a two-camera shoot, and after we did it, he said he was really impressed with it. He said, "If you can mix this down and give it to me tonight, you'll have a video in the morning," which is completely unheard of. Of course I said yes. [chuckles] I was like, "Okay!"

0:41:00 Debra Schwartz: Well, you don't know Gary. [chuckles] He goes down the rabbit hole and comes up with something.

0:41:04 Dore Coller: It's just amazing. And while he was there, he said, "God, it would be great if you could write an anthem for the restoration of the West Peak." It's what we're working on right now.

0:41:16 Debra Schwartz: Gary Yost is very much involved in trying to get the West Peak cleared from the debris and the material and the cement that was left there after World War II by the US Army.

0:41:25 Dore Coller: That's right. And they got the barracks down 25, 30 years ago, but they just left it there. There's just mess up there in the middle of this gorgeous park. It really needs to be restored. The way my brain works is if somebody makes a suggestion, I'm probably gonna — I had the chorus of the song written almost instantly, and then I called him back and said, "I think I could do this." Gary and I spent the next six months working on it 'cause it was winter weather. I went up in probably December of last year, spent the day up there with him. I got the \$10 — I got the \$15 tour because I was going to write a song. He showed me all these amazing places. That completed the feelings I had for what I thought I would be writing about. He had a specific idea in mind of what kind of a song he wanted it to be and when he said anthem, I said, "You mean like Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, I'm playing a 12-string kinda anthem?" And he said, "Yeah." I said, "Okay, I've got a 12-string, I could do that."

Also, I grew up in the Hudson River Valley, so I was involved at around that same age I came out to California and a little before I helped Pete Seeger raise the funds up to get the Sloop Clearwater built, which was pretty much the beginning of the ecology movement. Pete canoeing with his buddies and seeing how awful the Hudson River looked like, and saying, "We ought to do something about it. Let's hold a bunch of concerts down by the water so people can see," pretty much started it. So I was involved with that, I grew up in a place where Pete Seeger was, Lee Hayes of The Weavers lived in my hometown, so I had some exposure to that. When Gary said that's what he was looking for, I was like, "I think I know that."

0:43:21 Debra Schwartz: Yeah, you can do that.

0:43:22 Dore Coller: I could do that.

0:43:22 Debra Schwartz: I should think it's amazing to be able to love something so much like music and then use it as a tool, a powerful tool to effect change.

0:43:32 Dore Coller: God, that is such a — I wouldn't call it a gift, it's such a present.

0:43:38 Debra Schwartz: Privilege.

0:43:41 Dore Coller: Yeah, privilege, just to be able to give back and use whatever talents you have to participate in making your local environment and the world a better place. It's certainly what my music is all about. I've written a lot of songs about the situations and politics and how things are and how things could be.

0:44:07 Debra Schwartz: Yes, your song, you wrote "Silent Spring," another beautiful song.

0:44:10 Dore Coller: That's right. It's a song I got a platinum award for the 40th anniversary Earth Day celebrations in Marin County. Awarded something for that.

0:44:22 Debra Schwartz: Do you find that people are really looking for the opportunity to contribute in that way musically? When you wrote the song "The Way it's Supposed To Be," you've got some local musicians there that aren't that easy to engage, apart from their professional work. But how hard was it for you to enlist their help with your —

0:44:45 Dore Coller: Well, you know, Debra, from where we're sitting I can look to my right and look at this mountain — Mt. Tam, Mt. Tamalpais — and if you've had any experience on that mountain, the energy of that mountain and how good it makes you feel, it certainly makes you an environmentalist right off the bat. And the majority of the musicians at least that I choose to work with and know and have met, really, most musicians I know have jumped at the opportunity to give back in such a way and help something like that. Do I think that any of those people would have done this just for me? You know, I'm just a guy who plays guitar. I'm just a musician. I've sacrificed whatever commercial thing I wanted for the environment I live in. That's more important to me than a career. They didn't do it because of me, they didn't do it because of Gary, they did it because of that mountain and anything that could make that better and improve that and make things in general for everyone, for posterity, better.

In addition to Bob Weir and Maria Muldaur and Ramblin' Jack Elliott, we also had Matt Jaffe and Caroline Sky, we had Josh Zucker of the Zucker family, who lived in Mill Valley for a long time. We had Lorin Rowan, we had Susan Zelinsky, who everybody's probably seen perform at the Mountain Play, an amazing singer, a woman with an amazing voice, gives a lot of herself. In addition to that, in the audience there was there was Pat Campbell and Jon Mitguard, who plays with Danny Click. Who else was there? Jim Strand was there, Kit Eakle, a great violinist, was there. There were all these musicians who just came up to be part of the chorus for the day.

0:46:41 Debra Schwartz: As well as a lot of hikers.

0:46:42 Dore Coller: And a lot of hikers.

0:46:42 Debra Schwartz: And the rangers.

0:46:44 Dore Coller: And the rangers.

0:46:45 Debra Schwartz: Friends.

0:46:45 Dore Coller: We had a whole lot of people, but I'm just talking about the musicians that just jumped at an opportunity to be able to do something like that. That's what we look for. It's something we all, most of us, want to do. It's a real honor to do that.

0:47:04 Debra Schwartz: Thank you for using your gift to help get the attention.

0:47:06 Dore Coller: It's my pleasure.

0:47:08 Debra Schwartz: When you think about the life that you've lived here in Mill Valley, do you see changes now in our community? Do you think it's different?

0:47:17 Dore Coller: Gosh, you think? You think it's changed much? Gosh, Debra, I don't know. [chuckles] Well, there's that word "entitlement," that seems to come up a lot. People seem to act like they're really entitled to be here. When I first was here, the Depot was still just a little magazine kiosk in a bus station. The buses turned around there in Lytton Plaza and kept around and it was obvious that people had made a conscious choice to live kinda a little outside the rat race by living here. Certainly, in the early '70s Marin County to me, it seemed like most of that hard-driving trendy status thing was maybe just happening in Sausalito, maybe a neighborhood or two in Ross or Kentfield, but it wasn't the whole county. And over the years, I've seen it spread north up the 101 corridor and west and every ways else, and become pervasive. But certainly I think the difference is people moved here and lived here, because of a certain pace and a certain easygoingness and a certain, I wouldn't say lack of drive, but a certain desire to live another way. And a lot of the political action and environmental stuff that happened in Marin County in the '70s, like everywhere else, we worked really hard. In the '60s, they worked really hard to keep Caltrans from building a freeway out to West Marin and a convention center at Rodeo Beach and have something just plowing through there.

There was a lot of work in the '70s to try to maintain a green belt around the populated areas and just concentrate in the populated areas. Nobody was thinking in 1975, or whenever that was happening, "Hey, let's really limit the growth here so that the real estate will be more valuable in 10 years." It just was, I shouldn't say nobody, there was probably some twisted person thinking that, but nobody was really thinking that. In all of those movements and in all of those efforts and initiatives, the whole point was to make a better place to live in, and better environmentally, an ecologically better place to live. Not higher priced and fancier and more exclusive place to live in.

0:49:45 Debra Schwartz: Mm-hmm.

0:49:47 Dore Coller: Certainly, you've seen that and it's endemic of our society. My time living in Mill Valley since 1990 has been on the wrong side of the freeway. I live over in Strawberry in one of those little stucco houses at the bottom of the valley under

Tiburon Boulevard that they built for the shipyard workers in the '40s. It was sort of like the wrong side of the tracks. A few years ago, I noticed right around Labor Day when school started, that the streets, all the major arteries in this town, got impacted with that red clay we keep trying to dig out of our garden. It just became impassable. You can't just blame that on the people in Mill Valley, it's a lifestyle. Apparently, except there was an edict that summer that came out that no child can walk anywhere or take their bikes anywhere. I think that Mill Valley is suffering from that.

And that's more of a consciousness thing of a community and a general feeling that the world is unsafe out there for whatever reason. It's not just Mill Valley's fault. Tiburon certainly has the same sort of congestion with that one artery going down Tiburon Boulevard. Miraculously, they've started paying for shuttles for the kids and they're actually dealing with that traffic a little bit. So I think that it really has changed. When you make an area exclusive with close proximity to the financial centers of San Francisco, more people are going to wanna live here. There's no reason that Mill Valley should be more expensive than San Anselmo. It's a beautiful little town with a seminary, but it is, because the freeway is closer to the city so, yeah, it's changed quite a bit.

0:51:39 Debra Schwartz: Yeah, well, the state is more crowded in general.

0:51:42 Dore Coller: In general.

0:51:43 Debra Schwartz: We've talked about some of the more challenging changes that have occurred in Mill Valley, but, Dore, can you tell me about some of the things that have changed for the positive in our community, in our town?

0:51:56 Dore Coller: Well, you know, we are still such an artistic community and the support for the arts and certainly for music in this town has been exemplary as time has gone on and things have developed. I'd say probably the one that stands out the most to me is 142 Throckmorton Theatre. What Lucy Mercer and Danny Slomoff have done, sacrificed themselves just to have an amazing art space in our community. It's an old movie theater, and Odd Fellows Hall and has amazing acoustics. And Steve Coleman, the resident artist, who has turned it into the Sistine Chapel, and I just think that's an amazing thing. The level of artistry and the kind of people that you can go to see in downtown Mill Valley. Between what they're doing at 142 Throckmorton and, of course, the new Sweetwater is just incredible. I find myself sitting at home saying, "All I have to do is go to the center of my hometown to see this amazing music." That's just phenomenal.

0:53:12 Debra Schwartz: Yes, but you're involved, aren't you, at the Throckmorton? After today's interview, you're gonna be heading over there.

0:53:19 Dore Coller: That's right. I came to Lucy about a year ago and proposed doing a songwriters' circle. So I actually use one of the front rooms, the Tivoli Room, holds about 40 people. Steve has turned it into something that looks like it's in Versailles, or the movie Barry Lyndon, or something. It's an amazing room with perfect acoustics. We play a really intimate thing with three or four songwriters at a time. I have done that, I've

hosted, I've helped stage-manage Kiddo! in the school benefits there. I've performed there a number of times and for a number of things. It's just an amazing asset. It's an amazing space and I stay as involved with it as I possibly can. I played there on New Year's Eve. I do all kinds of things there. And the same with the Sweetwater. When I get the call, I've played outside and I've played on the main stage a number of times, done different nights there, and that's a real joy. I've been involved with DjangoFest at both places. I have nothing but good things to say about what goes on in those places.

0:54:18 Debra Schwartz: But I have to say, especially, thank you for the last-minute calls I've given to you to help augment the First Wednesday speaker series when we like to have a little music after the show or during the presentation.

0:54:30 Dore Coller: Well, that's a joy, and Mill Valley Library, what an amazing building and a beautiful place to play, and another incredible resource in this town that I'm never in enough. I wish it was down the street from me, if it was where I live in town I'd be there all the time.

0:54:47 Debra Schwartz: If you could switch one thing in Mill Valley right now, what would it be? If you could harken back to another time, if you could tell people about Mill Valley that you feel is slipping away or from a Mill Valley that you highly identified with, what would that be?

0:55:10 Dore Coller: Well, I think the traffic is endemic of that. The place I first came to was a sleepy, little, not quite bedroom community, and that suited me just fine. There was an ability to breathe a little, and live life a certain way and not have to be scrambling every minute of every day to pay the rent or your mortgage or whatever it is you have to pay. If there was anything I would go back to that in Mill Valley, in California in general — every place I've lived has become that way. It was nice to be able to just kind of roll on downtown and hang out. Go to the Old Mill Tavern, see what's going on, and eventually the Sweetwater, the original Sweetwater came around and it was a little, cute place, it was a relaxed place. And I think [chuckles] you talk to anyone who comes here from any place still and it's still relaxed to them.

0:56:11 Debra Schwartz: Compared.

0:56:12 Dore Coller: Comparatively relaxed. People I know who run businesses, own stores in San Francisco and they say, "Mill Valley is the one place I wanna go and just hang, 'cause it's just this great atmosphere," and all that. And it's true, the redwoods are still there. The trees are still there. The buildings are still there. It's just become so dear to have to live here. I would like to see it go back to that little space between the '50s and the '90s where you could just kinda kick back a little bit and relax and live your life and not have to kill yourself just to keep it going.

0:56:53 Debra Schwartz: Yes, amen to that. Well, perhaps that's something you can write a song about.

0:57:01 Dore Coller: I've certainly touched on that in several of my songs.

0:57:05 Debra Schwartz: One of the reasons I really like "The Old Railroad Grade" is it takes you back to another time and place.

0:57:12 Dore Coller: Well, thank you.

0:57:13 Debra Schwartz: Because Mill Valley was very different then to even the town that you lived in in the '70s and '80s and '90s. And yet that song, somehow or another, even though its bluegrass and we're in California, it really captures it. And I like that your band, Dore Coller and the Millbillies, are all local guys, performers as well, by the way.

0:57:35 Dore Coller: I tried as much as I could to fill all of the instrument spots with locals. Got close.

0:57:42 Debra Schwartz: So before we end this interview, I would like to ask if you would consider playing that song.

0:57:50 Dore Coller: Oh, I would consider it. Sure, Debra.

0:57:52 Debra Schwartz: You would? Before we go, then, before we get to the song, which I'm excited to hear — 'cause I probably only heard it 10,000 times, well, maybe 500 times and I've never yet been tired of it, I always enjoy it — let me ask you a couple of questions. Is there anything in this conversation that we haven't talked about that you'd like to talk about?

0:58:19 Dore Coller: Let's see, we haven't mentioned my grandchildren yet, I've got to cover them. There's Sonora, who's 6, and Julian, who's 4, and Stella, who's 1. They live in Southern California. Maybe we'll be able to afford to get them up here one day. And I really wanna stress that I have music and I feel incredibly, unbelievably lucky to have music. And it's really important to give back, to make a commitment to the community in whatever way you can, whether it's contributions or whatever. To give back what you have and share that is something I'd like to mention. I don't know, I mean, I've been around for a minute or two, I don't know if you want me to give any sort of advice or anything.

0:59:15 Debra Schwartz: Advice is always welcome.

0:59:21 Dore Coller: Shut up and pay attention. Be patient for the things you want. And always go for it, always attempt at least to go for the things you think you want.

0:59:40 Debra Schwartz: Sage advice.

0:59:43 Dore Coller: It sounds like something you should say in an interview. [laughs]

0:59:46 Debra Schwartz: Well, I think you mean it.

0:59:48 Dore Coller: It's how I live, it's how I try to live. I'm a go-for-it kind of person when I have an idea. It's nothing ventured, nothing gained.

1:00:00 Debra Schwartz: Spoken from the words of a man who explored the city at 14, wide open, ready to go.

1:00:09 Dore Coller: Pretty mellow, wimpy place, compared to Manhattan.

1:00:12 Debra Schwartz: Yes. I suppose so.

1:00:13 Dore Coller: At the time.

1:00:14 Debra Schwartz: Yes.

1:00:15 Dore Coller: It seemed like everybody was so nice. That's the other thing I will say. I'll give that as a maxim from all of my years of hitchhiking and traveling: if you allow a person to just be a decent person, 99 percent of the time, that's who they will be. If you give someone a chance to be decent, most of the time, that is gonna be their first reaction.

1:00:45 Debra Schwartz: True.

1:00:46 Dore Coller: Enough maxims from me.

1:00:48 Debra Schwartz: I enjoyed that one. So do you wanna do a little time traveling, right now? Shall we go back?

1:00:53 Dore Coller: Let me play a little bit of "The Old Railroad Grade."

1:00:55 Debra Schwartz: How about the whole thing?

1:00:57 Dore Coller: Okay.

[music]

1:01:06 Dore Coller: I don't usually play it on this guitar, but I think the chords work out the same. Let's see here.

[music]

1:05:05 Debra Schwartz: [Applauds] Very, very nice!

1:05:07 Dore Coller: Thank you.

1:05:10 Debra Schwartz: What do you say, Dore? You got a little more music in you?

1:05:14 Dore Coller: Wanna hear another one?

1:05:15 Debra Schwartz: I would.

1:05:17 Dore Coller: Doesn't take much provocation to get me to play a little more music, so I think I can squeeze one more in here.

1:05:23 Debra Schwartz: Yeah.

1:05:26 Dore Coller: Well, I suppose I should, since this is an interview about the Mill Valley experience from my eyes, we should do the Mt. Tam anthem, wouldn't you think?

1:05:38 Debra Schwartz: I think so.

1:05:38 Dore Coller: Probably "The Way It's Supposed to Be."

1:05:40 Debra Schwartz: Yeah. I would love that.

1:05:42 Dore Coller: Orchestra comes up here.

1:05:44 Debra Schwartz: Okay. Curtain opens.

[music]

1:09:32 Debra Schwartz: Dore, thank you so much for a delightful interview.

1:09:37 Dore Coller: It's my pleasure. Thank you for asking me, Debra.