

**The David and Barbara Pryor Center
for
Arkansas Oral and Visual History**

University of Arkansas
1 East Center Street
Fayetteville, AR 72701
(479) 575-6829

Arkansas Memories Project

Hayden McIlroy
Interviewed by Scott Lunsford
July 25, 2013
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Objective

Oral history is a collection of an individual's memories and opinions. As such, it is subject to the innate fallibility of memory and is susceptible to inaccuracy. All researchers using these interviews should be aware of this reality and are encouraged to seek corroborating documentation when using any oral history interview.

The Pryor Center's objective is to collect audio and video recordings of interviews along with scanned images of family photographs and documents. These donated materials are carefully preserved, catalogued, and deposited in the Special Collections Department, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville. The transcripts, audio files, video highlight clips, and photographs are made available on the Pryor Center website at <http://pryorcenter.uark.edu>. The Pryor Center recommends that researchers utilize the audio recordings and highlight clips, in addition to the transcripts, to enhance their connection with the interviewee.

Transcript Methodology

The Pryor Center recognizes that we cannot reproduce the spoken word in a written document; however, we strive to produce a transcript that represents the characteristics and unique qualities of the interviewee's speech pattern, style of speech, regional dialect, and personality. For the first twenty minutes of the interview, we attempt to transcribe verbatim all words and utterances that are spoken, such as uhs and ahs, false starts, and repetitions. Some of these elements are omitted after the first twenty minutes to improve readability.

The Pryor Center transcripts are prepared utilizing the *University of Arkansas Style Manual* for proper names, titles, and terms specific to the university. For all other style elements, we refer to the *Pryor Center Style Manual*, which is based primarily on *The Chicago Manual of Style 16th Edition*. We employ the following guidelines for consistency and readability:

- Em dashes separate repeated/false starts and incomplete/redirected sentences.
- Ellipses indicate the interruption of one speaker by another.
- Italics identify foreign words or terms and words emphasized by the speaker.
- Question marks enclose proper nouns for which we cannot verify the spelling and words that we cannot understand with certainty.

- Brackets enclose
 - italicized annotations of nonverbal sounds, such as laughter, and audible sounds that interrupt speech;
 - annotations for clarification and identification; and
 - standard English spelling of informal words.
- Commas are used in a conventional manner where possible to aid in readability.

Citation Information

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Scott Lunsford interviewed Hayden McIlroy on July 25, 2013, in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

[00:00:00]

Scott Lunsford: Okay. Hayden, today's—uh—date is July 25, 2013. We're at the Pryor Center here on the University of Arkansas campus in Mullins Library. And this is kind of a—a pick-up session. You've had some time to live with our earlier interview with—uh . . .

Hayden McIlroy: Right.

SL: . . . Barbara and—and myself. And—uh—I knew at the time, that we didn't get enough covered, anyway. [*HM laughs*] Uh—if you remember, it was a huge thunderstorm that day. I—I don't know if you could hear it when you were . . .

HM: I remember. You could hear it on the tape.

SL: Man, it's just unbelievable. Um—so I had a feeling that—uh [*HM sniffs*] whenever you and I [*HM clears throat*] got a chance to talk again after you'd had a chance to look at what we had done, that we'd be gettin' back together. And so that's kinda what we're doin' today. We're gonna try and pick up some stuff that we just didn't get to in that—in that first interview. And I—I gotta thank you for being willing to come in and do this 'cause I

think there's a lotta stuff that—lotta stories and—uh—uh—a lot a folks that—uh—you've been involved with that have made differences in a lotta people's lives. So that being said—uh—maybe we ought to—maybe we should start with your family—uh—uh—your family. I—I know we covered your—your mom and dad and your grandparents and—and kinda the genealogy. But I think we kinda shortened—uh—the folks—uh—the family that—that became your family. And so I just want us kinda throw it out there. [00:01:41] What—is there anything that you wanna dive into on that?

HM: Well, I would like to say a couple of things. I would like to regress back to—uh—my family and maybe—uh—maybe touch again on—uh—on my experience in the bank and—uh—uh—uh—so let's start with uh—uh—let's start with the bank, and then I'll move into the family.

SL: Okay.

JM: Uh—uh . . .

SL: All right.

JM I want—you know, I—I'd—I failed to mention the—uh—uh—the great camaraderie I thought that—uh—uh—we enjoyed at the McIlroy Bank. It was a small bank. Uh—you knew most of your customers. Uh—it was a—it was fun. You—you—you didn't have

the stress and strain, I don't think, that has come, you know, later in the banking world. Uh—it was a—we all looked at it as strictly—as much a community service—probably too much so—uh—more than—more than makin' money for the stockholders. So—uh—we had some great employees, and I had some long-term employees. We had employees that been there for forty to fifty years. And we had Betty Clark. We had Carol Walker. We had—uh—Norma Moseley.

SL: Hmm.

[00:03:03] HM: We had—uh—I'm gonna leave somebody out, I know—uh—'cause I've been tryin' to rethink—uh—uh—some of these old-timers—uh—that were there. Uh . . .

SL: I—I remember Norma Moseley myself.

HM: Well yeah, I think everybody—everybody remembers Norma. Uh—she—'cause she was up out front.

SL: Uh-huh.

HM: And—uh—but—uh—there—Buddy Ledford later and—and—uh—Gary Head. Uh—uh—let's see, who else am I missing? Um—I'm tryin' to think of some—I'm—I gave you a—a list of there. Give me some—give me some help.

[00:03:44] SL: Well, you got Skip Rutherford . . .

HM: Skip Rutherford.

SL: . . . sittin' on here. [*Laughs*]

HM: Skip Rutherford was, you know, great.

SL: What . . .

HM: Uh—he worked with Betty Clark. I mean, it—it's just—it was—he was a fabulous employee. You know, you couldn't have a better employee.

[00:04:00] SL: Well, I—I know Gary Head [*HM clears throat*] [*cell phone dings*] went on and continued in the banking business.

HM: Gary Head—uh—stayed in the business and has done—uh—extremely well. And no thanks to me, I think he just—uh—uh—he had that ability. But—uh—it was—it was a lotta fun, and we did things for the community, I think, outside of raisin' money for projects. Uh—I tried to do things—uh—that—uh—helped—uh—or—uh—um—improved the life of—of some of our citizens. For instance, we had—uh—uh—we had a program where our local artists could bring in their paintings every month and display 'em in the bank—their paintings or any kinda artwork. It coulda been pottery or paintings or weaving or—or—uh—uh—metal . . .

SL: Sculpture.

[00:04:59] JM: . . . sculptures and what—whatever, you know, the—the artist—uh—was working towards—whatever field he was in.

And they would bring 'em in. If they wanted to sell 'em—uh—we would put prices on 'em. I ended up buyin' half of 'em—uh—
[laughter] just—uh—they—they weren't—they weren't that expensive, and I'd—I'd buy these pieces of art, and I'd put 'em somewhere in the—in—in the bank. And—uh—that was fun.



Then—uh—Christmas—uh—we had a Christmas tree-lighting night, and I think you remember that—uh—on the Square at—uh . . .

SL: Mh-hmm.

HM: . . . uh—big celebration for turnin' the lights on the square. We had a big, huge Christmas tree in the—in the plaza of the bank, and we'd have Santa Claus, and we'd have [sniffs] gifts for kids and maybe popcorn. I can't remember what—what all we did. But it—it turned out to be quite an—uh—you know, quite an event. [00:05:55] But the main event that we had at Christmas was a program where we tried to—uh—uh—uh—interact with our elderly, who—in their later years some of 'em lead very—uh—secluded lives. They're—uh—gone and forgotten—uh—basically. And I think we started with—uh—Hillcrest Tower by sendin' invitations down there, and—and they would—uh—come up on a certain day of the—the—of the week—uh—Thursday or whatever day. We—we had it planned durin' the season, and it started out

small, but larger than I—a bigger crowd than—than we had planned for. And I think we ran out of—uh—you know, the punch and the cookies [*SL laughs*] and the cakes and everything that we were providing. But—but it was—it was amazing to me. I mean, some of these people dressed up, and—and they probably hadn't been anywhere in years. The word kinda spread, and by the second or third year it had gotten so large that we—it would—the bank couldn't even hold the number of people, and they were comin' from Prairie Grove and Lincoln and Cass and [*SL laughs*]*—and—uh—uh—all the surrounding communities—Madison County and far-out Washington County and West Fork, Winslow. People were seein' each other they hadn't seen since grade school, and it was just—it wasn't expensive. It was—it was just magical. And the employees at the bank enjoyed that as much as anything. They worked . . .*

SL: Sure.

[00:07:46] HM: . . . their tails off to get that put together. And my wife was very instrumental—Mary Joe. Two things that she did for what I say the citizens of Fayetteville were—three things, really—she started the Christmas events, or she was part of starting the Christmas events. She was part and maybe cosponsor to start Autumnfest with Billie Starr. And she and

Andrea and Jim Romine were probably the biggest fund-raisers that started The New School. So her contribution to Fayetteville was great. I mean, she—she contributed a lot 'cause I think all those things are still in existence, which is kind of amazing.

[00:08:47] SL: Yeah, I was gonna say, these are precursor to things that are still happening. First of all, the—the—um—the artist support is way great, I mean—and—as far as a business entity, a bank, offering their space for a gallery.

HM: Right.

SL: 'Cause they're probably weren't any galleries, other than maybe up here at the university—uh—for artists to show their stuff. And so that's a major breakthrough. And then you—uh—choosing to help the artists out in—in turn, in kind of [*HM laughs*] investing in the art.

HM: That's right.

[00:09:21] SL: And leaving it up beyond . . .

HM: That . . .

SL: . . . the event—uh—is—is a template that—you know, most recently in Fayetteville Underground, there was a concern to—to get local artists exposed and—and help them get their products out there.

HM: Mh-hmm.

SL: And so I have—it's like you planted things—Mary Joe planted a seed, or y'all planted a seed to support the art community. That's—that's one big thing. And then the tree-lighting thing. I mean . . .

[00:09:50] JM: Well, the tree-lighting and the—uh—the—the party for the old folks, which—which I was very, very disappointed that—uh—uh—when I sold the bank and Arvest took over, they—they chose to—uh—eliminate—uh—all the programs and the artists and the tree-lighting, and—and—as far as I know, those things aren't done anymore. I mean, I realize that the banks aren't all local anymore, and there's—there's many, many banks now, and—and they're more—to me, they're more profit driven than civic driven [*clears throat*], which is a shame, in a way. But—uh—be that it may—uh—I just—uh—relish those years that—uh—that I—I was here in the banking business and the employees and the people that were so loyal and such great workers and—and—uh—we had a lotta fun.

[00:10:56] SL: You know, family-owned bank, but you know, it sounds like the staff and the employees were—it was all folded into a bigger family, and there was a—an . . .

HM: It was.

SL: . . . attitude that it was everybody's place to go and—and—

and . . .

HM: Well, it was. And one I left out—Margaret Parish. I mean—
uh . . .

SL: Oh yeah, Margaret.

HM: . . . she—yeah, she [*laughs*] was as loyal and gung-ho after
thirty or forty [*laughs*] years in the bank as anybody [*SL laughs*]
we had. I'm tellin' you, she was—she was wonderful. Uh—and
I'm sure I'm leavin' out, you know—uh—a lot of 'em—uh—
Winston Sloan—uh—uh—was there for . . .

SL: I remember him.

HM: . . . my trust department forever and—uh—uh—just—I guess
there wasn't much turnover.

SL: That says about everything right there.

HM: Yeah. Uh—so—uh—it was kinda special.

[00:11:59] SL: Well—um—back then, as far—as long as we're talkin'
about banks, the—uh—the banking industry—not only is it more
profit driven now and not so much—doesn't seem to be so local
or community driven anymore, but also the lines have been
blurred as to what kinds of banks can do thing—what things they
can do. I mean, I—I remember savings and loans used to be
where you'd go to get a mortgage, and—and then you'd . . .

HM: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . do your personal . . .

HM: Yeah.

SL: . . . savings account or checking account at—at a regular bank.

And—and all—all that's kinda gotten blurred, hasn't it? I mean . . .



HM: It's almost gone back to—uh—the way before banking regulations—they've eaten away, in my opinion, at the regulations to the point that we're almost back pre-Depression, where you've got banks that are now—uh—they're really investment banks. They own coal mines to—or trains and—uh—uh—railroads. Uh—uh—and they are too big to fail, so—uh—it's—it's not good, in my opinion, but maybe it's necessary. I—I don't know. The world's changed.

[00:13:15] SL: Yeah. Well, you gotta think it affects the community in not a great way—the local communities that—if they're more interested in bottom line than they are having a relationship with their community. It's a . . .

HM: Well, that . . .

SL: . . . different attitude.

[00:13:34] HM: Yeah, like I say—but you got—you know, some of 'em are Bank America or—or they're from—their home office is in—uh—another city in Arkansas. Uh—this is a—a satellite

location. Uh—so it's not—uh—uh—it's not entirely—uh—
understandable. I mean—uh—uh—but it's certainly not like it
was when—when everything was owned locally by . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: . . . by the stockholders—the local stockholders.

[00:14:12] SL: Is—is there anything you wanna say—talk about any
of those folks that worked with you there at the bank? I mean,
is there—are there any good—I—I—I know that there's tons of
great stories and how they [*laughs*—how they would help
somebody. But is there anything that—uh—comes to mind—
um—you know, say—course, I'm always interested in anything
about Skipper 'cause . . .

HM: Ol' Skip.

SL: . . . I know him and . . .

HM: Yeah.

SL: . . . his kids and . . .

HM: Right.

SL: . . . and all that stuff. And he's always been . . .

[00:14:46] HM: Well, it—uh—uh—uh—uh—I hate—I can't think of
one particular—uh—uh—story or incident, but—uh—uh—there
were just so many of 'em, and they are so many of 'em that—
uh—you know, they went above and beyond. If somebody was

sick, they'd go to—you know, they'd go get their deposit or—or cash it—you know, cash a check for 'em and bring 'em the money. Uh—you know—uh—uh—they—they didn't think anything about it. Uh—I mean—uh—um—somebody'd call in and say, "I can't get to the bank today, and—and—uh—if you could bring me fifty dollars, I'll write a check here at the house." And, shoot, they'd—you know, they'd—they wouldn't think anything about not doin' that. But . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: Uh-huh.

SL: Yeah.

[00:15:42] HM: So—but those employees—like I say, it was amazing when you look back, and—and—and—and you see the—uh—the number of years that some of 'em worked there, for—you know, longer than I did. [*Laughter*] So—I mean, it was a [*Trey Marley coughs*]*—it was amazing.*

[00:16:01] SL: Uh—and I wanna—I—I wanna say somethin' about the tree lighting. You know, one of the biggest things now on downtown square is the Lights of the Ozarks.

HM: Hmm—right.

SL: And that didn't always used to be there. That was . . .

HM: No, I think . . .

SL: And . . .



HM: . . . that kinda started—uh—well, it—it—uh—it started in a small way, and it's grown—you know, it's—it's—it's grown. I would, you know, suggest the same thing happened as far as—uh—landscape. When we built the new bank, we hired—uh—somebody to landscape everything that could be landscaped. Uh—and—uh [*clears throat*]*—it—uh—uh—we got so much recognition, and I thought it—uh—it improved the looks of—uh—the concrete—uh—so much that—uh—uh—I kinda explored goin' ahead and doin' the whole square. And there was a—a—a man named John—Don McEnany . . .*

SL: Yeah.

[00:17:03] HM: . . . and—uh—finally got a plaque for him up—up there on the—in the gardens because, I mean, he worked for nothing—uh—basically—uh—uh—and a—a few of us were, you know, payin' the bill, and then we finally got—uh—oh, I think we got the Chamber and a group called Downtown Fayetteville and—and—uh—and then eventually the city—uh—kinda kicked in. But—uh—and now it's—and—and now it's completely, you know, landscaped. But before there was—you know, there was nothing there.

SL: Nothin'.

HM: And—and you look over there now, and just think that before there wasn't anything. [*Laughs*] And you wonder what . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: You—and a lotta people don't appreciate, you know, what a—how it's changed like that.

[00:17:49] SL: I guess the—uh—thing that's really gotten dropped, though, is that—uh [*smacks lips*] gathering of—of all the older folks.

HM: Yeah, that was . . .

SL: . . . for a Christmas gathering. That's . . .

HM: That . . .

SL: I guess that's gone. I—I don't know.

HM: And I don't either. Uh—but—uh—uh—those are—I just threw those out, and there's—they're the kinda programs that—uh—uh—that I took pride in, that I—and—and I'd like to—uh—uh—I liked to see come about because they meant so much.

[00:18:23] SL: And then Autumnfest. I mean, that became a huge thing.

HM: That—uh—that survived. I—uh—uh—uh—I member how worried we were for the first one. I don't know if the weather [*laughs*] and [*laughter*] thunderstorm or what it was, but—uh—and basically—uh—it was an attempt to [*sniffs*] get people down on

the square and have—you know, have activities. And—and outta that's come farmer's market, probably, and the—uh—the First Tuesday or Thursday or whatever that program is.

SL: Right.

HM: I mean, there's a . . .

SL: Springfest and the . . .

HM: Springfest.

SL: . . . block party and . . .

HM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

[00:19:07] HM: So that—that—that was where it all started.

SL: Yeah, it's funny how a good idea can grow . . .

HM: Right.

SL: . . . if you get the—get the right folks . . .

HM: That's the . . .

SL: . . . in the beginning, and it sounds like—sounds like [*sighs*] y'all were spawning a number of things—just tryin' to be members of the community.

HM: Tryin' to be members of the community, and it was fun. I mean, it—it was rewarding.

[00:19:36] SL: Well—so you know, if you think of somethin' else about the bank and all that, we can go back at [*turns a page*]

any—any point in time.

HM: Right.

SL: Uh—but it kinda leads us toward—uh—we—if you're talkin' about the bank and the community efforts—now you're talkin' about probably a gathering of—uh—friends that become lifelong friends. They're—they're—they get involved with what you're doing, or you cross paths in some way. And all of a sudden, there's a—a staple of strong, loyal friends that—around to support and help and—and just generally have a good time with life.

HM: Right, right.

[End of verbatim transcription]

[00:20:23] SL: So do you wanna talk any more about some of your friends? I know we mentioned a few in that first interview, and we probably didn't pay any of 'em enough justice.

HM: Well, I—you asked me about Don Tyson—I—you know, I can't say enough about Don. He was certainly a major player in my life for a number of years—the kinda guy that would—if you were a friend of his, he would do anything—anything. If you were stranded in Istanbul and couldn't [*SL laughs*] get out, he'd send an airplane, or he'd hire some operatives to go in and get you, you know. I mean, that was—that's how far he would go. And

his family has carried—John's done, I think, a good job as far as community involvement and helping people that were friends of his dad. I know a couple of cases where he's really stepped in above and beyond. Jim Blair—Jim and I—gosh almighty, we had—as I said earlier, we had great times together, but he's also been, oh, immense help to me on several—many occasions. And Diane and Mary Joe were great friends, and Diane and I were friends. And I'm—certainly, she was a loss. However, Nancy has come along, and Nancy's been a very good friend. So . . .

[00:22:14] SL: How early did you—when did you first start spending some time with Don and with Jim—was Jim with Don about the time that y'all started hangin' out together or do you predate that relationship?

HM: I think Jim and Don's relationship started probably before I came into the picture. Jim worked for the law firm in Springdale that handled Tyson's . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: . . . when Tyson was a client, and I think Jim handled their account. And—but as far as I know, that's how that relationship got started. I just assumed that. But it wasn't that long afterwards that I got into the—quote—"triangle." But it was interesting times. I member, we—I mean, I can remember

when Don [*laughs*] said, "Well, I'm gonna"—he said, "I'm gonna make—Tyson Foods' gonna make a million dollars this year, and I had to cheat some, [*SL laughs*] but I'm gonna have it, and it's gonna show a million-dollar profit." [*Laughter*] And you think back [*laughs*] and say, "Well, gee, that's a day's work today."

SL: Yeah, right.

[00:23:45] HM: And of course, Jim left the firm and became a—Tyson's chief counsel. So—and let's see, there was—course, Paul Berry—in and outta my life and then in for a long time, the last forty, fifty years. Grew up with Dash Goff and Paul Young and Jim Tatum, and they've all been, you know, lifelong friends and, I mean, from—this is goin' back to the first grade. And later in life there was—oh gosh—Jim Watson, Butch and Kay Robertson, Jim and Andie Romine . . .

[00:24:43] SL: Tell me about Bunky.

HM: Oh, Bunky and Paula Lee.

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*] Tell—now tell me about Bunky.

HM: When Mary Joe and I first got married, I'd sold my—I just sold my house and then got married. Didn't make much sense.

SL: Yeah. [*Laughs*]

HM: So now I didn't—now I had a wife and no house. [*SL laughs*]
And Gene Goff came in the office one day—that's Dash's dad.

Who, by the way, invented the corn dog. And I think Dash has got the original corn dog irons, in case you wanna see 'em sometime. But he had a big horse operation one mile from the square in east Fayetteville and he—they didn't live there. They lived in Tulsa, and I asked him—I said, "Gene, I've sold my house and gotten married. I gotta have a—you know, someplace to go till I find another house, so would you rent the farmhouse?" And he said, "No, I won't rent it to you." Said, "But you can just stay there."

SL: Wow.

HM: So we moved in there and stayed—I don't know—maybe six months or seven or eight months or somethin' like that—and then bought another house. But . . .

[00:26:04] SL: So was it called Vera Lee Farms back then?

HM: Verna Lee Farms.

SL: Verna Lee. And is that house the same house that Dash ended up livin' in for a while out there or is that a different . . .

HM: No, that's the same one.

SL: Same one. Same one.

HM: Yeah. Same cabin, they called it.

[00:26:24] SL: [*Laughs*] So you and Dash date back to first grade?

Is that . . .

HM: Oh, before first grade. We're three weeks apart and so—and our—and I think I said earlier—our parents were very, very good friends. And—so course, I don't remember [*sighs*] Dash till we got up to about the first grade.

SL: Right.

HM: But from then on, we—you know, we've been friends, but I'm sure that we were sharin' a crib at [*SL laughs*] various times durin' the first three or—two or [*laughs*] three years, so that's how far back we go. And about the same with Paul Young.

[00:27:10] SL: Now Paul Young—that would be PY3.

HM: That's right. Yes.

SL: So you—all the way back to preelementary . . .

HM: Preschool.

SL: . . . school.

HM: Yeah.

SL: Yeah.

HM: Yeah. And he went to Leverett, too, I think. But . . .

[00:27:22] SL: There was quite the crew at Leverett, wasn't there?

HM: It was a mixture. It was—and it really had some people, you know, from—almost farmland in those days, if you're goin' north towards the university farm now, you know, to comin' back towards Fayetteville. Then you had, you know, the streets and

the houses and the city folk. And I guess we'd be called the city folk.

[00:28:00] SL: Well, the campus at—University of Arkansas campus was much smaller then, and [*HM clears throat*] there were actually houses and neighborhoods where there are now . . .

HM: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . dorms and buildings and classrooms and stuff. So—

HM: Yeah. But the—at the end of the street I grew up on, which was Ozark—now McIlroy Avenue—across the street was the Razorback Hall. That was there for as long as I can remember. But my grandfather's house was still standin' on the other corner, and everything behind there was just a field. And so I—when I walked to Leverett, I mean, 75 percent of it was just all this vacant land.

SL: Yeah.

HM: So . . .

[00:28:48] SL: Well, was it your all's farmland, or was it your land . . .

HM: Well, it . . .

SL: . . . the family land there?

HM: I guess it had been originally, but the university did have it—did own it. And they eventually—you know, they built the fine arts

center, and course, now it's—the library faces out, and the student union's on the other side, and it's fully developed now, but at that time, it was vacant. I think the Greek Theatre was there, though.

SL: It's been there a while. Yeah.

HM: Yeah.

[00:29:22] SL: When did Paul Berry enter your life?

HM: Oh well, Paul—you know, I told the story earlier about the basketball game where, you know . . .

SL: Well, you . . .

HM: . . . he thought I was makin' rules up and [*SL laughs*—course, knowin' Paul, he probably had a rule book in his back pocket, and he thumbed through there to find out, you know, what the rule was. But . . .

SL: It was your ball, so you set . . .

HM: It was my ball, so I left. [*Laughter*] And it really—we didn't really connect until we were both married in our twenties—middle twenties—and that's when we really connected. It was—I had been married for a few years before he got married, and then it was after I'd graduated and after I'd been in the Marine Corps, and it was a little bit later.

[00:30:27] SL: You know, did we talk much about you being in the

Marine Corps? I mean, there's a great photograph of you and a buncha Fayetteville folk on a—I don't know if it's Frontier Airlines or a scheduled Skyways or . . .

HM: Central.

SL: . . . somethin'. How long were you in the Marine Corps?

HM: Central and—well, we—you know, I—we did talk about it.

SL: Okay.

HM: We—I was in there long enough.

SL: [*Laughs*] You were ready to get out. [*Laughter*]

[00:30:58] HM: That was Kirby Penick, myself, John Lewis, and Gary Lunsford. [*SL laughs*] The four of us went in together and came out together, so it was a—as I said earlier, it was a worthwhile experience, although a miserable experience at times, but worthwhile.

SL: Yeah, that's back in the old marine days.

HM: That was—yeah, they called it the old corps.

[00:31:27] SL: Yeah, yeah. Well, let's see—what about Butch and Kay Robertson? Is there . . .

HM: Well, Butch and Kay came along quite a bit later after Mary Joe and I had gotten married. We had spent time with them and made some great trips to Europe and California and Las Vegas. And that was probably about thirty years ago that we connected

or maybe a little bit longer.

[00:32:13] SL: In—now tell me about Jim Watson.

HM: Well, Jim had been in the Marine Corps, interestingly enough, and he was probably one that inspired us to . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Sign up.

HM: . . . give it a—[*laughs*] sign up, which I've never forgiven him for. But in our college days, we spent a lot of—you know, we spent a lotta time together. We—both water skiers, and we would—John Lewis and Jim Watson and I and various dates would go to—oh gosh—Tenkiller, and it was before . . .

SL: It was pre-Beaver Lake.

HM: Pre-Beaver Lake.

SL: Yeah.

HM: Yeah, we'd have to go to Grand Lake or Tenkiller or Table Rock or someplace like that and haul the boat. [*SL laughs*] And I'm tryin' to think—I think maybe Paul Young had the boat. I can't—and he was in that group. But we'd even go out to Lake Wedington. I can remember Jim Bob Wheeler havin' a . . .

SL: Jim Bob Wheeler.

HM: . . . beautiful boat. And if you can imagine water skiin' in Lake Wedington—it was about two and a half feet. I mean, once you let go, you were—you went down in the mud. [*SL laughs*] And

a lotta people ran ashore [*laughs*] . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: . . . because it was just so tight. It's just so tiny. But we went out there some. And thank God that Beaver came along to where we didn't have to drive a hundred and twenty miles and . . .

[00:34:04] SL: Well, you mentioned John Lewis, and we probably talked a little bit about John Lewis earlier. Is there [*HM clears throat*] anything you wanna add about John?

HM: I can't say enough about John. I mean, he was just a great, great person. I think anybody that knew John knew him and loved him. Super, civic-minded individual. Loved Fayetteville. Loved working for various advances in the city and projects and was just a prince of a fellow. I mean, I can't—and he and I were—he—we were like brothers, almost. I mean, it was—as I said earlier, I could not talk to him for two or three years and come up here and go walk in there, and it was like we'd [*SL laughs*] just seen each other the day before. So it . . .

[00:35:08] SL: You know, what's unusual is that, you know, you got two bankin' families that, you know, at least . . .

HM: Well, yeah, I mean . . .

SL: . . . on paper, you're competitors and . . .

HM: That's another thing that's changed, you know. And I think we touched on that. I mean, the Lewises and the McIlroys were close friends. Neither bank did anything without . . .

SL: Lettin' 'em know.

HM: . . . discussin' it with the other one, and worked together on every civic project and every fund-raiser and city problem—city beautification. I mean, John and I really worked our rear ends off on the square and getting the planning and supplementing the expenses and the bills and . . .

[00:36:15] SL: [*Sniffs*] Now what about Jim Tatum?

HM: Yeah, Jim Tatum was in my life through about the sixth grade, I think. His dad was a Buick dealer here. He lived three doors down from me, you know, on Ozark Street, and we went to Leverett School together, and we saw each other ever day. I was at his house, or he was at my house. And course, when he moved to Tulsa that—we remained friends for all these years, but it's—you know, it was a mature friendship—but there again, one of those lifelong friendships with somebody you went to grade school with or you grew up with. You just don't forget 'em.

[00:37:12] SL: [*Sniffs*] Jim Hatfield?

HM: Well, Jim and I probably didn't really connect till high school.

And that was the year that I spent back in Fayetteville goin' to high school here. He and I were runnin' buddies durin' those—durin' that year. [*SL laughs*] And you know, two . . .

SL: Is that . . .

HM: . . . summers and a year, so [*laughter*]*—*we hung out a lot together, and we were great friends.

[00:37:53] SL: You've got Lynn Wade down here, too.

HM: I didn't know Lynn. Lynn was older than I am, but of course, I was—his dad was chairman of the board at the bank after my father passed away for years.

SL: Deacon.

HM: And so—yeah, the Wade family—and there again, it's the old families in town. The Wade family and L. L. Baxter, the Youngs, Jim Mashburn.

SL: Hatfields.

HM: I mean, these were all people that were either connected through the bank or through the church or just had become friends.

[00:38:39] HM: How—when did you hook up with Bob McBride?

HM: Bob's younger than I am. He and Denny Tune were always arm in arm—side by side, but [*laughter*] I think that started way back when I was workin' in the warehouse that we owned that—Mr.

McBride—his dad—got the Budweiser distributorship, and I think I said earlier, had a little fenced-off area that he's—that all the total beer would—for the county would come into. [SL laughs] And [laughter] I would help load—unload the beer and load it in his space. And so that's how I met Bob. And then, of course, his parents died at a young age, and he took over the Budweiser distributorship as really young. Mighta been the youngest, maybe, distributor ever in Budweiser history. I don't know.

[00:39:46] SL: Yeah. I know he and—seemed like he and Doug Douglas were good friends, too.

HM: They were. Yeah.

SL: You know, another example of Fayetteville . . .

HM: Yeah.

SL: . . . families . . .

HM: Yeah.

SL: . . . being competitors, but being friends, too.

HM: Right. They were good friends. I mean, competition wasn't cutthroat. You just worked. You just tried to provide the best service you could provide, and you realized the other guy was tryin' to do the same thing and so—but there wasn't any cutthroat business ?goin' involved? in most cases. It was just straight up, you know. I'd go ask you for your business, and

he'd come, and you might take him, or you might take me, and that's just the way it was.

[00:40:48] SL: As long as we're talkin' about lifelong friends—early stuff—you know, I always have this interest in the earliest stuff—what was the worst trouble you ever got into with any of these folks? I mean, it—I mean, I know—you know . . .

HM: Now we're wanderin' off the reservation . . .

SL: I know we are.

HM: . . . with that kinda thing. [*Laughter*] Yeah.

SL: Well, I just thought, you know, you might have a good [*HM laughs*] story that would exemplify how loyal . . .

HM: Oh well, I . . .

SL: . . . your friendships were.

HM: . . . don't know if—yeah, I don't—I assume the statute's run on some things, but I . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] You're hesitant to confess.

HM: I'm hesitant [*laughs*] to bring it up. Just for [*cell phone dings*] . . .

SL: Well, I just thought maybe if you had a—you know, if you had . . .

[00:41:31] HM: Well, I told the one about drag racing and—earlier and police stoppin' us and givin' Hal Trumbo and Hatfield and

myself tickets and [*SL laughs*] how that came out. And . . .

SL: Yeah, it—yeah, I remember that story. You got the least ticket, and you were goin' the fastest or somethin'.

HM: Well yeah, I think I was one, Hal [*SL laughs*] was two, and Hatfield was three, and they, I guess, showed favoritism, I guess. I don't know. [*Laughter*] But there wasn't any serious trouble. I mean, you know—yeah, we'd race cars, and we'd drink beer, and we'd do that kinda thing, but we didn't break any major laws, and I'd . . .

[00:42:25] SL: Yeah, yeah. Well, okay, if you think of somethin' you—a little later we get back to it. But you know, sometimes the—when you experience trouble together it furthers the bond, you know . . .

HM: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . or it strengthens the trust and loyalty among friends.
And . . .

HM: Well, you—yeah.

SL: . . . you just get through somethin'.

HM: Sounds like you know.

SL: I do. [*Laughter*] I do. I [*HM coughs*] understand it.

HM: Excuse me.

[00:43:02] SL: Okay, now what about the Whitfields?

HM: Billy and Bobby. Billy's my age, and Bobby's younger. Bobby was a little brother that we picked on. [*SL laughs*] But we—where I really kinda connected with Bill early on, is we went to the same summer camp. John Barnhill, who was our athletic director for years, had an interest in a boys' camp in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee called Camp LeConte.

SL: Okay.

HM: And I went there for, oh gosh, eight or nine years, I think.

SL: Wow.

[00:43:57] HM: Billy and Bobby went there for maybe two years—three years. Dash went there for a couple of years. And that's—Billy and I were in the same cabin, and one year, I think, Billy and Bobby and I were in the same cabin. And that's where that relationship started. And then later on in college, we would—when we were both married, we'd go to Billy's house. Ruthie was a great cook and hostess, and we'd go over there and eat, and we'd play bridge, you know, till midnight or one o'clock on the weekends. And then later on, we traveled. Billy had an airplane at one time and—that's scary—and he got a license, and [*SL laughs*] we were flyin' places and [*laughter*] so—and the Whitfields were always connected to the bank through the—through their businesses—you know, through the automobile

businesses and the finance business. So there was always that family connection, and I loved his dad. His dad was just a—well—just the sharpest guy I could think of back in those days. He was really somethin'. So . . .

SL: I remember Ruthie Jolly . . .

HM: Well yeah, she was right down . . .

SL: . . . lived right next door to us.

HM: Yeah, right down the street from you, and so you knew—I guess you knew her and her brother.

SL: Yeah.

HM: Yeah.

[00:45:41] SL: And then Gail . . .

HM: And Gail . . .

SL: Bob Cooper lived across the street.

HM: Yeah, right.

SL: Gail ended up with John Tolleson.

HM: Right.

[00:45:49] SL: Now is John older than you?

HM: John's older than I am, and Gail's younger.

SL: Yeah.

HM: Yeah. John and I were in Sigma Nu's together.

SL: He was quite the showman, too.

HM: Great . . .

SL: Great . . .

HM: . . . singer and piano player and entertainer. Played every weekend that I can remember. [*Laughter*]

[00:46:16] SL: You know, we were talkin' before we got up here. I was hearin' some Conway Twitty stories from you or the—his name was Harold. Is that right?

HM: Yeah, Harold—oh gosh—Jenkins.

SL: Jenkins. And he had a brother that—is that right? That he . . .

HM: Now that, I don't know.

SL: You don't know. Okay.

HM: But he was—yeah, I think his name was Harold Jenkins, but . . .

SL: I think that's right.

[00:46:48] HM: . . . he came up. I remember the—he came up on many, many a weekend and played over at—played for some Sigma Nu function, and it was—you know, as I said earlier, I think it was, like—cost us a hundred dollars or a hundred and [*SL laughs*] fifty dollars or somethin'. [*Laughs*]

SL: For all night.

HM: For all of 'em—for he and his band and all night. So—and that's the same time John Tolleson was playin'. I'm sure they played together a lot.

SL: And Hawkins.

HM: Hawkins had moved on to Canada, I think, by the time I was in college. Hawkins was playin'—well, they call it playin'—he was [*SL laughs*] at Jug Wheeler's Drive-in on weekends and that kinda thing. I don't know that he ever had an official booking and—but that was—I was—that was when I was in high school. And then I think he went to Canada.

[00:47:57] SL: Yeah. Well now, was there somebody that was playing with him at Jug Wheeler's?

HM: Well, Harold Pinkerton—that's the one . . .

SL: Pinkerton.

HM: . . . I remember.

SL: That's who we're talkin' about . . .

HM: Yeah, Harold . . .

SL: . . . before it came up.

HM: I think Harold played with him, and I guess Herman played with him some. And I can't—there's somebody else—Bob—I can't remember. But they were just what I'd call untrained magicians—musicians that—about like Hawkins, you know. They could hit two or three chords and keep a song goin' forever and—[*laughter*—long as they didn't have to sing another song [*SL laughs*] or play another song. But we thought it was good

entertainment. It was better than nothin'.

[00:48:56] SL: You bet. [*HM laughs*] You bet.

HM: So . . .

SL: It was the birth of rock and roll back then, too.

HM: Right. It was the—yeah, that's just when rock and roll and Elvis was just coming on the scene.

[00:49:09] SL: Yeah. Okay, let me look at these names now. I wanna make sure we get everybody in here. I think we've touched on all these folks.

HM: I'm sure I have left somebody out, and I apologize. I can't [*sighs*—I just can't think of 'em right now.

SL: Well, why don't we—I tell you what—why don't we swing around to family stuff and if—when you're talkin' about your family stuff, you know—and I—I'm thinkin' we kinda do it in a [*HM sniffs*] chronology. When—I guess Melanie was your first wife. Is that—that's right . . .

HM: That's right.

SL: . . . isn't it? And what was her maiden name?

HM: Parker.

[00:50:12] SL: Parker. How—how'd you all get together?

HM: In college and actually, I got married before either one of us graduated. And I think it was right after I got outta the Marine

Corps, and I luckily only had one semester left. And then my dad died, and then I went into the bank, and so we've gone through that earlier. But she was wonderful, and she produced the—two of the greatest kids that ever was, and that was Melissa, the oldest one—I call her Misty, and Melinda—call her "Worm."

SL: [*Laughs*] Worm?

HM: Yeah. And I call Misty "Bird" sometimes, but those are just my nicknames. And now I've been instructed that I can't call Misty Bird or Misty anymore. I gotta call her [*laughs*] Melissa because she's got her doctorate degree.

SL: Oh.

[00:51:31] HM: And so I—but I referred to her as Dr. Bird one time, and [*SL laughs*] apparently they didn't like that. But anyway, that was between me and her [*laughter*] and—but Melinda is great. She got a law degree. She worked for David for a while in Washington. Got her law degree. She's been an attorney now with the state—in Human Services, which is a very demanding job—stressful. I give her credit for bein' able to do that. And she's just been wonderful. Melissa has married Drake Hawkins, and I refer to him as the world's greatest father, and she's a tremendous mother and I—as parents, they have raised

two great kids. I mean, the time they devoted to them has just been unbelievable. They've given up a lot to make sure that they were playin' soccer from St. Louis to Louisville every weekend, growin' up, and probably didn't have one or two weekends to themselves for . . .

SL: Fifteen . . .

[00:52:57] HM: . . . four or six years there.

SL: Yeah, yeah.

HM: She went back and got a doctorate degree after all these years. She's never really practiced. She did work for David when he—when they opened the Clinton School.

SL: School. Mh-hmm.

HM: And she was his assistant. And I say worked for David—David'll say, "I work for her." [*Laughter*] But . . .

SL: Somebody's gotta [*HM laughs*] keep him straight.

[00:53:29] HM: Anyway, they're a fabulous family, and they're very civic oriented, and both of—both my children—both of those children are now. And I give Melanie credit—half-credit for those two children, so—maybe a little bit more'n half 'cause they've turned out so great. But . . .

[00:53:57] SL: Okay. So now, you have two grandchildren? Is that . . .

HM: Two grandchildren.

SL: Two grandchildren.

HM: Walker is the youngest—great high school athlete—was athlete of the year in state. Play—lettered four years at Central on the football team. A 4.0 student.

SL: Wow.

[00:54:24] HM: And went to—is—but will be a junior in—at the University of Virginia this year.

SL: Great school.

HM: Is in Italy right now on the summer program.

SL: Summer program. Yeah.

HM: I think, havin' the time of his life. But he's a wonderful, smart kid who will someday—you'll be reading about him. And he's that exceptional. [00:54:58] Anne Elise . . .

SL: Now Anne Elise . . .

HM: Is . . .

SL: *A-N-E-L-I-S-E* or . . .

HM: Yeah. *A-N-N-E E-L-I-S-E*.

SL: Kay.

HM: Anne Elise. She graduated from Arkansas cum laude and signed on with Teach for America under a two-year contract . . .

SL: It is great.

HM: . . . and is in rural North Carolina . . .

SL: Wow.

HM: . . . working in an underprivileged school in a depressed area and is a true, true leader. And she is exceptional. And Mary Joe and I had Michelle. Michelle is the baby of the family. She—actually, we moved to Dallas when she was goin' in, I believe, the—she was goin' into middle school. So that was the first year of middle school, and I can't member—that's sixth or seventh grade. But she went into middle school when we got to Dallas. And then went to SMU, then got a master's degree in psychology—worked in California for a while in the—quote—"industry," movie industry. Came back—well, actually came back to Dallas and then got a teaching certificate and is now a schoolteacher in the Dallas area. And she is just—I can't say enough. She's the sweetest little girl that you ever saw. I mean, she's—not a mean bone in her body. She's special.

[00:57:15] SL: Well, I know you—you've got a home in Dallas as well as your home up here, so—but you spend most of your time in Dallas. Is that . . .

HM: I do.

SL: Yeah, so you get a chance to see her and . . .

HM: Still see her. She comes by regularly. She . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: . . . checks on us. [*SL laughs*] So she—we get to see her—her mother and I—and Mary Joe's done a great job with her, and they have a very special relationship, I think. So that—I just can't say enough, how lucky I am to have children that have never given me any kind of problem or given the family any kind of problem and have been nothin' but a joy. And I love 'em a lot.

[00:58:03] SL: So you probably gotta thank the—your wives for that.

HM: Yeah. [*SL laughs*] Yeah, that's true. You know, I mean, do they—they deserve most of the credit—all the credit. So . . .

SL: Well—so let's see, what else do we wanna talk about here about the—is there anything else you wanna say about Mary Joe or . . .

HM: Well, I can't say enough about 'em, and I don't wanna underemphasize or bore anybody, on the other hand, with all this—but I can—all I can say is I've been a very lucky person to have had 'em all in my life.

[00:58:52] SL: Well, okay. Is there anything else we wanna talk about?

HM: I can't think of anything now. I'm sure tomorrow or [*laughs*]
a . . .

SL: [*Laughs*] Yeah, yeah.

HM: . . . month from now . . .

SL: We'll be . . .

HM: . . . I'll think of a hundred things . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: . . . you know, we shoulda . . .

SL: Yeah.

HM: . . . talked about. But . . .

[00:59:07] SL: Well, what—where are you headed with your life now? What is it that you like to do, and what do you see linin' up for yourself?

HM: Well, at my age, you know, I guess I'm headed for the end zone.

SL: Man, you look great.

HM: [*Laughs*] And so . . .

SL: Look like you're healthy and sharp still and . . .

[00:59:30] HM: Well, I wanna talk to . . .

SL: . . . you're active.

HM: . . . you about these pictures. You don't have enough makeup on. [*Laughter*] I don't know—I've enjoyed Dallas a whole lot. I mean, I've learned a lot—I've made a lotta good friends, and I haven't talked about them because I understand this is Arkansas history . . .

SL: Actually . . .

HM: . . . and I don't—nobody would—a few people know who I'm talkin' about on this taping, but they wouldn't know anybody in Dallas. But I've—just a long story short, I have had a great run down there, and I've had the opportunity to meet and interact with some powerful, great people. And so it's been a fabulous experience. Where am I goin'? I have no idea, really. I know I'm gettin' slower and slower, so I don't know if I'll ever completely retire, but I think I would consider maybe comin' back to Arkansas, and I'd love to.

[01:00:49] SL: Well, there's a pretty strong Arkansas contingent down in Dallas, too, isn't there? I mean . . .

HM: Oh yeah.

SL: . . . you've got friends . . .

HM: Yeah.

SL: . . . Arkansas friends that also landed in Dallas as . . .

HM: Well yeah, you would be surprised. I mean, the—probably can't go a week without seein' a Razorback on a car. On a license plate or one of the emblems on the back of the trunk. So I don't know—there's a number that I heard of the number of Arkansas graduates that, you know, live and work in Dallas, and it's a sizeable community. But they still blame us for gettin' outta the

Southwest Conference, so [*laughter*—for the demise of the Southwest Conference.

SL: Well, [*HM laughs*] yeah, the one non-Texas school.

HM: Yeah.

SL: [*Laughter*] Yeah, it's all our fault.

HM: As Lou Holtz said after that SMU game where they called that [*laughs*] invisible penalty, he said, "If this isn't a reason to get outta the Southwest Conference [*SL laughs*], you'll never have one."

SL: There you go. Yeah. Those were the days.

[01:02:06] HM: But it's been fun. Been a great experience.

SL: Well, man . . .

HM: That's it.

SL: That's it? Are we—do you think we're done for today, anyway?

HM: What is that ol' Looney thing—"That's all there is, folks."

SL: "That's all, folks." [*Laughs*]

HM: "That's all, folks." [*Laughter*] Thanks a [*claps hands*] . . .

SL: Thanks, buddy.

HM: All right.

SL: All right.

[End of interview 01:02:32]

[Transcribed and edited by Pryor Center staff]