

# Interview with Kelly Ann Sproul

# VR2-A-L-2011-023

Interview # 1: June 15, 2011

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Good morning. Today is June 15, 2011. It’s a Wednesday. We’re thrilled today to have two people with us. My name is Mark DePue; I’m the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Some days I get to have some fun, and today is one of those days because I have Kelly Ann Sproul and Vincent Speranza. This is an unusual occasion when I’m interviewing two people at the same time. But this is quite an occasion; I’m excited to have both of you here. There’s a little bit of an introduction, I think, that is required. We have already interviewed Vince several times about your experiences, Vince, as a paratrooper in World War II, got these great stories about growing up in Staten Island in an immigrant family. So it’s been fascinating to have that series. But part of your story has been going over to Bastogne and visiting the city where so much of your early memorable moments were spent, and then encountering Kelly Ann Sproul. So we’re going to pick it up from there, and most of the conversation is going to be with you, Kelly. But let’s start with a quick introduction. Tell us where you were born and when you were born.

Sproul: I was born in West Ham, which is in London. I was born in 1988, and I was born on the 24th of March. I had my mum and my nan and my granddad, and I was a bundle of joy, so to speak.

DePue: Your mum and your nan—okay, now we’re already getting into some of those different ways of saying things between the United States and England. Your nan—who would your nan be?

Sproul: My nan would be my mum's mum.

DePue: So is that slang for grandmother?

Sproul: That's grandmother, yeah. That would be nan is my grandmother, and my granddad would be my grandpa, and my mum is obviously my mother.

DePue: Okay. Tell us a little bit about growing up. Where did you grow up, first of all?

Sproul: I grew up first of all I was in London, in a place called Plaistow, which is in Newham.

DePue: Plarstal?

Sproul: Plaistow, yeah, which is in Newham, near West Ham. And I grew up there with my mum, nan, and granddad. And then we left there and we moved to Kent when I was six years of age.

DePue: How big a town is Kent?

Sproul: It's a very, very small town. It's like a small fishing village. It's near the sea, so it's more like a small fishing town.

DePue: Well, tell us more about growing up. Part of this, obviously, is how you got to what you're doing today.

Sproul: Well, basically, when I was growing up, I always wanted to be a performer. As a kid, I was dancing before I was even walking. I was tapping my feet; I was singing. I was a very, very forward child, as my mum kindly tells me quite often. And my nan, she used to sing me to sleep when I couldn't sleep as a kid, because I was such an active child that she used to sing me to sleep, and so did my granddad. They used to sing me to sleep with the World War II songs. And it's progressed from there.

DePue: Once you got a little bit older and you started to be able to have conversations with the two of them, what are the things they were often talking about?

Sproul: They often talk about being in World War II; they was evacuees. They was evacuated from London, because they lived in London when the Blitz was going on in London.

DePue: That would have been 1940 into '41.

Sproul: Yeah. And my granddad, I think it was at the age of seven, he told me a story. He lived five miles from where the Blitz was going on, where they said burning London was going on. He said you could feel the heat from London, the burning. You could smell the burning and the heat and everything. And he told us about being a kid and being evacuated with his other brothers and sisters, because there

were six of them in the family. He told me that they was evacuated to Diss, and he told me some very, very funny stories, what him and his brothers got up to, because he had older brothers.

He told me that one day he was evacuated as a kid, and they was climbing trees, and he was holding onto the top branch, and he said, "Look," you know, "I've got to the top branch." And his brother said, "Well, if you let go, you're going to drop and you're going to break your legs," because his brothers used to wind him up, because he used to be the small one out of the lot of them. He told me that he was hanging onto this tree, and he wouldn't let go of this tree, and he had all his brothers hanging onto his legs trying to pull him down from this tree. (laughter) So there were some very funny stories.

DePue: Was his father in the military at the time?

Sproul: Yeah, I think he was in the Navy. My granddad doesn't talk much about his father. He finds that very painful sometimes, because he lost his father when he was twenty years of age. That was the first experience that he's ever experienced someone dying.

DePue: Which would mean that his father died after the war experiences?

Sproul: Yes, yeah, but he was kind of to do with the sea and stuff, so.

DePue: So you don't know much about your great-grandfather?

Sproul: I don't know much about my great-grandfather. I know that my great-uncle Henry is buried in Bayeux in France, and he was in the Battle of the Hill 112. Last year we went out to Normandy and we found where he was buried and we placed roses there for each of our family members.

DePue: Does your grandmother—I guess you call her nan—does she have similar stories, similar memories?

Sproul: She does, yeah. She was evacuated [to] a place in Dunmow, and it was near where the American air base was. My nan used to tell me as a little kid, they used to leave ham and gum and candy in this little ditch, and they—

DePue: The American GIs would?

Sproul: Yes, they would, yeah. And they always used to go 'round and go to the house, because it was a big farmhouse my nan was in, and the lady and the gentleman that lived there—the gentleman used to play the piano for the films in that time. He used to sit her up on the piano, and he used to play, and all the GIs would sing all these old wonderful songs as well.

But she told me a story. When she was walking down a road, she said to her mum, "Look, mum, look up there." And she said, "What, what?" She said,

“Wow, look at that plane. It’s got a great big cross on it.” And her mum just threw her in this ditch. This German plane just went *di-di-di-di-di-di* and fired at my nan and her mum, and it was lucky that they got thrown into a ditch. My nan’s still got a wonderful scar where they threw her in the ditch and she caught her leg on a wire.

DePue: Wow. See, those are the kind of experiences that people in the United States didn’t have. Now, Vince had wartime experiences, but not the civilian experiences like everybody in England was experiencing.

Sproul: Yeah, yeah.

DePue: But here’s my question for you. You were hearing these kinds of stories, but lots of other kids growing up in England at that time were—

Sproul: No.

DePue: No?

Sproul: No. None of the children of today, back in the UK, know a lot about World War II. It’s a shame, because—

DePue: Even your generation?

Sproul: Even my generation. I could say to them something about World War II, and they’ll go, “Well, what is the Blitz?” and “What was Bastogne?” and “What was Normandy?” “What was D-Day?” And it’s quite surprising. Some of them don’t even understand our Armistice Day, which is on the 11th of November in England where they go down to the Cenotaph<sup>1</sup> in London and they pay their respects to the dead.

DePue: Of course, that goes back the First World War, the end of the war.

Sproul: It does go back to the First World War, yeah. My family, have always been—my grandfather, personally, was always the one that said, “You’re going to sit down and you’re going to watch this, and you’re going to watch these men march and, you know, respect what they did, respect everything, what they did for us, how they served for us, what they’ve done. So many people lost their lives in the First and Second World War, you know.” Some of the kids in the UK take that for granted, and they don’t get to have experiences of listening to stories that Vince has told me and my granddad’s told me and other veterans have told me. And it’s sad.

The only thing that I can say is that one thing that I make sure that I do is, phone up primary schools, and I’ll say to them, “Look, I do this 1940s singing and entertaining. Would you like me to come and sing some songs to the kids

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<sup>1</sup> Cenotaph: a memorial monument that isn’t a grave.

back home?” And they say to me, “Yeah, come in and sing to them. We’re learning about evacuees.” And that’s where they teach them in primary schools, but now in the secondary schools, going up into your higher years, there is nothing that they learn about World War II now.

DePue: Do you consider yourself fortunate, then, that your nan and your granddad were taking the time to tell you all these stories?

Sproul: I’m very fortunate that I still have my nan and granddad, and I’m very, very lucky to be able to sit there and listen to all these old stories, time and time again. They never, ever, ever get boring to me. I could sit there and listen to my nan’s stories forever, and my granddad’s.

DePue: What is it that connects you to those stories, that so moves you in hearing these? Can you explain that?

Sproul: The fact is, I sit there and I think to myself—and my nan is the one that makes the point—if it wasn’t for people, Americans and English, going out and fighting for us, we would all be speaking German now. And this is the point that my nan’s trying to make, that so many men fought for that not to happen, so many. The kids don’t understand some of the experiences that Vince has personally told my nan, my granddad, and me, and they just don’t understand that our freedom is because of these people. And sometimes the kids back in the UK take it so for granted. I respect them, I respect the fact of what I’ve done, and I think that should be remembered. If I can make that happen by getting that message across through music to the next generation and the next generation, I will do.

DePue: Okay. Let’s get into what we in the United States would call your high school years. Terminology drives me crazy (Sproul laughs) when you get to this subject. Public school is a private school in England, or how does that work?

Sproul: We don’t call them public school—it’s secondary. We go into the secondary years, so you go from primary school into secondary year. And they’re called secondary school. I went to a mixed school, boys and girls.

DePue: This is the stage of your life when you’re beginning to think, My gosh, I have to do something once I graduate. What am I going to do?

Sproul: Now, this is where it becomes very, very tough, because I didn’t have an easy secondary school time when we was there. There was a few difficulties in the fact—and I have told Vince—that a few of the kids, because I was different, because I sung, because I danced, because of this, I was bullied at school, very, very badly, to the point that I’d come out with no grades. I come out with no graduation, no exams. You call it graduation here, but we come out with no exams. We call them GCSEs [General Certificate of Secondary Education]. I come out with nothing, and from then on, I had to work. From the age of seventeen, I was working in a supermarket, I was working as a kennel maid. So I didn’t know where to go with it. I managed to sort of say, “Look, mum, I still

want to do my dancing.” I was still doing dancing. I was a dancer before I was a singer. As a kid, I was driving my mum crazy with tap dancing.

DePue: Knowing full well that if there’s a tough business to break into, it’s dancing and singing, right?

Sproul: Dancing and singing is a very, very tough business to break into. I was dancing, I was getting into amateur dramatics. You would have societies, like you have little towns here, and we have a dramatic society in Ramsgate, which is a town in Kent; we have a dramatic society in Margate and Folkestone. And I joined the Folkestone one. I had my first audition, and it was for a musical called *Carousel*, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Carousel*. I sung, and I started singing as well, then, at the age of twelve. And they said to me, “Wow, your voice is incredible. We’d like you to audition for a part in the show.” And the gentleman who was actually running the show said, “I would love for you to play the main character,” but I looked too young. I was so tiny; I was so small. At the age of twelve, I looked like I was about nine. (laughter) And that was a struggle. I had such a mature voice from twelve, it sounded like a woman’s voice, so much so that I got the part as Mrs. Snow in *Carousel*. I performed in *Carousel*, and when they sing “You’ll Never Walk Alone,” I had to sing the lady’s part for the lady who was playing the actual part of Julie in the show because her voice wasn’t good enough. So my voice was dubbed over hers on a live performance.

So it’s progressed from there, and that’s when I got into doing other shows. I done *Oklahoma* after that; I got my first role, lead role, as Ann in *Half a Sixpence*; and then I played Dorothy on the Winter Gardens in Margate. So I progressed slowly.

DePue: All of this was while you were still in what we would call high school?

Sproul: Yeah, yeah.

DePue: Okay. Now let’s get beyond high school, then, because now you’ve got to figure out a way to make a living doing this.

Sproul: I have. And I was still working at that stage; I was still working in between and doing things. And I helped out working as a young person who was helping young kids, a service called Connections. We talk about helping with schooling; we talk about other things, you know. And someone said, “Hey, have you approached the Prince’s Trust?” And I said, “Well, no.” At that time, my mom was actually writing a show called *Run Adolf Run*, which was about the Second World War.

DePue: What was the name again?

Sproul: *Run Adolf Run*.

DePue: As in *Run Adolf Run*?

Sproul: Yeah, but we pronounce it Adolf. That's how we pronounce it. But my mom was writing a show, and she was putting all these World War II songs, and I was starting to sing them again. It was amazing, because my mum managed to tell a story, what it was like to be a mother in World War II, what it was like to have sons who went off to war in World War II, what it was like for the girls having to go into the land army. So it was progressive. We played a little family; it was about this little family, and I played the sister. I started singing all these World War II songs and putting on the uniform, and I said to mum, "When we finish the show, I really did enjoy doing that?" And she said, "You know what? You could make a business doing this." I said, "Okay. Let's go for it. Let's do this."

DePue: I'm dying to find out some of the songs you were singing at that time.

Sproul: The one that's the very famous one is "We'll Meet Again," which Vera Lynn sings. You've got "White Cliffs of Dover." The Andrews Sisters, "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B," "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree." "The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" is one of Vince's favorites, (laughter) believe it or not.

DePue: What a surprise, Vince.

Speranza: (unintelligible)

DePue: Okay, go ahead.

Sproul: So all those sort of songs, and Glenn Miller, all those ones. I just loved it. I said to mum, "Okay, let's start making a business." I went into work, and I said, "Look, I want to try and make my own business."

"We've got the perfect place for you to go." I said, "Well, where am I going to start?" And they handed me this pamphlet, and it said something about the Prince's Trust on it. The Prince's Trust is Prince Charles's trust, and he helps out young people, you know, who have been broken families, from the extreme to the non-extreme. He encourages young people to go out there and be very creative and do what they want to do but make a business and life out of it. I went there and I said, "Look, I want to do a business." It was kind of like the dragon's den—you have to go up before a board of people and you have to say what you're going to do and—

DePue: Pretty stuffy room?

Sproul: Oh, yes. And I got through. They lent me some money, and I put that towards advertising, getting my outfits, ringing around, getting live performances and shows. We started off a little, doing like care homes, singing—

DePue: Care homes?

Sproul: Yeah, singing for the elderly people who suffer with Alzheimer's and dementia, and we sing for people like that. We do that during the day, and that's how we started it off.

DePue: What year would this be?

Sproul: Ooh, I was eighteen when I started my own business. I went to them and I said that's what I wanted to do, and I've been doing it five years now.

DePue: Okay, so about 2007, 2008 timeframe?

Sproul: Yeah.

DePue: So the first opportunity you had to make this work for you is to go to these care homes?

Sproul: To go to the care homes. You have to go in there, and it's not easy, because you have these people who don't know what's going on, who don't remember anything, and they come up to you and they might want to hold your hand or might want to sing with you, and you have to be very graceful, as Vince said, and you have to sort of say to them, Okay, fine. That's fine. Or you'll have some of them, because they don't know where they are, that will actually shout things out at you because they don't know what they're doing or where they are. You have to get past that. I must admit, for the first two years that I done it, I found it very difficult, but now I love it.

DePue: What you're helping them do, then, to a certain extent, is to unlock these memories, these cherished memories that they have?

Sproul: Mm-hmm, yeah. Through music, they do that. Because surprisingly—a lot of people say music touches everyone, and it does, because when you sing to these people, they mouth the words. They start mouthing the words as you're singing, and you're sitting there thinking, But five minutes ago, I walked in, and you didn't know me, you didn't want to talk... I mean, there was a case of I went into a care home, and the carer said to me, "This lady hasn't talked for three years." I said, "Okay." And she said, "She's very difficult. You know, she might come up to you..." And I was singing one of these songs from World War II, and it was actually "We'll Meet Again." And she started mouthing the words, and the carers went, "Wow, this is incredible. You know, this is incredible." When you get a reaction like that, as a young person, I sit here and I think, well, if I can give them that pleasure, just for that hour's entertainment, then that gives me something, you know, to go home and smile about.

DePue: Feel great after that experience, I would think.

Sproul: Yeah, I do.



- DePue: Plenty of times when you're not getting much of a feedback at all from them, though?
- Sproul: Plenty of times. Plenty of times when you don't even get an applause, you don't even get anything said, anything sung. You just have to sort of go with it. You have to go with whatever—you know, you're going into their care home, so you have to understand that this is their territory, and they are ill people, and you really have to have a lot of patience if you're going to do it.
- DePue: What are some of the other ways that you know when you are connecting with them?
- Sproul: My granddad sometimes comes on the performances with me, and my mum does the sound. And she can always tell because they'll start tapping the side of the chair (DePue laughs) or the foot will start tapping, and you sit there and you think, Okay, they're not actually responding, but they're listening, because you can see the foot tapping. So it's good.
- DePue: Let's talk then about the transition from doing that. You called it musical therapy, right?
- Sproul: Yeah.
- DePue: From doing musical therapy to doing the performances with veterans' groups. How did that come about?
- Sproul: I started doing, as I said, the musical therapy, and somebody saw me in a care home and said to me, "Wow, your voice is amazing. We would love you to come and sing for our association." The first association that I sang for was the Royal Tank Regiment of London. That was my first-ever gig.
- DePue: This is a reunion or the contemporary?
- Sproul: This is a reunion of all these who served in the tank regiment. They all got together and had a nice meal, where they have a nice—
- DePue: Is it strictly a World War II era or...?
- Sproul: Yes, strictly World War II. And, you know, bearing in mind I've not really sung for the big association. I'm used to singing to people who have no reaction. And (laughs) well, you go into the gig, and first of all, you're nervous. One of the things my granddad says to me: "If you're not nervous, you're not doing it right; you're not in the right business if you don't have nerves." (DePue laughs) So in we go. And I'm shaking. My hands are shaking, you know, like this, really. Because I start singing the first song, and the thing is as well, they look at me and they go, "What's a young person wanting to sing all these World War II songs for us?" So they kind of look at you going, Well, she's quite small. How is she going to cope with this audience? So the first song, it's kind of like, Oh, okay. And then

as it progresses, they see, Wow, this is incredible. And then it's kind of like, Okay, I feel comfortable, I know my audience now, and I start telling them, "Well, if you're going to misbehave"—because some of them do say stuff to you. They might go, "Oh," you know, so-and-so.

DePue: (laughs) That's a shock.

Sproul: Yeah. And you have some of them being very naughty and sometimes shouting out stuff, and you have to sort of go, "I'll put you on a charge if you carry on." Like I had to put Vince on a charge, you know. I really did. I had to put him on a 252. And you have to turn 'round and sort of—you have to laugh it off.

DePue: Well, I would imagine by that time, they're just feeding off of that.

Sproul: They're feeding off of it. It's like a sponge. You know, it's absorbed. And that was it. And you start singing the sing-along songs like, "Run Rabbit Run" and "Wish Me Luck" and "Bless Them All" and all these songs, and they all start singing and swaying their arms. You come out of there, and they go, "Oh, you made our day." And you think, Wow. Big enough compliment. Okay.

So after that, it was recommendations from people. It's progressed from there. And there's nothing better than actually getting recommendations from people, than actually phoning up yourself and putting yourself forward.

DePue: Okay. We're going to get Vince into this pretty quickly, but I did want to ask you about the London Taxi Association and the charity side of what you do as well.

Sproul: Yeah. I raise a lot of funds back home for the World War II veterans for the London Taxi Association. Oh, that was another big gig that I done, very, very big. They have a massive annual get-together in June. If I was back at home, I would have gone to it. It was whilst I was here that they had the massive... And Vera Lynn goes, who was the original Forces' Sweetheart. She's their patron. But I raise funds for them, and I put on dances, which Vincent comes to our dance in March.

DePue: So you still get to do some dancing.

Sproul: Oh, yes, very much so. I do all the '40s dancing and stuff. Basically, we raise funds for them to give something back. So far, back home in the UK we have raised about ten thousand pounds. We are sponsoring their trip next year, which I'm going on with them, their last trip for the World War II veterans to Arnhem, because now they're getting older and they're getting wheelchair-bound and not able to walk and things, and it's a long trip for them to do. But they want to do it so they can say goodbye to their fellow friends and comrades. So that's what we're doing; we're sponsoring their last trip to Arnhem.

DePue: So this is the bittersweet side of what you do, then.

Sproul: Mm-hmm.

DePue: Are there some tough moments, realizing that that generation is slipping away?

Sproul: Yeah, because I have the Taxi Association, and then I'm an honorary member to the Normandy Veterans Association. And you get e-mails at home, and it says, Oh, this one's passed away, and you think, Oh. And you have to kind of swallow and get on with it, really. But it is very difficult knowing that few and fast, it's slipping away. Yeah.

DePue: When you first got into this business, you had this perception of what it might be. How has the way this evolved surprised you?

Sproul: It surprised me in the way that I never thought that I could touch people in the way that I do. I mean, I don't know what it is that I do, I really don't, because I just stand up there and sing. And I don't see how I'm performing; the audience see how I'm performing. But I can honestly say I'm just so shocked with the response I get from veterans; the response that I get letters; the response that I get things, badges, sent to me to put on my uniforms that I'll wear. And I just think that for me, if that is going to be something that I can be remembered for when I get to Vince's age or my nan and granddad's name, honestly—I'm being honest with you—that will be the best compliment I can ever have.

DePue: Okay. Well, let's weave Vince into this story. I'm going to start with you. One of these trips, you went to Bastogne. And that was, what, 2009? Was that the first time you went there?

Sproul: Yeah, that was.

DePue: How did you get invited to go to Bastogne?

Sproul: I got invited to go to Bastogne with—I sing a tribute song—because normally what I do is I start off with all the sing-along songs, and then I do a tribute songs to the forces—today's forces, World War II. And we tug at the heartstrings a bit, you know. And we do this one called “Band of Brothers,” don't we. And (laughter) we do this one, and—

DePue: This is the theme song from the TV series.

Sproul: This is the theme song from the TV series *Band of Brothers*.

Speranza: Yeah. Wait till you hear.

Sproul: And it's a beautiful piece of music just on its own.

DePue: When was that written, do you know? Was that something that's been done in the contemporary era?

Speranza: I don't know.

Sproul: I don't know when it's been written. I think it was written for the film, but I do believe that the guy that actually wrote the piece of music did pass away. That's what I've read. But they wrote words to it for the—you know I was telling you about the Armistice Day. They normally have a big, big service where the Army, Navy, Air Force bands all go to the Royal Albert Hall in London, and they all do—this is absolutely beautiful, it really is, and if you ever get to watch it on telly, it's fantastic. It really is. This woman sung the words to the "Band of Brothers." My nan was watching it, and she said, "Oh, wow." And I said, "Wow." I love the "Band of Brothers" music on its own, and I said, "Wow, I want to learn this. I'm going to put this in my performance. I'm going to put this in my set," because that song tells the story—they was one big band of brothers; they was family, you know.

DePue: And that's, of course, the story about a company from the 101st Airborne, but it's universal.

Sproul: Mm-hmm. It's universal.

Speranza: She's met them. She's met the members of the Band of Brothers.

DePue: Mm. Okay. Go ahead.

Sproul: Basically it's the song that every veteran loves to hear. They always request it, because it's about them. We sung it, and it was heard on YouTube, on the Internet; Marco Killian, who runs the Bastogne Museum in Bastogne, asked me to come over there, and would I sing it in his museum? I said, "Yeah, okay." So I came over there. You know, he invited us over there, and we was in the museum, and that's where we met Vince.

DePue: Okay, and Vince, I'm going to let you jump in here and tell your side of the story. I think we might have heard this before, but let's do it again, how you first encountered Kelly and that experience.

Speranza: I was one of four veterans from the 101st who were present at that reunion. There were only four of us—

DePue: This is what, sixty-five years later?

Speranza: Sixty-five years later. And we were asked, when we went to the museum, to make ourselves available to the fans, if you will, who came in. They wanted us to sign the books. All the pretty ladies would kiss you on both cheeks and then—

DePue: Which you're okay with.

Speranza: —say "Thank you for our freedom." Oh, of course I objected badly. (laughter) But even the little children would come up and shake your hand, "Thank you for

our freedom,” and they’d want you to sign a book. So I sat down to sign some of these books and autographs and so on. This young lady is singing, and I’m listening, but, you know, very beautiful voice, absolutely beautiful. I’d look around every once in a while and so on. And as I signed one book, I got up to move my chair, unknowing that her microphone wire was under my chair, and I ended up unplugging her mic, and she’s singing to an audience into a dead mic. I was embarrassed to tears. And I waited till her performance was over—you know, her mother had fixed it immediately, plugged it back in—and I went up to her and I said, “You know, I’m so sorry. I apologize. I didn’t realize your microphone wire was under my chair, and I’m embarrassed, but I do admire your singing.” I said, “You have a beautiful voice.” And she was very gracious, “Oh, it’s okay,” and so on and so on. In fact, she gave me a CD. And she said something nice on it, so I said, “Well, I guess she does forgive me.” But at any rate, hey, I only knew her five minutes, and that was all, you know.

At home, there’s sadness in my life, my wife and so on. I put that CD that she’d given me in my automobile. Every time I came home from visiting my wife in the morning, you know, sometimes you come out in tears, actually. You have watched a beautiful woman go downhill mentally for the last seven years. At any rate, I put that CD in, her CD. It starts as (sings) “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy of Company B,” and it just sort of lifted my spirits, and I enjoyed it. I found out the next day that I made it a habit of playing that music, and I felt better when I got home. And by the way, if you listen to all the music on that CD, it’s all uplifting—I think—and some of the hymns are beautiful.

DePue: Does it include the “Band of Brothers” song as well?

Speranza: About a month or two later, I said to myself as I played her music, I said, “You know, if I ever meet that young lady again, I’m going to take her to dinner and I’m going to tell her how much I enjoy her music and that it’s actually made a difference in my life.” So the next time I went back to Bastogne, in 2010, she was there; I spoke to her again. And this time I didn’t embarrass her—at first, anyway—(laughter) but I asked her if she and her mother and her driver—she had a driver with her—would be my guests at dinner. “I would like to take you to dinner because I really think your music has made a difference to me.” And they accepted. At the dinner, now, we really had a jolly old time. We’re just, you know, compatible people speaking and having a good conversation. I was really delighted. This time, she tries to give me four CDs. You know, again, I told her how much I loved her music, and so she says, “Well, I have four more CDs.” So I’m trying to pay her for them. She says, “Oh, actually, we can’t take money from a veteran.” I said, “Hey, I can’t take charity either. I’ve got to pay. I feel...” you know. “No, no. We can’t.” Her mother chimes in, “No, no, we can’t take any money.” I said, “Well, I won’t take the CDs,” I said, “unless—I’ll tell you what. I’ll make a deal with you. If you will give me your address and permit me after I get home to send you a little appropriate gift, I’ll take the CDs.” And I did; I went home, and I did. I sent them a little something. The telephone rings. (laughs) “Oh, we received your gift,” and they made such a fuss over it. I didn’t think...

DePue: What was the gift?

Sproul: My gift was a lovely diamond necklace that Vince had got me as well. Also he put on there—because we went out to the cemetery, didn't we? We went back to the cemetery. When we was out in Bastogne the second time, we went out to a cemetery. And Vince hadn't gone back for sixty-five years, and he found it very difficult. He said to me, "I feel ashamed not having gone back." I said to him, "You've got nothing to be ashamed of," because seeing that is not always the easiest thing. And I held his hand, and we both sort of cried together. And he sent that back saying thank you, and a small letter. It was lovely.

Speranza: Well, at the phone call, she invited me to come to see them. And now I'm saying to myself, you know, She's just being polite. She only knows me for a couple of hours. She puts her mother on the phone. The mother says, "Oh, you must come." Puts her grandfather on the phone. (laughter) "Hi, Jack, I'd like for you..." In other words, the whole family got on, and I was convinced, yeah, they really wanted to see me, it was not just a "hey, come see me sometime." And I went, and it was the most delightful thing I did. I went to England to see them, in March, and they made me feel like a...

DePue: I'm going to pull the both of you back a little bit, because I've got a picture here that we want to show the rest of the audience of the two of you singing, and I think that was in Bastogne.

Speranza: I was trying to avoid that one. I was trying to avoid the second embarrassment, (laughter) but I will—okay, okay.

DePue: Well, let's turn it over to Kelly, and she can talk about that.

Speranza: All right.

Sproul: Okay. We was in—

DePue: There they are.

Sproul: —Bastogne, and we was at the museum, and Vince was at the museum, and everyone came back to the museum to have a drink, because they're supposed to be opening an actual, like, 101 museum, but it keeps always being shifted back, doesn't it, all the time? (laughs) But we was all there. And you had re-enactors there, from Polish to, you know, well, all different—

Speranza: British, American.

Sproul: British, Americans—you had a whole bunch. So I'm singing, and I'm singing—oh, I was singing a wonderful song that Anne Shelton used to sing, which is "I'll Be Seeing You." And I was singing. (sings) "I'll be seeing you," and Vince is sitting there, and, you know, he's enjoying it. These re-enactors walk in dressed in the Airborne stuff, you know, coat and the helmet. They hand me two bottles of

champagne, hand me that. And of course I'm standing there singing, and I'm thinking, Well, okay. I've got to try and get this to my mum, who's over here somewhere. And this Polish re-enactor goes up to Vince and he goes—you can tell the rest.

Speranza: I don't know where he heard the story, but they said something about they heard that I liked good whiskey, and he pulls out a bottle of Johnnie Walker. And being a gracious host, I said, "Well, we must use it." And so we all had a drink.

DePue: Well, the Poles like their Vodka, don't they?

Speranza: Well, this Polish re-enactor hardly spoke English, (laughter) but he said, you know, "Vincent, I hear you and the 101st Airborne Division like good whiskey." (laughter) He pulls out a bottle of Johnnie Walker, and we started drinking this, and we got a little raucous.

Sproul: This is bearing in mind that I'd seen this over in the corner. So, you know, I'm singing and I can see this going on. (DePue laughs) So I kind of started preparing for this one, because they were singing. And these re-enactor paratroopers started singing, (sings) "Glory, glory, what a hell of a way to die."

Speranza: (joins in) "To die."

Sproul: "Glory, glory..." Vince joins in, and this whole room just—my performance is just like (blows raspberry). This whole room starts singing this "Glory, glory, what a hell of a way to die, and he ain't going to jump no more," this song. So I decide, I think, "Well, I'll start singing it on the mic." And all of them started singing this, and we was all doing it. And then there was a few songs that didn't get sung by me, but we enjoyed singing—what did we sing? "When the Saints Go Marching In"? Vince played on his—what is it?

Speranza: Harmonica.

Sproul: Harmonica, yeah. And, oh, it was absolutely amazing. And me and Vince—

Speranza: Go ahead.

Sproul: —sung his song that he likes me to sing. It was a very special song to Vince because his wife and him love this song, and it was "It Had to be You." We both stood there and sung it together, didn't we?

Speranza: Yes, we did. And the picture you saw was her very gracious invitation to me at the microphone.

DePue: You didn't mind that you were upstaged just a little bit by all of this?

Speranza: Not much.

Sproul: Not so. It's part of the whole performance package. Wherever the performance is going to go, that's where it's going to go, and you go with it. And that's what you do.

DePue: So you're connecting with these veterans in a very different and special way, it sounds like.

Sproul: Yeah, yeah.

Speranza: Well, that was the second embarrassment. Then the third one: When I went to England just this last month, I took her to a restaurant to dinner and dumped a glass of water in her lap talking with my hands like that. (DePue laughs) So I've managed at each visit to do something to embarrass her.

Sproul: But you see, it's very special to me, because they're special moments.

Speranza: I have to keep apologizing. Half of my conversation with her is apologies.

DePue: You embarrass her in very charming ways, it sounds like.

Sproul: Exactly, yeah. That's how I see it.

Speranza: Okay.

DePue: Well, we have another picture here that I'd like to show of the two of you singing, and I think this one was in England. This one looks like it was more of a planned engagement.

Sproul: Yes. This one was for raising funds for the London Taxi Association. We put on a dance at Hawkinge; it's a town in Kent, in Folkestone. And when I phoned up Vince and asked him to come over, I said, "Look, I'd like you to come over, because I've got something special that I'm doing." And he said, "Well, what's that?" And I said, "Well, I'm putting on a dance, and I'd like you to be my guest of honor." And he said, (makes warbly speech sounds). You know how we go, you know sort of things. And I said, "No, no, no, I want you to be my guest of honor." And he said, "Okay," he said, "I'm coming." So we go to this dance, and we had the whole day preparing this dance. You know, you put out tables and things. We had a '40s DJ, and we call him Gypsy John. He's ever so good. And we had the dancers who'd done the—they call it the Lindy Hopping and the old ives, the American jive and everything. And I was doing a few numbers by singing.

Speranza: Now, you will leave out the part about your grandfather and me.

Sproul: Oh, of course. (laughter)

DePue: The question that I have to ask, then, Vince—nope, nope?



Speranza: Leave the grandfather and me out of it. (laughter) We were in the corner—and again, you know, talk about embarrassing the lady. But no, she just invited me up to the microphone, and I went. And we sang. Oh, no, and she asked me to tell them the beer story.

Sproul: Yeah. I asked him if he would do a speech and talk about one of his experiences, because I wanted these people to know some of the experience that Vince had had. And he told them about the helmet story, as I like to call it. We call it the helmet story, me and my mom and my granddad, in Bastogne, and we just wanted him to share it with all the other people that was there. And we had quite a few people there, didn't we, at the dance?

Speranza: Yes.

Sproul: We had about three hundred, four hundred people attend, and we raised a lot of money that night. It was very, very good.

Speranza: And it was my downfall, because the people who enjoyed the story came up to where her grandfather and I were sitting. We had only ordered one Scotch each—that's all. But well-wishers come, you know, and—

DePue: Again, you have to be gracious.

Speranza: —are you going to be rude and say, “No, I don't want your drink”? And so we... (laughter) We embarrassed her again. Not much. We didn't do anything.

Sproul: No, they just were singing. My granddad was—

Speranza: Started singing. He loves to sing as much as I do.

Sproul: Oh, he does.

Speranza: And we sang “Maybe It's Because I'm a Londoner” maybe a little too loudly, and besides, Kelly's performing. (laughs) A whole series of things. Oh, my experiences with this young lady has been one embarrassment after the other for her.

DePue: What was the song the two of you sang together that night?

Sproul: We sung again, “It Had to be You.” We sung that song because it's a little song that we always tend to sort of go, “Come on, let's sing this one.” But the song that Vince and my granddad were singing was “Maybe It's Because I'm a Londoner,” and they were singing it at home before I flew out here. We had a big family dinner, and they were singing it at home. Well, my granddad is—they call them cockneys. In cockney slang, instead of saying “I'm going upstairs,” he would say “I'm going up the apples and pears.” (laughter) The first time I heard it as a child I'm a bit like (makes noises). And my granddad sung “Maybe It's Because I'm a Londoner.” And at the end of the song, there's a bit that goes “Get off me

barrow.” That’s what you have to say. And you have to say it in a kind of like, “Get off me barrow.” My granddad was trying to teach it to Vince, and the two of them was saying this phrase all the evening.

DePue: Can you translate what that would be in English.

Sproul: Okay.

Speranza: (whispering) Get off your arse.

DePue: Oh. (laughter)

Sproul: Basically, when it was the old cobbled streets in London, they used to have a barrow that they used to push ’round, and it’s basically saying, “Get off me barrow,” you know, “Move it,” “Shoo.” Vince trying to do that in his American accent and trying to make it into cockney slang, it was quite good.

Speranza: I’ll enrich that a little bit. What really happened was I did not know all the words. Whenever we sang, I’d sing the first two lines. He, of course, continued singing, and I’d have to sort of hum along or make it up. So I said to her, “Listen, write down the words to ‘Maybe It’s Because I’m a Londoner.’ I want to know all of the words.” And they procrastinated and procrastinated until finally the last night when we were invited to dinner at her granddad’s house, I said, “Now, listen, I want the words to...” So they finally wrote them down. Now, granddad is helping to prepare the dinner. He’s in the other room. But after they gave me all the words, I started singing it now with all of the words. He heard us from the other room and he comes in and he says, “When you want the real thing,” he says, “you’ve got to ask the expert.” And I said, “Why, what do we got here?” He said, “They didn’t put everything in it. The last line goes (sings) ‘Maybe it’s because I’m a Londoner, I love this London town. Get off me barrow.’” (Sproul laughs) And I said, “What is ‘Get off me barrow.’” He said, “Just first sing it.” (laughter) And I had to do it several times before I could say “Get—get—get off me barrow.” (Sproul laughs) I had to get the tone just right. And he said, “All right, now you can sing it.” (laughter)

DePue: Well, all of these occasions are very memorable, aren’t they?

Sproul: They are very.

DePue: And you guys got a chance to go to Dover as well?

Sproul: Oh, yes.

DePue: Was that a special trip?

Sproul: That was a very, very special trip. We showed Vince ’round Dover. We showed him where some of the old gun stations used—

Speranza: Gun emplacements.

Sproul: Gun emplacements used to be, that's right. And they overlooked the white cliffs. You've got this beautiful sea behind, and there's a picture of me and Vince looking out to sea whilst I'm telling him about these gun emplacements.

Speranza: And the Spitfires. Remember the Spitfires?

Sproul: Oh, yes.

Speranza: Original British Spitfires from the Battle of Britain.

DePue: Were they in the air, or you saw them on the ground?

Sproul: They was on the ground.

Speranza: Ground, ground.

Sproul: Spitfire and a Hurricane at this massive Battle of Britain memorial.

Speranza: That's what we saw.

Sproul: Yeah, at Hawkinge.

DePue: I'm thinking of that great Churchill line that was attributed to the Spitfire and the Hurricane fighters. Vince probably remembers it better. I hate to put you on the spot. But "Never have..."

Speranza: "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few."

Sproul: Mm-hmm.

DePue: I knew I could count on you, Vince. That's a wonderful quote. Tell us, then, how this trip came about, coming to the United States.

Sproul: Oh. Well, because I've invited Vince over to here to England, he invited me back in return to America.

Speranza: You and your mother.

Sproul: Me and my mother. Unfortunately there was a little bit of problem that my mum couldn't attend, which is the first time that I've ever, ever, ever been away from my mum. So it's kind of like the Bambi story, you know. (laughs)

DePue: Or all those GIs who end up in England waiting to go across the Channel and go into combat missing home.

Sproul: Yeah, yeah, definitely. Definitely. I can definitely sort of sympathize with them, because being away from your mum and your nan and your granddad is hard. It's not very easy. And then having to overcome the fact that this was my first time flying as well, so it's quite an experience.

DePue: Well, what's your initial impression? You've only been here a couple of days, right?

Sproul: Mm-hmm. I love it. I love it. I absolutely love it. I think it's wonderful. I really do. And the corn—wow! (laughter) The corn is so high. In England it's only about, what, here, and it's coming up to here. It's like, Wow.

DePue: Well, it's just a start right now; wait till the end of the season.

Sproul: Oh, wow.

DePue: Vince?

Speranza: You're driving in a canyon when the corn really grows. It's eight, nine, ten feet. And on a single-lane road, when you're driving through cornfields, you're driving in a canyon. Can't see anything on either side over the top.

DePue: As her tour guide, then, Vince, what do you have planned for her while she's here? Other than me sneaking into the schedule. (laughter)

Speranza: Well, first of all, my primary ambition is to be sure I don't embarrass her again. But last night we went to the airport to greet the returning veterans from the Honor Flight Association.

Speranza: Originally she was going to sing there, but there was a visa restriction, something about the place where if you're making money. And the Honor Society is making—you know, they sell t-shirts and hats and so on, so we had to cancel that. But we did enjoy seeing the veterans come in.

Sproul: That was very much—that was even emotional for me.

Speranza: We cried.

DePue: Did it surprise you that it felt that way to you?

Sproul: Yes. Because it was upsetting to think we don't do anything like that in the UK. The only thing that we do is Armistice Day. But we don't do flights or anything for the veterans. It's amazing how all these people was just at this airport when they're coming through, and tears, and...

DePue: The people on the ground or the veterans themselves or everybody?

Sproul: Everybody. Just everybody. And, you know, young people going up and shaking hands and going “Thank you for your service.” And it’s a shame we can’t be like that in the UK.

DePue: Interject just a reflection on my own. Part of that, I think, is a response to what happened in the United States to the Vietnam generation, because they were treated terribly when they came home.

Speranza: Very badly.

DePue: If they were remembered at all, it was in the most negative ways. So there is something of a regret over that experience, and this is one of the ways to express that.

Speranza: Well, then we had this interview. And tomorrow is Thursday. Tomorrow morning we’re going to visit my wife, and then at noon, she’s going to sing for the nursing home people. She’s got a set of hymns that you just would not believe, the most beautiful thing you ever heard. Now, again, she knows—and it’s a good thing she does—that there’s not going to be any reaction from the audience. These people are all senile or mostly senile. But I particularly want to sit in the audience with my wife and listen to her sing Thursday. Friday, in the afternoon, we have to go to the Lakeside Christian Church where she’s going to perform Saturday and check out the sound system. And Saturday, then, she will perform. And Sunday she and my granddaughter and I will go to the Mississippi Riverboat dinner and dance up the Mississippi from St. Louis. And Monday, dinner at my daughter’s house. And Tuesday—(laughs) we ran into a bunch of- the local Illinois guys who do the reenactment, you know. They’re all in uniform and so on.

Sproul: We always seem to attract them.

Speranza: And they want to have a beer fest. (laughter) I said, “Well, you know, maybe next week,” and they said, “No, no, while Kelly’s here.” (laughter)

DePue: Well, see, that’ll be the opportunity for you to embarrass her on this trip as well.

Speranza: No, I don’t wish to do that.

Sproul: No, no.

Speranza: Let’s chalk up a miracle one time. (DePue laughs) So we’ll probably meet with a bunch of these guys at my house, and maybe we can prod Kelly to sing a little bit if the thing’s ripe. But actually, these fellows were so gracious, you know, at the airport. They surrounded her and we talked about everything. We had done this once before. They met me when I came back from the Washington flight. And so I know them, they know me, and we like each other’s company. We talk and laugh and so on. They want to add the attraction, so I said, “Okay, we’ll figure out a way to do it this week.” And that’s the end of the trip. She’s got to go home the next day.

DePue: So not a whole lot of sightseeing.

Sproul: No, not really.

DePue: Well, you have to come back again, because there's a lot of America to see.

Sproul: Yes, I'll have to come back again, but I'll have to bring my mum back with me. I really would like to bring my mum with me. Because I'm being honest with you, if it wasn't for my mum being a good mum as she is, then I wouldn't be doing half the things that I'd be doing now if it wasn't for her. So I owe her quite a lot.

DePue: I don't think you're going to be able to find a better host than Vince.

Sproul: Oh, no, no, not at all. Not at all. But I did get very upset yesterday at the fact that I couldn't actually sing for those veterans as they was coming in. There was a certain song that I would have loved to sing for them, which is called "Here's to the Heroes." It is the theme music from a beautiful film, the *Dancing with Wolves*, and it is a beautiful piece.

Speranza: And Mark, in that song, she sings the double octave. Sing it in a normal key, and then the refrain and singing it again one octave up. You know, she's got the high soprano voice. And wait till you hear the notes in the last part of that song, when you've gotten to the double octave. Fantastic.

DePue: We do want to finish with a couple songs, but I have a few questions before we get to that point to kind of wrap things up here. You talked about growing up and again, we call it the high school years; they were some tough years for you.

Sproul: Mm-hmm.

DePue: Has that helped with what you've been doing in the last few years, you think?

Sproul: If I'm honest, it's because of what the kids done. And it's very strange that kids today, I think, or when I was at school, are very mean to each other. It's tough in the UK, the children. If you do something different—which is singing, dancing, whatever you do—it's the jealousy thing. And because of these children, I must admit—Vince knows me very well after three years—I'm a very, very sensitive little soul. And if anybody comes up and says to me, you know, "You're wearing something wrong" or "You're doing it..." it hurts. I think that comes from my school years, that that is a form of the form that the children picked on me at school, and I find that that hurts. In the case of the children now, I don't understand how when they're telling someone something now, they have this abruptness with them in the UK that it's more like they're taking the mick out of what you do, your family, your this, your that. And what I've learned is really the one thing: Before I came out here, I bumped into one of the girls who used to pick on me at school. She came up to me, and she went, "Ah, Kelly, how are you doing?" and kind of looked in amazement. I sat there, and I told Vince here, "Yeah," I said, "I'm okay." She went, "Ah, how are you getting on with your

dancing and your singing?” And I had to say, what, the thing that you took the mick out of me at school because that’s what I was doing? You’re asking me now how I’m getting on with it? said, “Yes, I’m doing fine.” I said, “I’m just about to go off to America” and doing this and this and this and this. I said, “Ah, what are you going?” She sits there and she goes, “I’m unemployed. I’m not working. I’m not doing anything.” So there’s the kind of thing now that (DePue laughs) makes me happy, because I got through that.

DePue: You’ve expressed this already a bit, but tell us a little bit more about the feeling you get when you know you’re connecting either with the group that have Alzheimer’s, but also with these veterans’ groups. How important is that for you?

Sproul: When I’m connecting with the veterans, there’s the case of you have the applause where they applaud you, and then they come up and shake your hand and say, “Thank you very much. It’s nice to know a young person.” Then you’ve got the applause where they want to have an encore, another song. And then you have the applause where they actually give you a standing ovation. All those three really touch me because it means that I’m doing a good job, and I’m not just doing a good job for myself, I’m doing it for them. And even when you get someone with Alzheimer’s come up to you and get hold of your hand and they squeeze it so tight, you sit there and you think, “That’s something.”

DePue: Are you a different person because you’ve been doing this for the last three or four years?

Sproul: Oh, yes, very. Very different person.

DePue: How so?

Sproul: To the point that I think of others, I always live my life to what can I do to help this one? What can I do to help that one? I mean, Vince has told me, as a husband, what could he do to his wife to make her smile every day. Mine is, what can I do in this performance to make it unforgettable? And even if you have personal issues with yourself going on at home or whatever’s going on, you still have to get up on that stage and—the old saying is “the show must go on.” That’s what you have to do.

DePue: What do you see yourself doing ten years from now? And very much part of that question is, again, Vince is still a very young guy, but most of his colleagues are getting up there in years.

Sproul: Mm-hmm. Because I’m with the Prince’s Trust, Prince Charles wrote me a letter and said, “I’d love you to be a young ambassador for the area of Kent.” And I go ’round to all these people in schools, like what Vince does, talking about his experiences, and I talk about mine. And basically, when I’m actually talking about where I want to be, what I want to do, we’ve got to think now that we’ve got new veterans now coming in, and these are the guys that are fighting in Iraq

and Afghanistan. So now someone's got to sort of say, well, these have got to come in now. This is what we've got to remember now. And in the UK, we have a place called Headley Court, and I'm doing the *War and Peace* show when I go back, which is a massive re-enactment show. We have a veterans' marquee especially for the veterans, and I'm going to get to meet some of the guys that have come back from Iraq and Afghanistan who are my age; they have no arms, no legs. And they only have half a life now. You know, before, they was able to walk, they was able to run, they was able to do this. And now, you know, there's this thing. This is what we have to be thankful for now. I know that that was their job, they had a choice whether they go out and do it. These didn't have a choice: *boom*, they were signed up, gone. These are the new veterans that are going to be replacing the ones that are going to be walking down the mall on Armistice Day and remembering their young fellow friends and comrades that they fought with.

DePue: On a little bit lighter note, I assume you've had a chance to meet Prince Charles?

Sproul: Oh, yes, yes.

DePue: Can you tell us about that?

Sproul: Prince's Trust basically invited us to come down. We were selected. We had to be selected. So to be selected was, whew, quite a big deal. I got a phone call, first of all, saying, "We're going to send you out an invitation," and it has the Prince's Trust, and it has his emblem, like the Prince of Wales. "The Prince of Wales invites you to join him at St. James's Palace for lunch outside in St. James's Palace Garden." Wow. We all stood around in groups, and he came out. Now, believe it or not—everyone thinks that he's quite tall, but he's really quite short. (DePue laughs) I looked at him, and I said to my friend, "Wow, he's quite short." And of course, he came up with this beautiful, you know, tailored. I smiled. He said, "I see you're doing 1940s music." I said, "Yes, that's right." You know, and you have to curtsy. And he said, "Oh," he said, "I do like 'The White Cliffs of Dover.'" He said, "That's one of my favorites." And I said, "Yes," I said, "it's on one of my CDs." "Oh," he said, "you have a CD? Maybe you can leave it with my secretary and I can listen to it." Camilla, his wife, and they walked around the garden. And he was very, very pleasant. He wanted to know, "Oh, how long have you been doing your business for?" "Five years." "Oh, yes, yes, I read about you. Yes, I think it's fantastic what you're doing, and it's nice to know that a young person..." I sat there, and I was like, "Wow." So it was quite amazing. But you really kind of have to listen to him because he talks quite quiet, you know, very, very quiet. And believe it or not, he's quite a shy person. I mean, a lot of people sit there and think that he's quite good at public speaking, and he isn't very good with public speaking. It's quite funny, because when he was up there and we was watching him during his public speaking, his hands was like this. You sat there and you thought, Wow, it's not only me, then, you know, sort of thing. But yeah, he is a very, very, very nice man.



DePue: Listening to you talk about the songs and then relating to understanding this new generation of soldiers coming up, I can't help but think you're going to miss being able to connect with them with all these wonderful old World War II songs that evoke the era so much.

Sproul: Believe it or not, the young people like them. It's something that they love. It's something that they sit there and they start bouncing on the chair, and you sit there and you think, Wow. Some of these young people come up to you and they say, "Oh, I thought I was going to really not like that '40s music sort of thing," all this teenager sort of attitude. And they turn around and they go, "Wow, how surprising. I really enjoyed it." And they really, really do.

Speranza: What I want to add to that is that just recently when we went to Normandy and she was performing, they had a dance floor. It was outdoors, but they had a dance floor actually put out there. You should have seen the young people reacting to our World War II songs. These were Frenchmen mostly. There might have been some Belgians and so on. But all the young people were the ones that got out on the dance floor. And everything from imitating the old boogie-woogie—jitterbug, rather—to the jive things, not where, you know, the modern dance where the boy stands there and the girl stands here and they just stand in front of each other and wiggle. These were real dance couples, and they were performing well. I don't think there'll be any trouble transitioning from the World War II generation who loved these songs to the young generation, because I think they can enjoy the songs just as much.

DePue: Well, Kelly, I've been throwing a lot of questions at you. How would you like to finish our interview today? Before we actually give you guys a chance to sing a little bit.

Speranza: Sing? (DePue laughs) I didn't know we were going to do...

Sproul: Well, I didn't know. Did you? Did you secretly plan this?

Speranza: I didn't secretly... Where's the music?

DePue: It's going to have to be *a cappella*, I'm afraid.

Sproul: Well, it's fine. No. I think for this interview, I just think that I would just like to sort of say that if, for the young generation, if you get a World War II veteran come up or speak to you or if you see a World War II veteran, go up and shake his hand. Go and say thank you to him. And if he wants to talk to you about his experiences, listen to him. That's the only thing that I can say, because they're never, ever, ever going to get an opportunity like that again like I have.

Speranza: Well said.

DePue: Well, that's a good way to finish up. It's been a delightful interview.

Speranza: It is, it is.

Sproul: Thank you.

DePue: As I knew it would be, but it's exceeded my expectations. I'd like to have the two of you singing together, and I think we need to give Kelly a chance to sing on her own as well.

Sproul: Oh, okay.

DePue: Vince, what do you think?

Speranza: I want her to sing the "Band of Brothers."

DePue: So I'll leave it up to the two of you how you want to arrange this, if you want to sing together first or—

Speranza: I just want Kelly to sing the "Band of Brothers."

DePue: Okay. That's what you want to do. Okay.

Sproul: Well, this is the "Band of Brothers." It's *a cappella* for the second time that I've ever done it.

Speranza: It would be better to stand up.

DePue: Well, I'm afraid—

Speranza: Can't stand up. Okay, go ahead.

DePue: I don't know that the microphones will allow it to do that.

Sproul: That's all right.

DePue: Okay. Go ahead.

Sproul: (sings) *You did not live to see*

*What you gave to me,*

*One shining dream of hope and love  
Life and liberty.*

*With a host of brave unknown soldiers  
For your company, you would live together  
When all the world is free.  
In fields of sacrifice*

*Heroes paid the price,  
Young men who died for old men's wars*

*Gone to paradise.  
We are all one great band of brothers,  
And one day you'll see you will live together  
When all the world is free.*

DePue: A lot of meaning in those words.

Sproul: Very much so.

DePue: Thank you very much, Kelly—

Sproul: Thank you.

DePue: —and thank you, Vince, for being with us today. And thank you.

Speranza: We thank you for your kind attention.

(end of interview)