

Jeff Nolan is the Music and Memorabilia Historian for Hard Rock International. A veteran musician and writer for over 25 years, Jeff transcribed and mastered the Lost Lennon Interview.

The “lost” Lennon tapes are a fascinating glimpse into the lives of John Lennon and Yoko Ono in late 1968 – the absolute height of their creative power and fame. There’s a treasure trove of quotable moments, period-specific “hippieisms” and unique insights contained in the more than two hours of audio. If you choose to listen to it in its entirety (highly recommended), you’ll be transported to John Lennon’s Surrey home in 1968. It’s a pretty amazing experience.

The story of how college student Maurice Hindle found himself at the home of the world’s biggest pop star less than two weeks after the Beatles released the ‘White Album’ is nearly as compelling as the interview itself. Maurice wrote a letter to Lennon through *Beatles Monthly* magazine. The letter was forwarded to John, John contacted Maurice (who was understandably gobsmacked) and the interview was set. Think about this for a second. A college student writes to the biggest star on Earth and that star responds personally with an invite to visit his home. It’s inconceivable in the 21st century. That’s the equivalent of a student writing an email to Beyoncé through a music magazine and then being invited to spend the day at her home – totally unsupervised. If you ever needed evidence that the 1960s were a less complicated era, there it is. We’ve included audio of Maurice Hindle himself telling the tale of that day. It’s a great story very well told by Maurice.

Throughout the interview, both John and Maurice make references to *Black Dwarf*. This was a somewhat-obscure leftist newspaper that had run an open letter to Lennon in the most recent issue. Maurice brought a copy with him and showed it to John. In the letter, the writer blasts John for becoming bourgeois and claims his music has “lost its bite”. He goes on to praise the Rolling Stones as champions of the revolution (they had released “Street Fighting Man” just a couple months earlier) while denigrating the Beatles as false revolutionaries. It’s a very naïve point of view, but it clearly hits a nerve with Lennon. Much of the interview centers on the sociopolitical issues this letter raised. It’s quite the time capsule of late-’60s idealism. John would fire off a rebuttal letter to *Black Dwarf* the following month that essentially dismantles all the petty arguments the paper had made. He tells them that people need to “change their heads”, not resort to violence, for true revolution to occur. This is a theme throughout the interview. Both of the *Black Dwarf* letters have been included with the interview for some historical context.

■ SOME THOUGHTS ON THE TRANSCRIPTION AND AUDIO

Hard Rock acquired the original tapes at auction in 1987. They’re ¼ inch open-reel tapes that have been kept safely in our vault for over 25 years. We digitized and mastered them in 2013. What is presented here is the complete and unedited interview. All pauses, technical glitches and background noises remain. We felt that editing this historic artifact to “clean it up” would diminish its significance. The audio is surprisingly good for a 45-year-old analog recording. Maurice Hindle very wisely kept the microphone close to John. His voice comes through loud and clear. The downside of that is sometimes it can be difficult to hear the questions clearly. We’ve provided complete transcripts of the interview to

assist. Transcribing this piece was a daunting and very time-consuming task, but it was an absolute labor of love. Between the slang, obscure cultural references and side conversations, a clear picture of John Lennon's life in 1968 emerges. Some parts of the transcript have side notes and some of the questions are paraphrased for clarity. This was done using Maurice Hindle's personal notes and the direct involvement of Maurice himself.

Make yourself a cup of tea and a loaf of macrobiotic bread, put on a set of headphones and be prepared to time travel to John Lennon's Surrey estate in 1968.

LOVE ALL – SERVE ALL

Jeff Nolan – February 2014