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Frances Whitlock Klein, Oral History Index

Frances Whitlock Klein

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Interview with Frances Whitlock Klein conducted by Louise Skinner

October 29, 2019

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00:00:01	Introductions and general information
00:00:45	Born September 16, 1946. Parents were Lillie Mae Berry Whitlock and Clovis Wilbur "Dobbin" Whitlock. Dobbin's parents were Joel Arthur Whitlock and Frances Whitlock. Lillie Mae's parents were John Conius Berry and Annie Elizabeth Berry. Has one brother, Ronnie Whitlock, 2 years older.
00:03:30	Mother (Lillie Mae) was Miss Enloe 1937. States Lillie Mae was born in 1941 [record shows she was born in 1920, married in 1941]. Lillie Mae and Clovis eloped to Oklahoma. Clovis joined the U.S. Navy when WWII began. Lillie Mae went to beauty school in Dallas and opened the first beauty shop in Enloe.
00:05:45	Father (Clovis) served on a ship dubbed "unsinkable" may have been the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise - was in many battles, including Guadalcanal. After the war, frequently had nightmares, but didn't talk much about the war.
00:06:38	Frances remembers her early childhood in Cooper; her father drove a butane truck. Lived across the street from Etta Jo Chancellor. Nancy McKinney was another good friend
00:08:35	Parents bought Ed Hendricks' house on the Country Club Road; had a horse; fished at the pool; had roller skates; rode bike into town, took piano lessons from Mrs. O. L. Talley. Remembers walking around the Cooper square on Saturday nights.
00:11:40	Remembers visiting her maternal grandparents (Berry) who lived in Enloe. Learned to drive by driving to their house.
00:13:06	Remembers childhood as safe, happy, and fun. Memories of parents working at the Automatic Gas Building; father managed the Automatic Gas store; mother's beauty shop was in the same building.
00:15:53	Memories of going to church (First Methodist Church) involved in youth group and choir; still teaches children's classes.
00:16:40	Memories of later childhood years – sleepovers, Miller's ice cream, sock hops – Ronnie Cassidy was a good dancer – band trips, swimming in the channel, making box lunches. Since nothing was integrated then, didn't know any black children.
00:18:46	Wanted to attend business school instead of college. Ellene Oliver, her English teacher, told her parents she should go to college (East Texas State University). She went to work as a secretary in the Education Dept. while working on a degree in early childhood education. Later, changed jobs – worked as the secretary of the First Methodist Church – worked with Lola Nell Morgan, the treasurer. Graduated in three years.
00:22:27	Story about the end of her engagement to Bryan Preas (meeting Keith, returning wedding shower gifts, etc.). Story about getting a teaching job in Dallas and moving into an apartment. Taught there for two years. Began dating Keith Klein.
00:27:37	Story of Keith's proposal of marriage and their wedding – married on Christmas Eve
00:29:15	Recent developments - Has one son, John Klein, and one grandson, Ethan Klein; retired from teaching after 34 years, worked 11 more years as an Education Specialist for Head Start
00:30:00	Memory of school bus accident – occurred when she was in middle school
00:31:05	More memories of family life when she was growing up

00:32:01	More school information – attended a private kindergarten taught by a Mrs. Anderson in her home across the street from Wilson’s Grocery. Was able to begin first grade early and then graduated in 1964 in Cooper.
00:33:15	Memories of Enloe where grandparents lived. Her mother’s oldest brother, “Dutch” Berry (Lionel Desmond Berry), Tilde, and Janice lived close by – they all farmed
00:35:27	Memories of desegregation of schools while teaching in Greenville, TX; Encountered first Hispanic students when teaching in Sulphur Springs, TX; Experienced discrimination from a white waiter when traveling with Black and Hispanic colleagues
00:40:57	Memory of where she was during the first moon walk
00:41:50	Advice to future generations – put aside electronics and get back to spending time with friends and family. Faith, family, and values are important.