

# Tom Hudson

NWT Archives, Northern Musicians Project, accession number N-2005-014, [item number 0012](#)

December 1, 2005  
Fort Smith, NT,

MMS - I'm just sort of going back, I want you to talk about yourself, specifically, starting at earlier or earliest memories of things musically that turned you on. If you grew up in a musical family or you saw somebody play music or just what sort of... When did you have that first realization that you got turned on and then just sort of carry it through up to a certain point and as we go and I'll maybe stop you and we can back track or whatever...

TH - Sure, well, I don't come from a musical family. I had an interest in music actually just through listening to the radio. I recall coming home when I was just a teen, there was a program on CBC that I never missed according to my mother. I used to just rush home from school and make myself a hot chocolate there and sit in front of the radio and listen to the music. And I used to sing along with the songs because a lot of times the material that was played was played over and over again.

MMS - Do you remember the name of the show?

TH - Oh God, no, I'm sorry I don't. I'm sorry, CBC. This was again in the late '60's. I would say '65. That was actually before I went to Akaitcho Hall. I never did play with anybody in town to make music until I got to Akaitcho Hall. I went there in 1966 to go to school for the first time. Basically that first year was just getting to know people you know and just getting into your grades and trying to do something with that. The following year I got hooked up... I used to sing all the time, I guess, in Fort Smith both at home and....maybe I could just back track again, Pat. There's another thing I recall doing here in (Fort) Smith and that was just cruising around town with friends of mine in vehicles and singing along to the radio and everybody would you know, kind of listen to me sing and you know. So I was getting at that early stage some response from people and I was enjoying it you know, that kind of thing. I was a very shy person and still am to some extent.

MMS - Do you remember some of the names of the songs you were singing, some of the titles, just the hits?

TH - Oh God, they were *Elvis Presley* songs, "Jailhouse Rock", contemporary stuff that was happening at the time I guess. And of course, my parents had all kinds of old records, *Jim Reeves* you know those types of things so I got to know that country material, the old country material. That was prior to going to Akaitcho Hall and like I say in that second year of being at Akaitcho Hall, I got together with some friends like *Tony Buggins* and also *Allan Cardinal*. He was another person that really started me off. And we'd just get together down in the bowels there of Akaitcho Hall, in one of the side rooms and just jam, you know. It was just a lot of cover tunes, that's primarily what we did. No one was doing original material at that time.

MMS - You're a singer so you just sort of sang. Was there any PA system there for you?

TH - Actually no, Pat, there was no sound system whatsoever. It was just individual students that came there had their own amplifiers and guitars. It was just wanting to get together and try to start something. So that's

MMS - Do you mind if we back track?

TH - Not at all.

MMS - Can I take you back here before you went...

TH - Sure.

MMS - You were listening to CBC and you got turned on by your parent's music collection as well. Was there any other way that you were getting music, like, other radio stations, anything like... that was the extent of what you were getting?

TH - That was it yeah, we had a lot of 45's and 78 records and stuff that we listened to. It was primarily country music we listened to.

MMS - Was the road in here?

TH - Oh Yes.

MMS - OK so we're talking about the early to mid '60s here?

TH - Yes, that's right.

MMS - OK, How old were you when you went to Akaitcho?

TH - I was 16 years old

MMS - Why the decision to go to Akaitcho? Was that a choice or did you just hit high school and then you have to go there?

TH - I guess it was two things, my own interest in wanting to go because a lot of my friends like *Allan Heron*, (*Squeak*) and my neighbour *Allan Gauthier*, who is a close friend of mine, they had already gone to Akaitcho Hall the year prior and they had nothing but good things to say about it so. That and in those days they were streaming students to either an academic vein in the school or vocational training. So they had the shop training in Yellowknife so I was interested in that as well. So, there was a couple of reasons for wanting to go and just the adventure of it all

MMS - Were you getting any of the popular music of the day, I mean, was that just before the whole hippie Woodstock generation hit?

TH - It sure was.

MMS - *The Beatles* were probably making their way up here on the airwaves at that time. But before the protest songs and all the rest of that stuff, I'm just sort of thinking of people like *Dylan*, *Neil Young* and *Joni (Mitchell)* and *The Band* and all of those people in that time. Did you know about any of those bands happening down south? Did you know or get any news of what was going on down south?

TH - No, no, no and I really didn't latch onto any one artist, I didn't really do any research or you know, go out of my way to learn any more about artists it was just the contemporary stuff that was on the radio at the time and also like I say the records that my parents had at home. There were groups operating in town at the time but they were doing adult dances primarily. So, you know as a kid you just couldn't plug into that kind of scene.

MMS - A lot more of a traditional, old time thing?

TH - No, not really no, there were rock and roll groups here at the time. There was *Bob Beaulieu*, was a drummer here then. They used to play actually... *Pat Burke* will probably fill you in more on these names and some of the groups that were around here 'cause he was closer to that scene, I guess. I remember they used to play at the Armories for adult dances and when the sky was dark outside all the kids used to sneak around the Armories and listen to the music there at night while the partying was going on.

MMS - So what kind of music they were playing for those dances? Country Swing, Country..

TH - It was old Rock and Roll. Who in the heck was happening....

MMS - Like, *The Ventures*

TH - Yeah, exactly those types of things

MMS - So the groups were local groups?

TH - Yes

MMS - Any out of town groups come through you remember seeing?

TH - No, I don't recall seeing any, no. There were a couple of bars operating in town here at the time and they didn't bring music in.

MMS - Just sort of keep asking, holding you back there because it is just sort of a snapshot in time that way. It sounded like when you say you got up to Yellowknife to Akaitcho Hall this whole other world opened up?

TH - Yeah, like I say, I was just getting a very small taste of the sounds out there I guess just by listening to the radio and that kind of thing. When I got to Akaitcho Hall it was a real ear opener I guess because everyone was bringing their own tapes and records with them to Akaitcho Hall so you got to listen to a whole range of material so it opened up a whole.. opened my ears up. Akaitcho Hall was fun. The administration gave me a lot of latitude and all of the musicians were treated that way. They actually encouraged that. We used to play for all of the Akaitcho Hall dances and dances at Sir John and also dances in town. It was a vehicle, a way, I guess of breaking down barriers between the towns' kids and the out of town kids who lived at Akaitcho hall and it really worked, it was a lot of fun in those days. And like I say, I got a lot of freedom. I spent many a night in town instead of having to go back to Akaitcho Hall. You know instead of going half juiced or whatever and they didn't come down on me because of that, which was nice. And we did all kinds of weird things, like I say, we played for all the gatherings there.

MMS - ...school dances, proms, ball tournaments, and stuff like that?

TH - Yeah, the whole bit.

MMS - Did you ever travel, go and do other communities?

TH - Not until...well I shouldn't say that we did a few trips to Hay River for instance to play for graduation dances and things like that. A couple of the band members that I played with *Brian Kovatch* and *Marc Whitford*, those people were living in Hay River at the time so they wanted to go back home I guess and do these gigs so it was fun to travel. Didn't do that many of those out of town things but they were fun. But we did quite a few gigs in town. I recall that we played at both the mines in Yellowknife, they had adult dances there so they allowed the Akaitcho Hall band, us, to go and play for these things. They were wet dances and there we were in our ties and white shirts and flashy jackets on and just doing our thing, we had a blast. It was all like I say, it was all cover tunes, you know, so there was no big egos.

MMS - So a PA system there for sure and stuff like that but I guess the people would arrange it or rent it from somewhere and get you back and forth? Would the hall set that up for you?

TH - Actually no, Akaitcho Hall, they had some old sound systems that they had from years past but they never did buy any new equipment for us, we had to do our own thing. And we slowly acquired adequate sound systems to cover the places that we played. One of the local merchants there, *Harold Glick*, really helped us out a lot. He allowed us to not only to play in his store but to get discount prices on strings, guitars anything that we really needed. So he was very helpful and encouraging to us.

MMS - He would have been selling a lot of records then too, were you spending a lot of money in the record store?

TH - Yeah that's right, it was, you scratch my back I'll scratch yours, so it worked out OK. There were other bands actually happening at Akaitcho Hall that first year that I attended Akaitcho Hall. I recall people like *George Mandeville*, from YK (Yellowknife), *Albert Canadien* from Fort Providence. They had a very good group in the '60s in Akaitcho Hall, you might do some

follow up on that. And they got to travel, they did some original material, they did quite a few gigs in the States from what I understand. So yeah, there's people around (Fort) Providence that can fill you in on that. It was prior to me going.

MMS - So, were you going out and catching other bands as well, you're going to school and playing the gigs and the wet dances and school proms and stuff like that. Were there other bands playing in the bars and stuff that you got a chance to see or any travelling bands coming through, just what ever, that you got a chance to hear?

TH - No. Again, this is in Yellowknife because I never did return to Fort Smith here until just recently. After I finished school I stayed in Yellowknife and raised a family there. There were groups operating in town. The *Tees* boys, *Gary (Tees)* and *John (Tees)* had a group going, they had a very good group going. Again they were doing cover tunes like the rest of us and playing local gigs.

MMS - Do you remember the names of some of those groups?

TH - The "Stained Glass Illusion", was one of the groups I think *John* and *Gary (Tees)* formed. They had a very good drummer/singer, geez, I can't remember his name. Again, you can do some follow up with those guys, they'll really help. As far as going out into the bars, I was just too young to go into the bars so I never did hear any groups. They were bringing groups into some of the bars there but I never did listen to any of them.

MMS - So you weren't bumping into any of the other musicians other than the musicians at Akaitcho Hall like you wouldn't bump into somebody like *Archie (Loutitt)* or *Norm (Glowach)* walking down the street? I guess I'm looking for what kind of community was sort of happening at that time?

TH - There wasn't... there were local groups happening, there were not a lot of... work between the groups. You know, everyone kept to themselves, we did a lot of the same material but I guess it was just the egos that didn't allow us to really, you know, converge with one another, get together and make music or whatever. It was just not happening at that time. It was kind of stale that way I guess. Although we kept up with the music scene that was happening on the radio, all of the contemporary stuff, we practiced and learned all of this stuff and played it at dances all over town.

MMS - OK, so this is where maybe you're a couple of years into Akaitcho now, in the middle of your time there, or whatever, in between the time you got there and the time you graduated, right? Was the music, popular music. How do I put it....,What kind of changes did you perceive... Maybe it just didn't happen that much, maybe I'm being too ideal on this. I keep thinking that there was this change that happened in music, I mean, just listening to the different styles of popular music has always been something that sort of interested me. I guess I'm asking you, you say you were aware of what was going on and stuff. Did you sense a change in the styles of music that were being popular? After, like....

TM - Hmmmm...

MMS - I guess in the development of rock and roll, Tom, I'm thinking that you're listening to that early *Elvis* stuff and then you're getting into the later '60s and the popular music is going through this thing in the south but it's also transferring up here through the airwaves. Were you starting to check out or even be physically there but know of different Canadian and American bands and stuff like and what they were sort of up to other than.... I guess not...

TH - No, that was it, man. And in terms of this type of music that we were listening to and copying, it wasn't coming over the airwaves all day long. There were certain times of day when it was broadcast. So, there was not a lot of, there wasn't a big bombardment of it. You did go down to the local stores and get the latest tapes that were coming out and you know we learned material that way and were influenced that way. Our material that we chose I guess reflected those changes somewhat. We introduced some blues tunes for instance and a little bit of folk music in some of our sets. So, I guess in that sense it was there and it was influencing us but as far as really us being aware and going out of our way to look for this stuff and working with other people no, it just wasn't happening, it wasn't a really rich scene yet.

MMS - I'm just trying to sort of imagine the isolation but there you guys are being here and then being in Yellowknife but I guess compared to what's happening today just while you were talking I was thinking how much we are bombarded with it now but back then it was just the song. It came at you out of the radio, scratchy or whatever and it had to grab you. Who does that song? So that you know who to ask for when you got to the record store. It was that direct and that simple, right, it just sort of hit you and opposed to everything that goes on now.

TH - That's exactly right. My world was so small, like my world was Fort Smith before going to Yellowknife so, I guess my upbringing was Fort Smith, Yellowknife and that was it. So, any influences I guess were brought on by the radio and by tapes and CDs and that kind of thing.

MMS - Around that time, would you have had, CBC television was happening but it was canned. There was some music shows that would come through, would you have been checking out any of those music shows that were coming through at the time?

TH - For sure, there were, when we were at Akaitcho Hall we got, I think it was, 3 or 4 hours of TV in the evenings if we wanted it. And there were things happening on television at the time, the *Tommy Hunter* Show of course was popular, so country music was on that program. *Anne Murray*, I remember being influenced by her a great deal because of her popularity and her great voice. So those types of shows were happening, I guess. It was just fun, like I say the administration, *A.J. Boxer* and the supervisor, *Gordon Lambert*, gave us all the freedom that we wanted to do our thing. So long as our grades were up and we didn't get ourselves in a whole lot of trouble we had this freedom to make some music and given the space downstairs to practice and the return for them like I say is that we played for the dances and we were ambassadors I guess of because the band was made up of individuals from different parts of the territories. Not only from Fort Smith but like I say from other parts of the territories, so it was a body that really represented the territories. So, I guess in that sense we were ambassadors.

MMS - Sorry, the name of the band?

TH - One of the groups that I worked in and I guess the most popular one, was the “UM<sup>2</sup>, The Universal Music Machine”. We got to travel and play local scenes. Part of this particular group got to then travel on our Centennial year which was 1967, we got to travel up the Mackenzie River, stopping at a settlement every second day and playing music and doing other things that were on this particular entertainment barge that they sent up the Mackenzie for the Centennial celebrations. The band that we formed then was called “The Centennaires” to coincide with that. And like I say, we stopped at a settlement every second day and set up in the community some place, either outside, against a house or in a gymnasium if they had it or band office or where ever you know and we played for the people and they really appreciated it. We got to do that for a whole summer. Got paid for it and had a great time.

MMS - The whole summer, so from what dates to what dates?

TH - The trip actually was a summer gig, it was organized in the latter part of 1967 while we were in Akaitcho Hall. So right after we finished school, we then got together in Yellowknife and we boarded this barge, this entertainment.....first of all they had trailers set up on this barge, they had a ferris wheel for kids to play on when we stopped at the settlements. We had a lot of showcases on one part of the barge which we had to tour the general public through so they could see some of these things that were being developed in various parts of Canada. It was kind of to show off the mega projects I guess that were happening around Canada at the time. So, that was one of the ways that we had to pay our way on the barge, on this entertainment barge, was to show the people around and in the evenings we made music. We did that for the summer right after school was out to I would say the third week in August. We turned the barge around in Tuktoyaktuk and it was cold up there, man. We then travelled back to Inuvik, and spent a couple of days there and then flew back down to the warmer south. But it was a fun trip. Again the band was made up of *David Evalik* from Cambridge Bay and *Lawrence Thrasher* from Tuktoyaktuk and who else was on this, *Eddie Bazie* from Rae (Behchoko) was our drummer, a very good drummer and who else was on the group... We had *Archie Plamondin* from Fort Smith who played keyboards. He travelled with us also. So we had a blast, such a good time and just treated really well by the different communities. It was a real good time.

MMS - It must have been amazing going into those communities, I mean they must have been settlements, like I mean, on the side of the river....

TH - No kidding....

MMS - think about communities, I mean hardly even a community now. But they're just so small but it that's an amazing time to go up there and just sort of witness that or be a witness to that.

TH - For sure, if you could picture this barge pulling into a very small settlement like (Fort) Wrigley for instance and just throwing the plank down off of the boat and onto the shore and walking the plank onto the shore with our equipment and all of the towns people standing on the shoreline just greeting us. It was a real blast, good time.

MMS - playing cover tunes?

TH - Yeah, like I said before there was no original stuff being done at the time and we were just doing all cover tunes.

MMS - being a dance band

TH - Yeah, exactly.

MMS - ...just doing the work that way but that's an amazing trip. How did you get the gig? Were you sitting in school one day and they said, OK Tom or here's an opportunity? Whose idea was it because it's a brilliant idea?

TH - I think that the administration of Akaitcho Hall were approached by government I do believe at the time because to pay for something like that the resources had to come from government I'm sure. And we were just the scene at the time at Akaitcho Hall and I think it was just because of that we had the opportunity to go. It was fun. A fellow that has a lot of photos and I never did any follow up with him was *David Evalik*. I'm not exactly sure where he is living right now but he had this camera, man, and he had it in his hand all the time. We all wondered what he was up to. He was the only one who documented anything. We just have our measly memories and he's got the good photos. So yeah that was just one summer and then when we came back we just disbanded, that was it. We got paid for the trip and got this wonderful experience and then everybody went and did their own thing after that.

MMS - So, you were done school?

TH - No, I had a few more years left at Akaitcho Hall.

MMS - So, how old were you when you did that trip?

TH - Oh gosh, I must have been 17, 17 years old

MMS - Awesome, that's an awesome experience at that age. So, back into Akaitcho Hall, back to UM<sup>2</sup>?

TH - Yes

MMS - ...or the next formation of?

TH - Yeah, that's right because people were finishing school and they were moving onto jobs and university and college and things like that. So, it was kind of like a revolving door so then you get to play with other people and they bring something new to the band, of course. So, it was always fresh, it was great!

MMS - Some of the names of some of the guys that were rolling in and out of the band?



TH - Oh, again, there was a fella I remember from Hay River, *Billy Lobb*, he was a drummer. Spent a very short time playing with us but he was a good drummer, a very disciplined young fella. And again, *Allan Cardinal* and his Brother *Lloyd (Cardinal)* of course. Who else was? *Pat Burke* from Fort Smith was there and he was forming his own group in the latter part of my days there at Akaitcho anyway. And again the local scene was starting to pick up again, I'm not exactly sure some of the.... I'm not exactly sure, I can't remember some of the bands that were forming at the time but there was a little richer local scene happening in the late '60s, early '70s.

MMS - Yeah so, just finishing off your grades. Did you come back home?

TH - I, yeah, Pat, I just came back a couple of summers. That first summer I came back for instance, I didn't even work in town. I worked on the highway doing some surveying because they were re-surfacing the highway between Hay River and (Fort) Smith here and the other summers I stayed in Yellowknife and made music with the boys. And those were really good paying gigs and allowed us to survive for the summer. We all had day jobs and were playing primarily on weekends and just making some extra cash making music in town in Yellowknife.

MMS - That's the way you spent your summer holiday?

TH - Yeah, that's right. That first year after we left Akaitcho Hall, we stayed in a tent. We had... there was 4 of living in a tent behind the Hudson House in Yellowknife and one tent contained our band equipment and one of the tents we lived in, we slept in. We stayed in this fella's yard, I can't exactly what his name is, *Jim Wright*, I'm sorry Jim, forgot your name for a second. He allowed us to stay in his backyard and use his washroom whenever we could sneak in there. But it was a fun summer, made music and had other jobs like I say. So it was a real blast. We didn't spend all of the summer in this tent, thank God because the rains forced us out of there. But for part of the summer we stayed there, that was fun. And we ended up scattering out into the community living in different suites and sharing with other people, that kind of thing. But we were still very eager to make music and whenever someone called a rehearsal we were right there eager to participate.

MMS - So, getting... spending your summer holidays playing in town, playing Legions, Elks, dances six nighters? Were you in the clubs?

TH - No, the club scene or the bar scene didn't start until really mid-'70's I guess. Prior to that we were doing dances, we were doing the two mines, Con Mine, Giant Mine, they were the rec centres and we did the Elks Hall and The Legion, and you know, the whole local scene.

MMS - OK, so, getting out of school and like you say working construction jobs and stuff like that and just playing and probably making more than enough money to have fun at that age. So, you liked Yellowknife and just stuck around...Any pull back then to come back to (Fort) Smith here at all at that time?

TH - I did come to Fort Smith because of course my family was here so I was coming here I think it was about, in those days, I think it was twice a year I would come home. When I was in Akaitcho Hall, I was coming home Christmas time and I was coming home Easter time and I'd

try and make a trip home to visit the family in midsummer or something like that and also once prior to going back to Akaitcho Hall. So I was always staying in touch with the family back here. As far as keeping up with the local music scene in (Fort) Smith here, this was not my spot so I...although I was born here and raised here, I didn't make music here. Akaitcho Hall in Yellowknife was my little home I guess.

MMS - OK, Just a bit of back tracking again. Between leaving Akaitcho and working up until the time you were working 2 construction jobs, what, were you playing with some of the same guys that were from Akaitcho who ended up staying? Can you tell you me about that 3 or 2 years, '69 to '72, fairly important years that way as far as age and being out and playing and doing a bunch of stuff that way? So what bands were you with then, was it still UM<sup>2</sup>, did you carry that name through?

TH - Yes, yes, we were working the local scene with people like *Brian Kovatch and Marc Whitford, Eddie Bazie*. Also another person from Fort Smith played with us around that time in the early '70s and that was *Tom Dempsey* from (Fort) Smith. I think that now he resides in Edmonton. *Pat (Burke)* again can fill you in on some of the stuff that he did locally here.

MMS - So that was pretty much the core of the band through say that time period, that 2 or 3 year time period?

TH - Yeah, that's right.

MMS - You guys kept playing around and stuff. Any memorable gigs from that time? Extreme playing outside, or whatever. Travel?

TH - Yeah, we did a few graduation things, again, Hay River. We got to travel up to Inuvik, we got to travel to Norman Wells. We were doing a few things. All the while doing cover material again. You know the writing I guess didn't come until sometime in the '80s.

MMS - Just one last question back around that time. So, do you notice the popular music changing then? One question, the other thing I sort of have, is there's different things that come from outside of, if you're listening to popular music, you're absorbing it, popular music is going through this morphosis or evolution or whatever you want to call it, it's just changing, right, because of all of the influences and stuff. Sometimes the technology can sort of come in and change things or your accessibility, a road goes in or the influx of media and stuff like that how that can sort of change things and I know at that time there was quite a bit of that going on.

TH - Yeah, there sure was. Yellowknife for instance was opening up, there were lot of groups coming in and playing the bar scene. It was influenced that way and just more music.

MMS -Which rooms would you have been going to and checking out other bands in those years?

TH - OK, that would be the bars. They had the Gallery Bar, what else was going on. The Gold Range of course had, they were primarily doing local bands I do believe. But the Yellowknife

Inn bar they were bringing in bands from outside. So it was a nice change to see some of these acts.

MMS - Do you remember the names of any of these acts?

TH - No I really don't Pat, it was such a long time ago.

MMS - ...other cover bands, or was there blues bands or country bands or whatever coming up. Were there any sort of styles of music that were sort of, mostly just cover bands, Gold Range playing country music.

TH - Times...you know, Yellowknife's local scene hasn't... the town or the city hasn't changed all that much physically I guess, playing opportunities haven't increased all that much, I guess. There's just a lot more music out there, a lot more radio stations playing different stuff. The availability of it over the internet, just buying stuff.

MMS - Yeah, I want to go back, I want to crawl back into the womb here

TH - I'm running out of things to say about those.....

MMS - OK, by that time, was there any other.... the format is changing from the 45 to the LP, the long play, to cassette tapes are coming in and becoming a lot more available and accessible in price and stuff like that. Did your method of getting your music start to change or was it still picking up records at the record shop and just listening to the radio? Was there any other radio stations that you were listening to besides CBC that you were able to get maybe on a really cold night or something like that, were you into checking out any of the other stations that might make it up. I guess I'm just sort of looking, did your access to looking for popular music or popular music material change in that time?

TH - Yeah, I guess, you were able to pick on radio I guess channels from Edmonton and Toronto and places like that so you did hear some new material out there. I guess the influence came primarily from tapes, you know, that kind of thing, shared through friends and also bought at the local stores. Again the stores were full of this stuff at this point in time. You know, yeah. There was a big popularity of music in the early '70s. It was just, people wanted to spend money on this. There was just more... I'm not sure whether there was a requirement by radio stations to play more Canadian content, I wasn't aware of whether that increased or not but as far as the local scene it was always small and we relied on primarily what was brought in the stores and what we heard on radio.

MMS - Cool, those are the very early days.....

TH - Also Pat, people would just, certain musicians knew of other musicians in town so, often times someone may show up at a rehearsal and sit in. So you were influenced not only by the radio and tapes and CDs but other musicians that were playing the local scene. Yellowknife was always, has always been a transient community, people come and go. It's amazing how transient that place is.

MMS - Maybe, if it wasn't the mines before the government got there, definitely after the government moved in. You're sort of talking 4 or 5 years after they landed and got off the plane so it was sort of a heyday of making a brand new government for the territory at the time too. So, OK, mid '70s you're starting a family, settling in and you...

TH - I was married July 6 of '74 and it was shortly after that my wife and I left for Victoria. We went and re-located there. I was out of the whole scene for a few years. We lived in Victoria for a year and then from there moved to Calgary, stayed there another year, and then from there moved back to Yellowknife and I got into a training program. I was totally out of the music scene for quite a period of time there and it was just simply because of family responsibilities. And it didn't bother me, I was focusing on my family and that was it. And of course most of the people I had worked with previously were gone, you know...

MMS - Left town doing other things, picking up other careers...

TH - Life got in the way

MMS - So, OK, you decide to step back into it.

TH - That didn't happen, I guess until the latter part of the '70s. We moved back to Yellowknife in late '76 I believe it was.

MMS - So you'd been out of the music scene for a while, how did you go about getting yourself back into the music scene?

TH - Again, it was one of those situations where I guess I was getting a little anxious to do something and again it was recognized by my wife and again encouraged to get back into the scene and I did again. I hooked up with some of the players that I was with previously, *Kevin Mackie* is one that comes to mind. And him and I got a group formed called "Katt Sass" and we did primarily country cover tunes and played the local scene. Did some trips to (Fort) Providence, Hay River, (Fort) Simpson, Norman Wells, Inuvik and Cambridge Bay.

MMS - Who else was in that band?

TH - We had *Ted Mildenberger* on the Bass guitar and fiddle, *Tony Buggins* on guitar and *Kevin (Mackie)* on drums and myself on vocals. It was fun, it was fun alright.

MMS - ...and the bars at that time, had expanded any by then? Was there different lounges doing different stuff or pretty much the same scene as when you left there?

TH - Yeah, it was pretty well the same scene. People were playing the Elks Hall and the Legion. They weren't doing as many dances at the 2 mines, I think that quit, I guess it must have been the end of the '60s when they decided to stop dances there or the early part of the '70s. And the bars were continuing to bring groups in from outside and they were also, like the Gold Range, hiring local musicians to play periodically. We were getting a lot of work and a lot of exposure and

having a lot of fun. There were other local groups happening of course. I was playing with, there were not only those particular gigs but there were jam sessions that were happening in town and people getting together and I think people were starting to write some of their own material acoustically and starting to introduce some material into the bands at that time. So, there was a movement that way I guess.

MMS - OK, so from “Katt Sass” to...what’s the next band?

TH - Oh, “Katt Sass” to...what was the other band? Must have been getting into a scene with *Norman (Glowach)* and company. Who else was part of that?

MMS - *Sue, Sue Leon*? Was she in there or was that *Gary (Tees)* and *John (Tees)* I think they were playing with her first?

TH - That right, yeah, *Gary Tees* and *Brother John (Tees)*. Although they had their own particular band, they were interested in doing and playing with other musicians in town here so, or in Yellowknife. So yeah, it was the *Tees* boys, and then *Sue Leon* on keyboards joined us later. And there were people like *Sandy Wilson* and *Mercer, Terry Mercer* and other guys doing their thing in town as well at that time. And they were doing a different type of music. We were playing primarily Rock and Roll, they introduced some Blues and that kind of thing, some shuffle tunes, that kind of thing. I liked that, I still enjoy singing that kind of material. So yeah, they brought that kind of influence which was nice. Blues wasn’t a big scene at that time but in some of the sets we did do a few blues cuts. So I got to experiment, I was not only singing cover rock and roll tunes but I was touching on country, I was touching some other forms of music, It was interesting times.

MMS - Just getting in with a different crew of players, I guess from even playing with *Kevin (Mackie)* since you were in high school together.....

TH - Yeah, yeah, that’s right, you see some of the photos of how young we look at Akaitcho Hall. Yeah...

MMS - ...and getting, like you say to, mixing it up with a different group of musicians and them bringing different songs for you to sing, right, different styles and stuff. And more or less the same activities with that band just playing around the different clubs and stuff like that?

TH - Yeah, that’s right, yup. I really didn’t get into original material until I got together with *Norm (Glowach)* and yourself, *Paul Tanner* of course.

MMS - So was there anything between that work... Like once you started to work with *Norm (Glowach)*, what was the name of that band?

TH - Oh god, what did we call ourselves?

MMS - What were the names of that band?

TH - This was post Expo. I guess we're talking....

MMS - pre - Expo actually....in between...

TH - pre Expo, so, what the heck were we calling ourselves?

MMS - I guess just sort of make the tie between, OK, the time that you and I worked together... that I'm familiar with and just before that and just sort of, you were working with *Norm (Glowach)* in the band and stuff like that and did it just evolve into the writing project that became the "Komatiks" or is that a fairly large leap?

TH - Yeah, we weren't at that particular time, we still were not doing original material. It was only until after the "Komatiks" were formed. Well, actually we had a different name for the group before the "Komatiks" this was shortly before we did the recording in Ottawa and finished it off in Edmonton. So that was just around Expo time, I guess.

MMS - But you guys had put this together with *James Milligan* and *Wayne Bertrand*, right?

TH - Yeah, that's right.

MMS - Was that a fairly fresh thing I mean you had the gig coming up to Expo. Did you put the band together to play Expo or was the band already going and then the Expo gig came up?

TH - No, definitely the band was going prior to Expo. We were one of the local groups that were invited to go to Expo but we were happening locally at the time and doing primarily cover tunes. And then *James Milligan*, *Norm (Glowach)* and *Wayne (Bertrand)* of course wanted to start introducing original material to the band. I didn't play an instrument so I found it difficult coming up with melody lines but once I got into the lyric writing it came quite easy. I think I had quite a bit of input into that. That was fun! And also when we went and played later on at St. Johns, NB, that was a fun trip. I have some notes at home. I kept track of every gig that we had there and made notes on how well we played and how many people showed up and the response of people, that kind of thing. The type of PA system that we were using. It was real fun looking back on that stuff. And all of the photos that we took, of course, umpteen photos. Expo was a gas too, that was a real blast. I think we were there for damn near 3 weeks. Staying, having to take the sky train into the Expo site each day, got to listen to some good music, ate some good food.

MMS - Coming back to Yellowknife, I sort of jumped into the fray, moved along pretty quickly after that I mean the recording happened.

TH - Yeah, that's right, I think it was '87 we ended up refining the material and writing a few more songs before we departed for Ottawa. Didn't quite finish the recording in Ottawa, ended up finishing it I think a year later or 8 months later at (*Daryl*) *Goede* Studios. Yeah, the "Komatiks". So yeah that was a real fun time for me. There's nothing like original material that's for sure and of course getting the response from the people as we did. That was fun.

MMS - After the demise....

TH - After the demise of the “Komatiks”, I was invited by CBC to do...to get involved in a recording. They were trying to feature different songwriters and performers, singers on CBC recordings they were doing at that time. So, I ended up singing some of *Randy Daniels*’ material, straight country, very good stuff. So I did... I got a little taste of working in a studio although it was a pretty crude set up. That was my first time actually being recorded and that was a very good experience. From that, I did more recordings with *Randy Daniels* and I did also some demo tapes of *Norbert Poitras*’ and then after that I ended up doing another recording, of course. And that one was done with a grant from the NWT Arts Council program. And *Norm Glowach* and I wrote the material for that. And used, I think there was 22 or 23 different musicians to play on the recording, It took us over 2 years to put the CD together so it’s a combination of different types of music in there and no real focus but some decent tunes. There was my...a little more involved I guess in the actual song writing, *Norm (Glowach)* and I were writing the lyrics as well as the music and hiring different people to come in the studio. And that was fun.

MMS - What was the name of that first album that you did with *Norm (Glowach)*?

TH - The recording of original material, was “*Dance Among the Stars*”. And the CBC production it was called “*North Country Ways*”. It featured *Randy Daniels* as one of the songwriters, it featured *George Tuccaro* as a vocalist. It also featured *Cheryl Webster* as a vocalist and also *Connie Johns Hinchey* was also featured on there.

MMS - So your last recording you did that and then you left Yellowknife?

TH - Yes, yup, I left Yellowknife actually in ’99.

MMS - Moved back here to Smith?

TH - Moved back here to Fort Smith. I did a few things with some of the local boys here and I still get myself involved in the festival each year. I want to get back into things, I gotta strengthen my voice up. Like I said I want to do another recording. I know I still have a fair bit to offer...

MMS - still have a few songs in there... So an album and I don’t know aspirations after that, I mean, you’re living your life down here, you’re settled....

TH - Yeah that’s right, you know, I never did have any aspirations of being a star in the music business. You know I had a hell of a lot of fun playing with friends of mine and doing the local scene, doing a bit of travel and doing a few recordings you know. I’m quite content when I look back on some of the stuff I’ve done. I’m quite satisfied with that. Raised a beautiful family, made some music and made some friends. Not much more to life than that, I don’t think.

MMS - Sounds like a good place to wind it up, thank you.

TH - Your welcome, Pat.