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Keith Klein, Oral History Index

Keith Klein

Louise Skinner

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Interview with Keith Klein conducted by Louise Skinner

October 29, 2019

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00:00:01	Introductions and general information
00:00:45	Born 1/12/1944 in Greenville, TX. Father stationed at Majors Field; family lived in the barracks. Father was a B-29 mechanic and cook through the end of WWII.
00:01:59	After the war, family moved to the Country Club in Cooper – mother ran the kitchen; father maintained the golf course. Memories of that time.
00:04:45	Family moved to Greenville for 3 years and worked at the country club – father managed the Pro Shop; mother ran the kitchen; uncle ran the bar – moved back to Cooper in 1958.
00:06:00	Parents bought Patterson’s Catering Service (from Harry Patterson), located in the old train depot - catered family reunions, etc. Biggest job was a film project in Paris - “Home from the Hill”, with Robert Mitchum. Story about the equipment and the process of preparing chickens and other meat for the Cannery.
00:10:56	Memories: feeding a veterans group in Hughes Springs; father letting him drive one night; mowing the fairway on the golf course
00:14:33	Memory of Cooper: He and a friend playing tubas outside the band hall one night.
00:16:30	Memories of his first year at East Texas State University; then his grades slipped and got a draft notice. He joined the U.S. Army and was trained as a helicopter mechanic – served in Africa.
00:21:06	Came back from the service in 1967. Taught at Spartan School of Aeronautics in Tulsa, Oklahoma for a year. Came to visit his friend, Ronnie Whitlock, who wasn’t home, but Ronnie’s sister, Frances Whitlock was. Frances was engaged to Bryan Preas, but she and Keith married about a year later.
00:22:27	Pictures of their son, John Klein, and grandson, Ethan Klein
00:23:26	Eventually received a degree from East Texas State University and taught at Sul Ross for 3 years. Got a grant from Sul Ross to develop a solar collector – current project.
00:27:06	Story about his grandfather, John Klein, born in 1887 in New York City to Adam Klein and Philipi Hanson. Parents were born in Germany or Austria. Mother died and Adam had a spinal disease; gave up custody of John. An orphan train stopped in Enloe for people to volunteer to take an orphan. John Klein was taken by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wickersham of Cooper, TX on 2/6/1899. John married Maudie May Watkins in 1906; they had 5 children, including Buster Klein, Keith’s father.
00:34:50	Story about the school bus accident on Hwy 19
00:36:46	Story about a rock fight at his grade school (East Ward) when he was about 6; then went to Cooper Elementary
00:39:50	Memory of where he was when he heard the announcement of the JFK assassination
00:40:55	Advice to future generations – get smart really early – the world is strange now
00:41:38	Story about an illegal alien stealing his car when he was at Sul Ross
00:46:45	Experiences in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Liberia while in the army. Also, the history of Liberia, including activities of the U.S. slave trade in the 19 th century
00:51:30	Stories about his father – working for the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) – photographer; also worked for MGM from 1936 to 1940, taking movies to the movie theater and counted number of people admitted to each screening.