

# Marty Wilson - My Life as a Hired Gun Musician – Volume 2

---



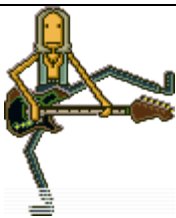
# Marty Wilson - My Life as a Hired Gun Musician – Volume 2

Welcome!

Thanks for tuning in

Over the years, I have worked with several great Music Educators, and I have learned so much from them. That's the GOAL!

So here you have it... A 30 year career summarization:

<p>I started playing music at age 8, playing classical strings</p>	<p>I was a brass musician for many years. Classical, Jazz, Blues, Chicago Transit Authority tribute band, weddings and private parties</p>	<p>Me as a crazy guitarist, mostly in the 80s although there is a recent resurgence, which I am completely digging</p>
		

Yup – a lot of keyboard work. Some classical. Mostly in the soul/funk/rock arena.

Sometimes you need to be The Boss (and I do not mean Bruce Springsteen... Love him. Great Band, Great Songs).

Instead I mean running your own band.

- Deciding what we will play
- Auditioning the performers
- Making sure we have the gear
- Booking the gigs
- Covering the financials

***Good Clean Fun!***



# Marty Wilson - My Life as a Hired Gun Musician – Volume 2

---

Introduction.....	5
Chapter 01 – The Ambassador .....	6
Chapter 02 – Va Va Voom.....	7
Chapter 03 – Aint No Way .....	8
Chapter 04 – Half Step Down.....	9
Chapter 05 – The Boss Loves Your Guitar .....	10
Chapter 06 – The Hydraulic Moving Stage .....	11
Chapter 07 – Which Instrument Version Are We Using Today?.....	13
Chapter 08 – Sallie We Love You.....	15
Chapter 99 – Closing Time .....	16

## Introduction

Greetings all

You may not know me. My name is Marty Wilson.

- Back in the day, I worked in the Market Research and Medical Device Manufacturing industries
  - Very Exciting!
  
- Then I switched to the consulting world
  - Also Very Exciting, but on a different level
  - ***Sometimes quite crazy***
  
- In the music industry, I worked very hard to create music content
  - I was lucky enough to learn 10 instruments, working with amazing music educators in the Verona NJ Music System. Amazing Educators!
  - I hand-wrote hundreds of music charts
  - I was a musical director for many bands
  - I played with many bands – although I did not ***Free Lance***
  - I formed my own bands, and I am very proud of them
  - Check it out! <http://www.martywilson.net/>

This is my story, and I'm sticking with it. Enjoy!

## Chapter 01 – The Ambassador

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians at a local establishment that includes a **Well Established Clientele**.

In this case: **The Ambassador**

I was playing with a rock band where we played bar gigs and restaurants in Northern NJ. I will refer to this band as **Band-AID**.

I enjoyed playing with **Band-AID**, mainly because we played great classic rock material, I liked and respected my band mates, and we played in several very interesting locations with very interesting Clientele.

Case in point: **The Ambassador**

This is how it goes sometimes. You bring your A-Game and hope for the best. These were great gigs and a lot of **FUN!**

If you have ever seen the TV commercial for *DOS EQUIS* beer, with the **Most Interesting Man** mantra, picture this...

1. We are playing classic rock music in a pub
2. **The Ambassador** is wearing sunglasses, a blue blazer with a **medallion**, dress pants/shirt, shoes etc. But the key point is **The Medallion**
3. For some crazy reason, several young **amazingly attractive women** decide to dance with **The Ambassador** in a **provocative manner**
  - a. My hunch: **The Medallion**. *It gets them every time!*

You cannot make this Stuff Up!

So there you have it

Enjoy!

## Chapter 02 – Va Va Voom

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians. In this case it was A Local Pop Band (I will refer to them as **Band-AID**)

We realized that we needed to record a video to get **The Big Boy Gigs**. And we also needed a great female vocalist.

I recruited her into the band. I had the amazing experience of meeting her while playing a wedding gig.

1. I was immediately captured by her talent
2. SHE'S A NICE PERSON!
  - a. How often do you meet very talented female vocalists who are **NOT A DIVA?! Very Rare!!**

I will refer to her as **GRACE** going forward, because she is (and I anticipate always will be) a very graceful lady.

We realized that we needed to record a live video to promote our band.

I booked a great rehearsal space and a 2-camera crew to record our video.

**GRACE** needed to look amazing (as always) to sell the video. That's the Way It Works!

**GRACE** emerged from the facilities wearing a great outfit. Stunning! I said *You Look Great. Classy, Beautiful*

**GRACE** said that she had another dress that she would like to show. OK

**GRACE** emerged from the facilities wearing the second outfit. **VA VA VOOM!**

I was thinking **VA VA VOOM**. But I did not **say that**. Instead I said *You Look Great and I think the first outfit would work better*. Everyone Agreed

So there you have it

Enjoy!

## Chapter 03 – Aint No Way

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians. In this case it was my band ***Soul Foundation***

One of the female vocalists could sing **Gospel** music like *nobody's business* and the lights would dim in the house when she **Let It Rip!** I would get goose bumps when she was ***Bringin' Home The Bacon!*** Amazing! I will refer to her as **ANGEL** going forward. A true *Angel*

**ANGEL** occasionally had health issues, so sometimes she could **BRING IT** and sometimes not. But when she did, it was **MAGIC and INSPIRING.**

**ANGEL** approached me and said she wanted to sing **Aint No Way** by **Aretha Franklin.**

Honestly – I had no experience playing classic Gospel music. I was willing to learn.

I purchased an Aretha Franklin gospel CD, and listened to it endlessly. A great music and spiritual education.

While playing the *Legends of Soul Tour*, we played **Aint No Way.** It was **Inspiring**

So there you have it

Enjoy!



## Chapter 04 – Half Step Down

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians. In this case it was A Local Pop Band (I will refer to them as **BAND-Cards**)

We realized that we needed to record a demo to get **The Big Boy Gigs**. And we also needed a great female vocalist.

We auditioned many female vocalists. One of them was memorable

I will refer to her as **PAT** going forward, because she was singing a **Pat Benatar** song.

Back in the day, rock bands would de-tune their guitars a **Half Step Down**. To this day I still do not understand the rationale. Supposedly to create a bigger tone. Seriously? – **How Crazy Is That?**

1. **Pat** shows up for the audition
1. We play **Heartbreaker**
2. **Pat** nails the vocal. Amazing!
3. The band realizes that we played the song in the key of E, and **Pat** sang the song in E-flat, a **Half Step Down**
  - a. So I ask **Pat**: *You sang great! Did you realize that you were singing a **Half Step Down** from what the band was playing?*
    - i. Pat's response: *I Sing By Feel*

Many years later, I worked with vocal coaches and I can now understand the concept of *I Sing By Feel*

However, in a live gig situation: **It's Weird**

So there you have it

Enjoy!

## Chapter 05 – The Boss Loves Your Guitar

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians. In this case the musician was **Daddy-O**

I have tremendous respect for **Daddy-O**. He's a great guitarist, and he taught me many things regarding music performance. He's also a very intelligent and funny guy.

### Love **Daddy-O**

1. I was playing a society gig, and **Daddy-O** told me a funny story.
2. His classic Fender Stratocaster was being serviced in Red Bank NJ
3. The Boss (aka Bruce Springsteen) sees Daddy-O's guitar
  - a. The Boss wants to purchase the guitar – at *Any Cost*
4. Daddy-O gets a call from the guitar shop, mentioning the purchase offer
5. Daddy-O says ***Who the [fill in the blank here] is Bruce Springsteen?***
6. The sales transaction did not occur

So there you have it

Enjoy!

## Chapter 06 – The Hydraulic Moving Stage

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians in a great venue. In this case a 1-song concert for a global accounting firm and these guys **spare no expense** on stuff that just does not need to happen

Case in point: A **Partner Summit**, where they want our corporate band to play **Takin' Care of Business** at 7:00 am (WHAAT?) to kick-off their Partner Summit meeting.

Here's the sequence of events:

1. The band is practicing **Takin' Care of Business**. Sounds good.
2. We show up at the **Partner Summit** venue the night before the **BIG 7 AM KICK-OFF**
  - a. Bear in mind, the **firm** spared no expense on the stage presentation
  - b. They built a **Hydraulic Moving Stage** for the band (bear in mind, we are playing 1 song for maybe 4 minutes...)
  - c. Also bear in mind that a 10-piece band carries a lot of **Weight**
    - i. Performers
    - ii. Music Gear
3. So the technicians said **This is the first time we're testing this moving stage, so HERE WE GO!** They warned us that you may feel a bit of a **jerking movement** when it starts but it will smooth out. OK
4. Yup – there was a serious jerking movement! I practically fell onto my piano. But they got it worked out, and everything seemed fine.
5. Next day is Prime Time! At 7:00 am (WHAAT?)
  - a. Bear in mind: I am a new employee at this company. It's a very large company and I do not know the name of the CEO – the **BIG DOG!**
  - b. **BIG DOG** shows up. He will give the key note opening speech
  - c. The curtain opens, and we start playing **Takin' Care of Business**.
  - d. The **Hydraulic Moving Stage** is working great, **OUTBOUND**
  - e. We finish playing **Takin' Care of Business** and **BIG DOG** enters the stage to give his key note opening speech. He's on my side of the stage.

- f. He raises his hand. I'm thinking he's waving to the audience
  - i. Nope! He was looking for a **High-Five from me!**
  - ii. Finally I realize he wants a **High-Five**, so I deliver (*dodged that bullet*)
    1. Again – *I don't even know who this guy is...*
6. **BIG DOG** starts his key note opening speech
7. The **Hydraulic Moving Stage** pulls the band backstage, behind a curtain
  - a. The stage jerks like an NYC subway train
  - b. I fall onto my piano – **CLANG!**
  - c. A few band members heard it. The audience thought it was planned

So there you have it. A long story with many *moving parts*...

Enjoy!

## Chapter 07 – Which Instrument Version Are We Using Today?

Sometimes you get a great opportunity to play with very talented musicians in a great venue. In this case I had the opportunity to play at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, and honestly I was treated like royalty – completely unjustified. I had my own roadies (who does this?) and I did not need to cart any gear. Instead I used the ***Back Line Rental***.

One thing I realized with the Back Line Rental – especially with keyboards, is that there are multiple versions. And they are all different. You would think that a certain instrument manufacturer (say, Yamaha) producing a certain line of keyboards (say, Motif) would be consistent. **Guess Again!**

Here's the sequence of events:

1. I signed up to use a Yamaha Motif keyboard (which BTW is a **spectacular instrument**) and I thought that I would be using the basic version
  - a. I have never played a Yamaha Motif, so I rented one for 2 days, just to get familiar with it, before heading to the band competition rehearsals.
  - b. I took notes on which sound, among easily 1,000 sounds – would work best.
2. I show up at the rehearsal location, with my notes.
  - a. The Yamaha Motif keyboard does not have the same list of sounds. **WHAAT?!**
  - b. I realize that there are 2 versions of this great instrument.
  - c. Thank goodness that I arrived several hours early. Everything is fine now.
3. I later realize that there may be more than 2 versions of this great instrument
  - a. I purchase a lot of music gear online, and I recall seeing a 3<sup>rd</sup> version of this instrument in one of the catalogs that I receive quarterly via snail-mail.
  - b. What are the odds that the instrument that I will be playing at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame is the 3<sup>rd</sup> version – potentially completely different. And I have no time to mess around figuring out which sounds to play. Not Good.
4. I called the local Guitar Center (I'm in San Francisco at the time – I live in NJ) and I asked if they had the latest version of the Yamaha Motif on display (?)
  - a. They said **Yes we do, come on down and check it out!**
  - b. **At the Risk of Overstating The Obvious – I DID!** Time well spent.

## Marty Wilson - My Life as a Hired Gun Musician – Volume 2

---

5. I showed up for the competition gig, and wouldn't you know it – the version that was offered was the latest & greatest that I had just *auditioned* at Guitar Center.
6. We played the gig and won the competition. Time Well Spent

So there you have it. A long story. Sometimes it pays to do your homework. Time Well Spent.

Enjoy!

## Chapter 08 – Sallie We Love You

In the Music Industry, you need to (or at least attempt to) juggle a few things:

- 1) Creativity
- 2) Attitude
- 3) Delivery of a Product
- 4) Silly Stuff

What do I mean by that? Good Question...

Hopefully I have outlined some **funny stuff** for Items 1 through 3 above, either here or in Volume 1: <http://www.martywilson.net/id53.html>

### Silly Stuff

Occasionally you deliver a product that you feel is worthy of protection:

- 1) Protection from someone stealing your idea, your *riff* – any creative element
- 2) So what do you do? You contact people who can make it official
- 3) I am not *besmirching* (that's a good SAT word...) our options here
- 4) All I am saying is: Sometimes it borders on Silly

### Case in Point:

In the early 80s, I decided to write a song. I wrote the arrangement, recorded all of the instrument and vocal parts in my humble (aka *cheesy*) Home Studio.

Then I submitted my song for Protection. Only to realize:

- 1) Are you a member of ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers)?
  - a. Nope. That's for the folks who wear the **Big Boy Pants**
- 2) Are you a member of BMI (Broadcast Music, Inc.)
  - a. Not yet but that sounds easier. I'll take that option!

In summary, I submitted my **cassette tape** demo, with my **printed lyrics**, and I eventually received my thumbs-up from Sallie.

It was easier **Back Then**. So there you have it. Enjoy!

## Chapter 99 – Closing Time

Thank You So Much for reading Volume 2. Volume 1 is also available here:

<http://www.martywilson.net/id53.html>

Volume 1 includes many more stories. And if you read any of my stories I hope you find them to be FUN!

I like to laugh and make people laugh. And let's face it– **you cannot make this stuff up!**

Life Is Good. Enjoy!

Marty