

Making Our Way



A McMAHON / CHEYNE PODCAST

#65 • Season 3 • Episode 4

10/1/2025

Autographs

Our Hosts

Janet Cheyne McMahon is a lover of family, dogs, nature, travel, books, and music. Born south of the Mason-Dixon line, she left after 9 months for parts north, landing eventually in Michigan, which will always be “where I’m from.”

Love of learning led Jan to a Bachelor of Arts (History, Political Science) at the University of Michigan-Dearborn (Go Blue), and a Master of Arts (Library and Information Science) at the University of South Florida. Amid all that, studied for a time with Rob at Colorado State University, a pivotal time in their lives.

Worked at the U of M-Dearborn Library, and then The Salvation Army Florida Divisional Headquarters, with the greatest reward being in serving as the Divisional Librarian. A librarian is who Jan is “in my soul.”

Jan and Rob have made our home in Florida since 1983, and live now in retirement with their dog, Skye, who makes it all the best adventure. They travel as much as possible, spending time in nature and in diverse places on this amazing planet. It has all been, and continues to be a fascinating journey, with hope of making a difference, in small ways, by being brave enough to speak and act on behalf of others.

Rob McMahon is a native Michigander, born in Saginaw and raised in the suburbs of Detroit. Rob attended Michigan State University, graduating in 1978 with a Bachelor of Science degree. He did graduate studies at the University of Michigan and the University of South Florida. Rob is retired, having spent 36 years in public education teaching both high school chemistry and biology and middle school science. He worked as a total quality management trainer for the Pinellas County School District and served four years as the president of the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association. Rob cofounded a non-profit total quality management training center, The Learning Co-op, for Teacher Unions interested in applying the W. Edwards Deming continuous improvement principles to their day-to-day operations. He worked with teacher unions in Colorado, Maryland, New Mexico, North Dakota, Texas and Michigan. He also worked in a similar capacity with Jim Shipley & Associates. In retirement Rob has written a series of science related children’s books, and enjoys traveling with his wife, Jan, and their Black Labrador Retriever, Skye.

Deanna Cheyne, born in St. John’s, Newfoundland, earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Toronto (1996), studying with such luminaries as Elmer Eisler, Doreen Rao, Greta Kraus, Lois Marshall, and Rosemarie Landry.

Dee taught music at Mississauga Christian Academy, served as music director for Meadowvale Bible Baptist Church (Mississauga, Ontario), served as Assistant Divisional Music Director for The Salvation Army in Florida, is a former member of Tampa’s Master Chorale, and, for the past 18 years, has been a public school teacher.

Dee has visit 36 of the 50 U.S. states, and 12 countries. Her favorite destinations include France, Prague, New Orleans, National Parks, & Hawaii.

Dee & Jim live in Florida with Brigus (Golden Retriever) and Pip (Teacup Yorkie).

James Cheyne, born in Galesburg, Illinois, earned a Bachelor of Music degree (Theory and Composition) from Michigan State University (1978); and a Master of Music degree (Theory and Composition) from the University of Illinois Urbana/Champaign (1981), studying with David Liptak, Salvatore Martirano, and Ben Johnston.

Jim has served as music director for The Salvation Army in Central Illinois & Eastern Iowa, Orlando Area Command, and the Florida Division, served as a pastor with The Salvation Army, and was a public school teacher for 17 years.

In travel so far, Jim has visited 50 states and 27 countries. His favorite travel destinations include National Parks, New Orleans, Newfoundland, Argentina, Prague, & France.

Jim continues to write music and support Dee’s musical endeavors, and cooks whenever absolutely necessary. Jim & Dee live in Florida with their dogs Brigus & Pip.



L-R: Brigus, Jim, Deanna, Skye, Jan, Rob.
Inset: Pip

Autographs

#65 - Season 3; Episode 4

10/1/2025

Hosts: Jan, Rob, Dee, & Jim.

| "Have you ever asked for an autograph?" asks Stephen Colbert's "Colbert Questionnaire." We supply a few answers, plus name our favorite Robert Redford films

[Music]

JIM (voice-over): With Stephen Colbert's upcoming exit from late night TV, we decided to steal one of his bits and ask ourselves one of the questions from his famous Colbert Questionnaire. Specifically, "have you ever asked someone for an autograph?" We'll get to those answers in a moment. First, we recorded this episode just after the passing of Robert Redford. So, we put on our Siskel and Ebert hats and held our own Sundance Film Festival review.

JIM: You guys have been watching Robert Redford movies, haven't you?

JAN: Oh, yeah.

ROB: Yes.

JIM: Because we just lost the great Robert Redford. What have you been watching?

JAN: My favorite, my favorite action movie, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

ROB: And then we watched Jeremiah Johnson and The Natural, so far.

JIM: Yeah.

ROB: Oh, The Sting. That's the other one we watched.

JAN: Oh yeah, we watched The Sting, too. Also...

ROB: That's my favorite.

JAN: See I'm trying to think what isn't my favorite. I realize it's a limiting statement, but...

JIM: Well, one that I don't like is Indecent Proposal.

DEE: Oh.

JAN: Oh yeah, that's not...

JIM: I didn't think the character was good. I didn't think the concept was good.

JAN: Yeah.

JIM: And I'm not so keen on that one. I just watched Waldo Pepper - The Great Waldo Pepper - also George Roy Hill. If you ever want to watch Robert Redford crash through a barn, this is the movie for you. The one I really liked, I think my favorite Robert Redford

movie was Three Days of the Condor, or All the Presidents Men.

ROB: All the President's Men.

JIM: But Three Days of the Condor, the only aspect of it I didn't like is that the love scene was not set up well. Watching it today, it feels like it's more assault than consensual. But everything else, it was intelligent all the way through. And of course, it starts and ends with The Salvation Army.

JAN: Our next on the list is Out of Africa.

JIM: That's the score that beat Bruce Broughton's Silverado.

JAN: Ah, sorry.

ROB: Oh, really!?

JIM: Yeah. I remember talking to [Bruce Broughton's brother] Bill about it. He said, "Ah, the Academy Awards." He said, "Oh, that's all politics anyway," which I understand more. It's not just a sour grapes statement.

ROB: Yeah.

JIM: Yeah.

DEE: Every time Out of Africa is mentioned, that's what he talks about.

JIM: That's what I talk about. That's right.

[Laughter]

JAN: Broughton, as you do - apparently.

JIM: Well.

JAN: The scene where he's washing her hair is extraordinary.

JIM: Do you like that?

JAN: Well, I like the poem that he quotes.

JIM: I like the poem, too. I thought the delivery was a little...

JAN: Forced?

JIM: ...prosaic.

JAN: I say, "Forced." He says, "Prosaic."

JIM: Well, the great emotion in that scene comes from her face...

JAN: Yes.

JIM: ...right?

JAN: She's amazing. But it caused me to go and look the up the poem. It's called The Rime of the Mariner.

JIM: Oh, is that the one he used?

JAN: The Ryme of the Ancient Mariner. And he gives parts of it, but the the line that I - that gets my attention is, "He prayeth well, who loveth well, both man and bird and beast." And it's just a - it's an environmental note.

JIM: Yeah.

JAN: So.

JIM: So Robert Redford.

JAN: Yeah. I miss him and I never met him. It's just I miss knowing he's there and the things that he did as his career took the turns it did.

JIM: So we'll we'll talk about some autographs. Autographs that we do have. I have one here that I'm saving for an episode of its own because it's a Paul Harvey story. And sometime we'll see an episode called The Rest of the Story.

ROB: "Good day."

JIM: So are you an autograph hound? Rob, you've brought a Bible.

ROB: I have one autograph.

JAN: We're going to start with the Bible. Good one.

JIM: Wait, wait. It's St. Paul.

ROB: Yes.

JIM: And over 1 Corinthians 7, he says, "To Rob: Always stay the way you are."

ROB: That's right. *[Laughs]*

JIM: That's a joke for seminary students.

ROB: Oh. I have Eric Ball's. He's a Salvation Army composer.

JAN: Of some note.

ROB: Brass band composer. Yes. He's one of the greats, and he was at the Central Music Institute, The Salvation Army, in 1979, the year that Jan and I were the Dean of Men and Women.

JIM: This used to be Frank Hovelman and Mary Petroff.

ROB: Yep. Yep.

JIM: Back when CMI had really quality people out.

JAN: Mm-Hmm.

JIM: And then they had you and Jan.

ROB: That's right...

JIM: Did you have flashlights?

ROB: ...the year after we were married. I don't remember having flashlights. I don't remember

even going out looking for kids.

JIM: Oh.

[Laughter]

JAN: Let 'em - just let 'em...

ROB: I think they were on their own that year.

JIM: Okay.

ROB: But yeah, Eric Ball was the guest. And I had him sign my Bible and he wrote, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

DEE: Hmm.

ROB: "Eric Ball, CMI, 1979."

JIM: Did you say, "I want him to sign a Bible?" Or that was in your hand when he was there?

ROB: I think I wanted him to sign my Bible.

JIM: Yeah.

ROB: Yeah. Oh, it also has autograph of my wife in the front of it.

DEE: *[laughing]*

JIM: Really?

ROB: Yes.

JAN: So I'm in the front cover and Eric Ball's in the back.

DEE: Oh that's pretty good.

JAN: Think about that.

JIM: Is it a gift autograph?

ROB: It is.

JIM: Okay, so she...

ROB: It was a birthday - It was a birthday gift in 1979.

JIM: So, Dee.

DEE: Mm-Hmm.

JIM: You ha you don't have anyone's autograph, do you?

DEE: No. You know, if you're meeting someone famous, one, you have to get close enough to ask them. And then, two, I think you're so starstruck. I think today if I met someone I'd be like, "Can I get your photo? Can we get a..."

JIM: Selfies. Is that the new autograph? Selfies?

ROB: Yeah.

DEE: But you know, Hillary Clinton did wave to me.

JIM: Yes.

DEE: And I know this for a fact, 'cause we went to - it was during the Obama election and she came into Tampa - to she was campaigning for him. You guys went to a band rehearsal because it was a Monday. And so I stayed back.

ROB: Oh.

DEE: And everyone was gone because I was just waiting. And so I stood on the corner. I was the only person, and her car was coming out, and she was in the back seat. And I was there by myself on the corner. It was quiet. And I just started waving at her and she smiled, like really big, and she smiled and she waved right back to me and I was like, "She recognized - like I got her attention."

ROB: That's right.

DEE: See? I couldn't have gotten her autograph, though.

ROB: Yeah.

JIM: Yeah.

DEE: So.

JIM: But here we are. Madame Landry would be a good one.

DEE: Madame Landry.

JIM: Elmer Eisler.

DEE: Elmer - he was my choral conductor at U of T.

JIM: Doreen Rao.

DEE: My other choral conductor.

JIM: And you never thought, "I should get their autographs"?

DEE: Oh well, and then there's Otto Tucker, the Newfoundland uh...

JIM: Author.

DEE: Writer - author who wrote me a really nice note.

JIM: So you you all these people you've met, you've never gotten their autograph. If you could have gotten an autograph, whose autograph would you have gotten?

DEE: Miss Barbra. I would love to sit and have a conversation. I mean, that's what I think about. It isn't so much her autograph. I would just like wanna sit and just, you know, ask her stuff that maybe we could connect on as singers and and just I don't know. I just I admire her for her strength and her ability to, I guess, break glass ceilings. And she didn't apologize for doing what no one had done before and saying, "I can do this, I don't care what you say," and doing it and then getting labeled as being difficult or whatever because she did

the same thing a man would do and nobody would question a man for doing it, but she was a woman. If I had a mentor, she's the one I would like - I would want her to be my mentor.

JIM: That's good.

DEE: So, and then, 'cause Jim kept asking me all this stuff and so I said, "Okay," because he said someone in history, I said, "Ella Fitzgerald." And then I said, "I guess Ruth Bader Ginsburg," because, the things...

JIM: Yeah.

DEE: ...that are important to me are strong female examples who broke misconceptions, or perceptions, of women having a certain role and staying in their place and then challenging that. Those are the things that are important to me.

JIM: That's good.

JAN: When I was a kid, I had an autograph book.

JIM: Is that what you have in front of you?

JAN: This is it. This is from 1963, so I was nine years old, and I took it with me to CMI. Central Music Institute, Salvation Army's territorial camp in the Central Territory. And so I got an autograph my brother would like. because I got Irwin Fisher, CMI, August, 1963. That was amazing. He was, if you don't know him, he was an a composer, he was the organist for the Chicago Symphony, and he came to CMI every year to teach a composition class, and to swim across the lake, which is what we all went down to watch him do. And he was kind to me. If you have me in a composition class, that requires kindness on the part of the instructor. And he was kind to me and encouraging, though you'll know I have no talent in that area.

JIM: You were in his composition class?

JAN: I was.

JIM: Jim Curnow was in his composition class.

JAN: I - there ya go.

JIM: Bill Himes was in his composition.

DEE: I can't explain it.

JIM: Gerry Schoults was in his composition.

ROB: Jim Cheyne was in his...

JAN: Jim Cheyne, yes.

DEE: Yes, and didn't you oversee, or do the boat when he was...

JIM: I did the safety row across.

DEE: ...when he was swimming.

JIM: I was in the boat while he swam across Center Lake, and I was completely nervous. I

thought I was gonna hit him with the oar.

JAN: Well, sure.

JIM: It was a rowboat, and I just thought, well, just I've got to stay this far away, but, you know, what if something happens? He says, "Nothing's gonna happen." I was honored that year. So you were in his composition class.

JAN: It was because... *[laughs]*

JIM: Do you have specimens of the work that you did there?

JAN: I used to, but honestly they weren't worth keeping. *[still laughing]*

JAN: I, um, I was in this composition class because I was good at theory.

JIM: Yeah.

JAN: And that was where you went if you tested out of theory. So I understood the dynamics of it all, but the creativity of it, that never entered my brain. So this is where I thought my my autograph was unique and forgot about Rob's, because I also got - this is 1963 and I'm a little kid - Eric and Olive Ball's...

JIM: Very good.

JAN: ...autograph in my autograph book, August of '63. If I'm usually gonna get an autograph, it's gonna be at a book signing. I don't go up to people and ask for their autograph. That is not my personality. But in book signings, I've done that. And I've gotten to do a lot of those because of going to library - American Library Association conventions and being exposed to lots of really great people. The tragedy is that two of my favorite humans on the earth are the ones that I didn't get the autograph from, the people that got away, and one of them was Desmond Tutu, who we went to hear at University of South Florida. I wish I had waited in that line.

ROB: Thousands of people.

JAN: There were thousands. That, I mean, just to be in his presence was an astounding thing, and he's fairly timely right now in how he approaches the world. For people who don't know, he was the chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. He was appointed by Nelson Mandela. And that task of bringing people together after apartheid had to be overwhelming. I mean, the whole process.

One more person whose autograph I missed at a book signing. We were at American Library Association, and Rob came over for this, over to Orlando for this, and it was John Lewis, who has been one of my heroes forever. And he was there because he wrote graphic novels on his - it was called March, and it was about the civil rights movement. And so he's writing them for younger people to tell them the history of the civil rights movement. And he was there to talk about one of his books. And we were in a pretty small room, you know, not huge. We could have walked up and met him, but I was too much in awe, and I just stood back and observed. So I missed that signature. A moment missed.

JIM: I was watching a video the other day and it was Harrison Ford walking in a city. And then there's some guy who decides he's going to get a selfie with Harrison Ford. So he just kind

of approaches him, calls him Indy. Not the best tactic. Calls him Indy and Harrison Ford just takes a dive away. He's not being rude. What this person was something for himself and he's using Harrison Ford for it.

JAN: I know.

JIM: Right? If you see someone in a restaurant, if you see someone walking down the street who's a famous person, just let them be, because otherwise you're just trying to get a piece of them for you. They want to have their own life. I saw someone walk up to Willem Dafoe, not knowing who he was, and it was just kind of a a man on the street sort of interview the guy was doing, and he had Willem Dafoe right in front of him and had no idea who he was. "So, what do you do?" "I'm an actor." "Oh, do you get much work?" You know, stuff.

DEE: [laughs]

JIM: "Yes, I do." But he was he was fine with it. He was kind of amused by this, his anonymity, right, and on camera. You have another book there.

JAN: Well, this is my uh my ultimate. If you've listened to previous podcasts, you know that Jane Goodall was one of my people that I would want to meet, have over for dinner, shall we say. Thanks to my niece Karie, who gave me the greatest gift here. I have a book by Jane Goodall called *The Chimpanzees Love, Saving Their World and Ours*. And Karie got Jane Goodall to sign it for me and gave it to me as a gift. Which it always sits out in our living room because uh...

DEE: Because it's Jane Goodall.

JAN: It's Jane Goodall and it was Karie. She would know how important that would be to me. We I've heard Jane Goodall speak in person, but it wasn't the kind of event that I could go and have her sign a book. This was a special thing that Karie and Patty, her mom, went to and um and she brought me this book...

ROB: Yup.

JAN: ...so it's my most val- - it is a valuable gift to me. I'm going to give you this one quote from this book. I think it kind of fits for life today. "Every individual matters. Every individual has a role to play. Every individual makes a difference. And we have a choice. What sort of difference do we want to make?" Which is her philosophy. We all make a difference. We can all do something.

ROB: Yep.

JIM: It's good. Here's a book called *"The Exception to the Rulers, Exposing Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, and the Media that Love Them"* by Amy Goodwin.

DEE: I just thought of that. I forgot that we stood in line to...

ROB: Amy Goodman. Oh.

JIM: We did. Was it at Eckerd College?

JAN: Yes. It was at Eckerd College.

DEE: Yes, yeah. Yea.

JIM: She was speaking. And so, what did she put in the thing? "Dear Jim and Deanna.

DEE: Mm-Hmm.

JIM: "Democracy now."

DEE: Yeah.

JAN: Well that's a obviously that's an historic reference.

JIM: So she's a journalist. The main thing is that she's always asking the question, "Which voices in this story are not being heard?" So she looks at the mainstream media and how the story is being covered, but she always knows, well, there's more to the story than that. So she goes after the things that maybe not everyone knows about. She's been arrested a number of times.

DEE: Yeah.

JIM: Every time the charges have been dropped, and on occasion she's able to get some recompense for what had happened. She was arrested in the 2008 Republican National Convention. There were anti-war protesters outside, so she goes to interview them, see what's going on with the protesters, and that. And so she's arrested because she appeared on one of the videos and someone - this was in Minnesota, St. Paul, Minneapolis - so she's arrested because she's viewed as a protester, so she's part of the problem. Charges are dropped. She's arrested because she's only telling one side of the story. Okay. Well she's interviewing the protesters to find out what their point is, and so she's arrested for that. And the result of that was a \$100,000 settlement, and also the police forces and the Secret Service had to go through training about people's rights, First Amendment rights.

ROB: Yeah.

DEE: Well, so much for that.

ROB: Need to do that again.

DEE: The thing I admire about her is, everyone is susceptible. She will take on Democrats and Republicans and anyone who she feels needs to be called out for...

JIM: Yeah. Well she's on the radio in two thousand when Bill Clinton calls in as the president...

DEE: Oh, yeah, I remember hearing about that.

JIM: ...and it's a get out the vote thing.

DEE: Yeah.

JIM: So, what's she going to do as a journalist? Just let him do his...

DEE: Right.

JIM: ...narrative? It's a commercial.

DEE: Well no, she's gonna...

JIM: Well, no. She's a journalist.

DEE: Yeah, she was...

JIM: So what she does is she starts questioning him about the policies and practices of his administration. And he went on to say she was hostile and combative, which translates to: she didn't let him just do his narrative. She frustrated his narrative.

JAN: Right.

JIM: So that that's that's something of Amy Goodman. So I got hers. Well, since we're talking about Bill Clinton, I have a book here by Michael Waldman called POTUS Speaks. Michael Waldman was to Bill Clinton what Toby Ziegler was to Jeb Bartlett, main speechwriter, head communications and that, and he worked in the Clinton administration. So how - I got his autograph, which, see if he says anything. Actually, write something? "To Jim, thanks for all you do, Michael Waldman." I was there with The Salvation Army. This was in September of 2000. And this was down in Miami area, and I took an ensemble down from the Bay Area. You know Bill Clinton's happy song was "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow," the Fleetwood Mac song, right? Michael Waldman remembers a speech that Clinton gave at the end of his presidency, and he said, either, "Whatever you think of me," or, "whenever you think of me, Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow." And Michael Waldman says, "I went back to listen to it, and I really wanted him to say, 'Whatever you think of me, don't stop thinking about tomorrow.;" He says, "But I listened to it carefully, and knowing the president as I do, he said, 'Whenever you think of me, Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow.'" Which I thought was an interesting confession. So that was Michael Waldman. I got that. It was again a book signing.

The one that I really like as a book signing is from Buzz Aldrin. So I'm at Epcot and who do I see in Epcot but Buzz Aldrin, and he's doing a book signing. I didn't even know he had written a book, but here's the book, Encounter with Tiber. It's a big, thick science fiction book about an encounter with Tiber. And it's he's co-written it with John Barnes. It's kind of a double book because it has to do with this civilization from some planet around Alpha Centauri, so it's a nearby star, as stars go. It's a neighboring star. And some civilization thousands of years ago had either contacted Earth or came to Earth or something. It's a bit like finding the, uh, monolith in 2001 where you realize there's traces of an ancient civilization - visitors - that they had planted some markers, I think, on the moon and on Mars. And so we discovered them. So we're going to find out about the civilization. So half of it is us trying to figure out who they are. And then he intersperses chapters of archives of Tybor from their point of view, about their civilization, about their history, what they've explored, and the idea was that their planet was in peril, and so they're looking for a place to go out into space to find out where they might go from there. So that's from Buzz Aldrin. And he was just sitting there in Epcot with these books. And it was just me. And so we had a little conversation.

Uh Jan, we had seen him in August of '69.

JAN: Chicago.

JIM: In Chicago.

JAN: Yes.

JIM: This was this enormous day that the three Apollo 11 astronauts had. They had a ticker-

tape parade in New York in the morning. They had one in Chicago that we saw. And then that night they were at a dinner in Los Angeles. So this was the victory lap for the Apollo 11 crew. And we saw them in Chicago. So that was Buzz Aldrin. So those are my three. Would these autographs ever appear on Pawn Stars or Antique Roadshow or eBay?

ROB: No.

JAN: I would never sell something like that. You know, the thing is, these are people that mean something to us. That's the the thing. People we admire, people that mean something to us, and I would argue people that helped us make our way, people who shaped us along the way in our lives.

JIM (voice-over): There are a few of the folks we've met on this journey, preserved in our memories and on a few scraps of paper. Oh, and also in a Bible Now, that one autograph I've put aside for later? Here's a preview.

JIM: *"It was a typical September day in Tampa, Florida, high near 90, mostly sunny. Chance of rain in the afternoon. Inside the federal courthouse on North Florida Avenue, a man stood to address the court. Moments later, the judge would read the sentence of time served. But who was that man, and what did he say to the court? And how did I get to know him? For that story, I'm gonna need some help."*

[Music begins]

JIM (voice-over): This is where Paul Harvey comes in, but you'll have to wait until next week to hear "The Rest of the story."

Until next time.

[Music ends]