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Arkansas State Police Project

Interview With

Ken McFerran
Unknown Location
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Interviewer: Michael Lindsey

Michael Lindsey: You started in 1965. What was the hiring process?

Ken McFerran: I don't really like to put it this way, but it was the way it was in 1965. Governor Faubus was in power and he and his people controlled a lot of things. Unfortunately, in 1965 and some of the years before that, the way to get hired was to know somebody, legislators or occasionally some sheriff who was in the inside circles. If you didn't know someone you would probably not be hired. They got some good people in those days and they got some people that were not so good. I didn't exactly fall into that situation, although my uncle was the sheriff of this county and he had been a state trooper for eight years before resigning to become sheriff. To some degree I was in on the political thing too, but he wasn't one of those very powerful individuals. He didn't exercise a lot of those political skills, as opposed to someone like Marlin Hawkins [politically powerful Conway County Sheriff]. If I had known Marlin Hawkins all I would have had to do was tell him I was ready to be a trooper and that

would have been that. I had received a [college] degree and at the time I went to work I think I was the only one in the State Police who had a degree. I wasn't the first one; there were a few before me that had lasted for a while. There were a few, when I hired on, that had some hours. I graduated from what they call the University of the Ozarks now. I had taught and coached for a few years, but I had always wanted to be a trooper. When I was ten years old I told my mom and dad that I wanted to be a trooper. As I grew a little older I thought it might just be a childhood dream because a lot of kids want to be a fireman or police officer, especially in those days. But, I never outgrew it. I always wanted to be a trooper. My folks didn't see a whole lot of glory in that and my wife didn't think it was such a good idea, so for a while this sort of derailed me. [But] I had to be a trooper, so in 1965 I became one. We did have a testing procedure in those days. The real trick was in being called to Little Rock to take the test. I don't know what kind of backlog they had as far as pulling from applicants. I just know that when I sent my application in, I got a reply back really quickly to come down and be interviewed and tested. I went down and spent a whole day there. It was pretty comprehensive interview and was conducted by Inspector Scroggins who was an original state trooper. He hired on in 1935 and was one of the first thirteen. He was a really good individual and wanted the very best people possible as candidates, but he could not control that entirely because of the political system. When given the opportunity he gave a really in-depth interview and testing. I would suspect that even if one of mediocre or less than mediocre [qualifications] as far as he was concerned [applied] he might not be able to veto their hiring. We did have a

testing procedure, but it wasn't anything like we got later. From the time I hired on until 1968, it was, to a great extent, who you knew to get hired. And sometimes you didn't have to know some big-time politician. Sometimes you could know somebody within the State Police and I think that is true in business as well, there is always a little bit of politics in everything. The so-called political thing changed in 1967 when Governor Rockefeller came on board. In my thinking, Governor Rockefeller was the greatest thing to happen to the State Police either before or since. He put in a director, or Colonel, and gave them full reins on running the show. I suspect he told them that he wanted a good organization free from the political ramifications that might have been occurring in the past. He appointed Lynn Davis, but he was declared illegal because of that technicality. I don't know how effective he was going to be. We had no problems [with him]. I was working highway patrol in Harrison at the time and when you are down on the trooper level you are low on the totem pole. I know after Lynn Davis left, he appointed Ralph Scott who was a retired FBI agent. Ralph Scott was a mover and a shaker and not liked by everyone, especially the higher-ups -- I mean the Majors and the Captains. He was making changes. He absolutely did not listen to outsiders. I don't mean he wouldn't listen. He would listen, but if they were complaining about a trooper, or wanted someone moved or hired or transferred for whatever reason, he would listen to the reason and he would check into the complaint and if it wasn't valid [he would take no action]. There is no way outsiders controlled the State Police. Under Rockefeller, that was the time they shut the gambling down and that was just one of many things Rockefeller started. When Dale Bumpers came

in, he ran the State Police the same as Rockefeller. When he put in another director, the director ran the state police. When I was commanding the Criminal Division, David Pryor was the Governor and he did essentially the same thing. Citizens got so used to complaining about the State Police to the Governor during Faubus' [tenure] that they still called the Governor. I know that Dale Bumpers told them to contact the State Police instead of [expecting] the Governor's office taking action. Eventually they stopped going to the Governor's office and began channeling all of their complaints through the State Police. You have enough pressure as the State Police director that you don't need the political pressure too. The director shouldn't have to worry about keeping all seventy-five sheriffs happy or all of the legislators happy. They are not a part of it. Ralph Scott was the first director that began to implement a hiring policy. We began taking applications and testing. From the testing [results], the applicants were pulled out. It got better. I think Colonel Doug Harp refined all of that and by the time he left, about 1981, we had a real good system in place to choose troopers. He had a lot of people involved in the screening process. It is a big job to hire someone and it is expensive. During his tenure, he instituted a promotional policy that was quite expensive and I think he made some good promotions. I remember his philosophy was that any time he promoted [someone] to sergeant he was looking at the potential for that person to become a troop commander. Troop Commanders do come from sergeants and he wasn't particularly enthused about promoting a trooper to sergeant unless that man seemed capable of going beyond that -- not that he probably didn't do it on occasion. He was always looking to see if that man had the capacity or abili-

ty to be a troop commander. I was head of personnel for about a year, 1979-1980, and we kept about one thousand six hundred applicants. We were under the consent decree. I replaced Major Gwyn when he retired. I moved over from the Criminal Division. I was only there [Personnel Division] a year, thank goodness. I like police work, not personnel. We had to handle the consent decree, which really meant that if we hired one hundred new people, thirty-three were meant to be minority and thirty-three were meant to be female. Actually it was thirty-three and a third. That is what they are still under. That year we had three schools and I think that was one of the last years for a while that we could have schools because of finances. It might be two [schools], but I was proud that we exceeded our percentages on minorities and women in those schools. I felt like we accomplished something there. I guess 1980 or 1981 we got cut back and we were unable to run schools for some time.

ML: Do you remember any particular ways that were effective in recruiting minorities or women during this time?

KM: No. We just worked real hard. When I went over to Personnel we weren't keeping up with the numbers. We were having a really difficult time. Personnel have a lot of duties. One is hiring. It starts with recruiting and goes through starting a school. We also had the security guards and private investigators that we had to keep track of and that is a lot of paperwork. When I went over, I believe there was Major Gwyn and four commissioned officers and about three secretaries. He was way understaffed. He had been doing everything he could with those few people. I talked with Colonel Harp and told him we couldn't do what we are supposed to be doing with the people we had. Recruiting women and minorities was something the State Police wasn't used to doing. All through the history of the State Police we had white kids lining up to be a trooper. All you had to do

was take names and cull through. When it opened up to the minorities and women it was a new world. I am not sure that I ever talked to a black officer or recruit that had wanted to be a police officer [from a young age]. It was often from the other side of the fence. It was the attitude where they lived that if someone voiced an opinion that they wanted to be a police officer he was ostracized. At least that was what they would tell me. Of course women were out of the loop entirely. Very few women even thought about being a police officer and a state trooper in particular. If you think about it, if a woman went to work for Fayetteville or Little Rock, you may have someone riding with you. You always have somebody out in cars close to you. A trooper may be out in the county at 2:00 or 3:00 o'clock in the morning and he is the only law enforcement in the whole county. When I was working up in Harrison, I would be the only trooper out for five counties. Usually by 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning there were no deputy sheriffs out. You were just it. When a woman thought about that a while she might have had second thoughts. We found out real quick that we weren't attracting minorities and women by putting on the radio and television media that we were hiring and looking at everyone. They just didn't walk in. I talked with Colonel Harp and told him we [Personnel Division] needed more people. He agreed and I got, I believe, five more. We put together a recruiting team. One was black, one was female and the other three were white. Their job was to brainstorm and put together any ideas that might help us. We all went to high schools and had a session either through an assembly or one on one – we did it in colleges too – to try to talk to minorities and females. We talked about our money, which wasn't a lot, and the benefits, which weren't that bad. You hear some people say state government doesn't pay, but there are a lot of fringe benefits, especially with the State Police. When it is all over it is not that bad of a job. That was our main thrust to try and go to colleges and high schools. We were able to get some. One of the problems was if a minority could qualify for the State Police would also qualify for some industry some-

where. We had two strikes against us because they out-performed us on money and then the peer pressure issues. I had blacks tell me that they practically lost their friends when they became a trooper. They were practically ostracized. I think that is still happening some. I guess it is a widely held belief among many minorities that the police are not your friends.

ML: Was it in 1965 or 1967 when the first black trooper, Marion Taylor, was hired?

KM: I think it was 1967. I believe he was the only one and then he resigned before we got our second one. I never knew Marion very well, but I think 1967 was it. I am assuming Governor Rockefeller was in on this. I don't think women were even being considered at that time. Our second man may have been Conrad Patillo and he came on in 1969. I am not for sure though. We have never gotten many minorities and I think we [state police] are still below [the mandated percentage of women and minorities].

ML: Can you tell me a little bit about what Harrison was like and what your duties were as a trooper there?

KM: I was sent to Little Rock in 1965. In those days they didn't do a lot of schooling and they put you out in a car practically by yourself. There were ten of us that were hired on that particular day and we had two weeks of classes. [The classes were] five hours of class and five hours riding with someone. We worked ten-hour days, six days a week. They would school us in the morning and we would ride with someone at night. When I finished, I was supposed to be sent up to Clarksville, which was great because my wife was working at the College of the Ozarks. When we were finishing up our two weeks, they called us in and told me I was still going to Clarksville, but they needed me in Little Rock on a temporary assignment for a couple of weeks. I stayed in Little Rock and worked the graveyard shift. I was the only trooper car in Pulaski County, other than the interstate patrol. They had just opened the six lanes inside the Little Rock area and those boys worked interstate and that was it. On September 15, they sent me to Harrison for

what I thought would be a temporary assignment. I worked with Hansel Bradford up there. He would work the day car one week and I would be the night car. The next week we would switch shifts. We were on call when we weren't working. I was there for three years after the temporary assignment became permanent. My wife moved up there and we bought a house and it was home. We frequently had duties in three other counties, beside Boone County, because most of the time there were no troopers in those counties. As a matter of routine, we didn't patrol them. We just answered wrecks or calls in those other counties. There was just one of us on duty at a time, but we could always call on the other if we needed help. If a manhunt came up or [you] were called out on your day off, you just lost it. There was no overtime or comp[ensatory] time in those days. If you were one of the unlucky ones that your day off was the same day you had municipal court, which is the traffic court, you had to go to court. They usually tried to schedule around that, but it still happened. We were troopers and that [working on days off] was okay. I was in the state police for twenty-two and a half years, a Chief of Police at Ozark for four years, and a United States Marshal for six years and being a trooper was still the best job that I've ever had. I would only have traded it to be a stock car racer [laughs]. The duties at Harrison were primarily patrol, working wrecks, assist in domestic affairs. In those days you only had a sheriff and he would have a jailer and maybe one deputy that would patrol. We were called on a lot by the sheriff for assistance.

ML: That must have lent itself to a close relationship with the sheriff.

KM: Yes and at times with the Chief of Police and his people, but we worked more closely with the Sheriff. When I left I went into Criminal Investigation and they sent me to Jonesboro. That was on August 6, 1968. The sheriff's office was very small and we would handle a good part of their criminal investigation calls. If they got a call at 6:00 o'clock in the morning that they had a burglary in a cotton field somewhere, the sheriff would hang up and call me. We would work the case. We especially worked the "heavy cases,"

like murder and robbery. We also worked some small stuff too, what I call “coke box burglaries.” Sometimes, we really had a coke box burglary. If we were busy working something more significant we would get out of it, but I didn’t turn anything down if I could help them.

ML: How long were you in Jonesboro?

KM: Three years. I went over on August 6, 1968 and left August 6, 1971. They brought me back to Little Rock in the Criminal Division. I worked for [W.A.] Tudor. When I went over in 1968 he wasn’t the head of the Criminal Division, but he was later that year. When he retired, I practically got Tudor’s slot, because I was promoted to Major in charge of the Criminal Division that same year.

ML: Do you remember how [W.A.] Tudor got promoted?

KM: Probably not exactly. I know that Ralph Scott sent him to the FBI Academy and when he came back he became head of the Criminal Division.

ML: He [W.A. Tudor] had mentioned that when Ralph Scott took over he wanted to implement a new reporting system for CID. Do you remember how that went over?

KM: It wasn’t a big change for me, because when I joined CID they went to the new system, so I never had to use the old system. I didn’t know anything about it [the old system], except that it was terrible. I know they typed their own reports. I was called to Little Rock in administration (later in his career) and had occasion to read a lot of those reports and they could be of pretty poor quality. A lot of the criminal cases were kept in their [investigator’s] shirt pockets and they might wash them in the laundry and they would lose everything. I know they used to go out and do their interviews and crime scene search and come back and type everything. When I went in they gave me a recorder. You take your notes on the yellow pad and that night dictate everything and mail the tape to Little Rock and they type it up. That may have been the biggest change that the Criminal Division ever had. I think it was the biggest and best change. They kind of came in-

to the twentieth century [with the implementation of these new reporting methods].

[W.A.] Tudor set that up. It is my understanding that Ralph Scott wanted him to setup a system. [W.A.] Tudor borrowed heavily from the FBI. He set up the dictation of reports and sending them to central typing. This was also the year that we went into NCIC [National Crime Information Center]. I think we were one of the first state police agencies to get into the NCIC. I am sure that since Ralph Scott was a retired FBI agent he had a big inside track. That [NCIC] was really neat. We could get wanted information on people through this system if he was entered into the NCIC. This was a big safety factor because it could give you an idea of who you had stopped. The addition of [computerized] license checks came a little later. If I was checking a license in Boone County, I would call a [Boone County] dispatcher and ask them to run me a "28," which was a license check. So the radio operator would copy that down a piece of yellow pad. He had a printout of all of the Boone County license plates and he would go through that and find my license plate. He could then tell me who it belong to, where they lived, and what type of car it was registered to. That was relatively fast. But if we got one out of Crittenden County or somewhere, our radio operator would have to call Forrest City and have them contact Crittenden County on the local radio to do the same thing. Then the information would have to pass from Crittenden County to Forrest City to Harrison and then down to me. This could take several minutes and sometimes the next day.

ML: In 1968, did they call you down to Memphis or Pine Bluff to quell any of the riots following the Martin Luther King assassination?

KM: They sent thirty-three troopers to Memphis after Martin Luther King was killed, but I wasn't one of them. My buddy out of Harrison was. The only reason I didn't go was because I was in Hot Springs working the races, which I didn't want to do. We had problems in Hot Springs that night. We were out all night on little flare-ups there. In Pine Bluff we had a quite serious flare-up. That was the first real "biggie" that I recall. We

had our own problems. We had problems at Blytheville, ASU [Arkansas State University], Forrest City and Marianna. When you are in criminal work it is a little different than when you are in patrol. At Forrest City for example, when we had so-called racial disturbances down there, the first thing they did was yell for the State Police. We sent people down from Jonesboro; Forrest City had its own troop; some came over from Little Rock. The troopers are the first in. Their job is to break up any fighting. If there are curfews initiated they patrol the streets. Usually you would have a trooper in the car with a local [officer]. Since I was in the Criminal Division I would go down by myself—or sometimes there were three or four of us and we would try to collect intelligence on what might be going to happen. If crimes had been committed we would be working them to make cases against the perpetrator. We didn't take part in the stand-off between two groups. We did footwork trying to put together who started it and why. Our reports always went to the headquarters and the Governor's office was always very interested in reviewing them to see if they could or should do anything in the future to prevent it from happening. In the late-sixties and early-seventies, I worked with the FBI—primarily out of Forrest City—on the Ku Klux Klan. There were about five of us paired up with five FBI agents and we did a lot of interviews with “klukkers” as we called them. In those years [there] was a hotbed of Klan action. We pretty well dissolved it by identifying them and getting their names out. There weren't many criminal arrests, but we dissolved the Klan. We occasionally had problems with the prison system. The troopers would be the first in to put it down and control it. The CID would then go in and investigate and determine who started it.

ML: Did you ever get much cooperation from the criminals?

KM: If they were blaming the administrative people, they would talk. If you were down there on an inmate-to-inmate crime it was tough to work because they would clam up. I had a tough time communicating with them because they have a language all their own. They

have a lot of terms that you don't hear on the outside world. We had an investigator that was assigned to the Cummins Prison and actually lived there for a few years and he could talk their language. His name was Jack Ursery. He worked the prison system for several years.

ML: In 1970, Sweet Willie Wine walked from Memphis to Little Rock. W.A. Tudor talked about this quite a bit.

KM: He lived with him [laughs]. I wasn't part of that. I was in Jonesboro. I think Tudor practically walked with him. It was kind of big then. [Returning to the prison system] The prison system was run almost entirely by inmates. You have very few free-world people around. When Rockefeller came in as Governor he was making changes and the State Police took over the prison system. Tucker was the first complex they took over. I was one of the first troopers they sent down there. R.E. Brown was the Captain who came over from Little Rock. They sent Captain Brown over to be the big man and they sent a few troopers down to assist him. I had to be there at 6:00 a.m. and I was working the night shift, so I got off at 2:00 a.m. I immediately headed for Tucker and I got there just before my deadline. When I rolled up to the gate the inmates still controlled it. I was stopped at the gate by an inmate wearing his khaki uniform and pistol. It turned out that this particular inmate was a classmate of mine at Charleston. Captain Brown told us that we were taking over the system and that we would be relieving the guards of all of their side arms, shotguns, and rifles. We would man all of the posts that they were manning and they would go back into the lockup. That was a pretty big day in my eyes. I was pretty new, and here we were taking back the prison system. We didn't have any problems. Thomas Merton [was hired by] Rockefeller and he was a well educated criminologist. I am not a fan of his. Rockefeller made a big mistake in hiring him—not in reforming the prison system, but in hiring him. He had not been hired when the State Police took Tucker. He was hired shortly thereafter and he went over to Cummins. We stayed

there until they could hire free-world guards and then we left. We ran twelve-hour shifts around the clock. We stayed at the “big house,” which was a regular two-story residence. I don’t remember how many inmates they had at that time. I do remember that whenever we went back to mingle with the prisoners they took our arms (weapons). I was surprised because I thought they would want us armed. The reason was that if they decided to take you hostage you wouldn’t give them any weapons. We had to mingle with the inmates. They had the lockup areas, kind of like dorms, that would hold one hundred and twenty prisoners. We would also work the gates and fences outside. If they had a problem we would listen to them and if we saw a problem we would report it.

ML: That doesn’t sound like something you were trained to do. It seems like two different jobs [being a State Police trooper and a prison guard].

KM: We weren’t trained to be prison people. We were trained to take care of critical, sudden type situations. All of those people that were there had been captured by us or other people, so it wasn’t really that much different. That is something I would not want to be—a prison guard. They don’t have good working conditions.

ML: When did you become commander of the CID?

KM: 1978, I guess. Quimby Johnson was promoted to major of the Criminal Division after me.

ML: What would be your typical day as commander of the CID?

KM: We had investigators throughout the state. You were basically an office person, which I didn’t like. I really liked working with people. I especially liked working in the Criminal Division. It was where I made all of my rank. When I made sergeant, I was still an investigator. When I made Lieutenant they brought me to Little Rock and put me at a desk in charge of Crimes Against Persons. I would read all of the reports from all over the state that investigators were working. It included murder, rape, battery, robbery, and anything against a person. I would read them for clarity and completeness. If I thought

someone should be interviewed, I would send the investigator a “tickler” asking them to talk with certain people. I kept all of them in a “tickler” file and [would] keep track of what I had asked them to do and then check back in to make sure it had been done. I didn’t like that part because I was on the desk. If it was a big case, I would go out and work with the investigators. For example, in the early 1970s there was a big shootout at a country grocery store that killed two people and wounded a couple of others, I went out for a couple of weeks and worked with them. I would go out a lot on things like that. Around 1974, we changed the Criminal Division a little. Prior to this date, all of the field investigators reported to the Major in Little Rock or to the desks like Crimes Against People. He [the field investigator] had several people he could report to and request assistance from. George Moye, who was the polygraph operator and second in command to [W.A.] Tudor, was instrumental in changing the makeup of the Criminal Division and how they reported. When I hired on at Jonesboro, I was one of twenty-four in the whole state. During the 1970s, we just about doubled. The Majors and the people on the desks were getting a lot of calls. The thought was that we would streamline a little. It was patterned after the Texas Rangers, where we created companies—Company A, B, C and so on. Troop commanders have “X” number of counties within their domain. The criminal people were assigned four or five counties each, but all of their communications came through one phone in Little Rock—technically the Major. Since we were getting so many new investigators, the thinking was to divide [the CID] up into Companies. Company A consisted of Pulaski, White, Saline, Conway, Lonoke, Perry and it seemed like about seven counties. I got that Company. We created A first, then B, then C, and so on. Quimby Johnson was the commander down at Dumas. This changed the line of communication. Now my five or seven investigators would report to me instead of directly to the Major. Even after they started the Companies, the Major was still the top dog and things still ran through him. He was stuck in the office. The Company commanders

could still get out and do leg work. I used to open a lot cases, normally more than my investigators. I just liked the fieldwork. In July 1972, the legislature decided the State Police needed to get involved in narcotics. They gave us the authority to hire five undercover agents for the state of Arkansas. With these five we were supposed to solve the drug problem in the state of Arkansas. We were given money to hire five people and buy equipment to start on July 1, 1972. I was the first commander of the first state narcotic unit. I also got to hire them, which was very unusual because the hiring had been going through Personnel. Major Gwyn called me and told me he was bringing over one hundred applicants that qualified for troopers and looked like good people. He said he had talked with the Colonel and gotten the okay for me to hire them. I picked out a few that looked good and contacted them by phone to have them come in for an interview. I ended up hiring five—one black and four white.

ML: You had five guys: then what did you do with them?

KM: The first job was to hire them. Next was to school them. I had never worked narcotics, but I was good friends with Bernie Redd and Mike Vowell who worked for BNDD or what later became the DEA [Drug Enforcement Agency]. They were the two people in the whole state who were federal and they worked out of Little Rock. We had worked with them in the past and I was pretty good friends with them. They were pleased with the new group. They were a big help in putting together a curriculum for classes. We started a recruit school in the first of July and our five officers went to that school for the first two to four weeks and then they came to Little Rock. Then we started our narcotics school. A lot of it was taught by Bernie and Mike. I tried to teach some basic criminal things. They were taught how to identify it [narcotics]—I was there, too. They had some people from their Washington office too. The classes were taught in the old headquarters on Roosevelt Road where the penitentiary was. We had a two-week school on narcotics testing and identification and how to work undercover and make cases. When they grad-

uated, we outfitted them in these old junk cars and took their identity away from them and gave them new driver's licenses and all that. If somebody had shaken them down they could prove they were somebody else. We sent one to Helena, one to Paragould, one to Fayetteville, one to Paris and kept one in Little Rock. They were sent out to see if they could buy some dope. We weren't too successful. On top of that the legislature didn't provide buy money. We had to borrow some from the sheriff's offices, and they didn't have any money to speak of. That was our beginning though. [Howard] Bear Chandler was our handwriting expert for years and when I say this was the state's first narcotics unit it is correct. Bear gets a little testy when I say this because back in the late-sixties he ran undercover agents. In fact I did some undercover work for him. So when he hears that this [1972 narcotics task force] was the first undercover operation it kind of chaps him [Bear]. He will tell you that they worked it in the late-sixties and he is right. [But] this was the first official, separate narcotics unit. I think they still work as a unit. I think when I left the State Police they had about a hundred undercover agents. Ken McKee would be a good guy to talk to. He went up through to Major and got fired. He got reinstated about 1971 or 1972. Ralph Scott fired him and, even though I am a fan of Ralph Scott and think he was a good thing for the State Police, he had a temper. He tried to fire some troopers that shouldn't have been fired, in my opinion. For example, one night a trooper in a northern county was trying to arrest a guy for DWI [Driving While Intoxicated] and there was just the two of them out there. He couldn't get him out of the car. Eventually, he was able to wrestle him out and then they started to fight. The guy may have had a weapon, but I am not sure. The trooper hit him with his flashlight and hit him in the eye and knocked it out. Ralph Scott really came unglued over that. What he failed to realize was that this was one trooper and one guy and the trooper was fighting, probably for his life. With the FBI, almost always when they make an arrest, they already know who they are after and they take multiple agents, deputy sheriffs, and other

officers. They overwhelm the suspect, but a trooper can't do that, so sometimes you fight to survive. W.A. Tudor walked into my office and said that Ken McKee was coming back in the Criminal Division. I told him that it was good because I didn't think he should have been fired in the first place. W.A. Tudor gave him to me. He was a Major when he left and at that time I was a sergeant, so I was a little unsure about how it might work out. He went to work for me and you would have thought he was a rookie. He was great. When I went to the FBI Academy in September of 1972 for twelve weeks, he ran the narcotics unit. I think he did a better job of running it than I did. I think he stayed with the narcotics unit until he retired. Ken was a sharp dresser and nobody had a cleaner car. He was a mover and a shaker and was always going to do something.

ML: You were head of the highway patrol division for a while: talk about that.

KM: I went there in August of 1980. Colonel Harp was over the State Police. We reorganized in 1981 and went to a regional concept. I was one of three Majors and we were all three highway patrol commanders. We all worked out of Little Rock. We each had four troops. When Colonel Goodwin came on board, he revamped again. He did away with one of the regions and I had the western side and Major [Buren] Jackson had the eastern side. We had six troops each. I think that was when I got the Little Rock region. When we went to the three-region concept in 1980 we not only split the highway patrol, but we also split the CID into three regions. That was what went wrong with that concept. They [CID] didn't want to be under highway patrol, period. They had always been independent and there was a bit of a wall there. The thinking was that the investigators would first report to the troop commanders instead of Little Rock. When Colonel Goodwin came on board, he was a retired highway patrol commander, and he had heard a lot of these complaints. He dissolved that and the criminal people went back to the way they had been. One of the Majors took the criminal division back.

ML: During your time in highway patrol, the State Police started the Criminal Apprehension

Program, which seemed to be very successful until it got altered. What led up to that creation?

KM: We had five teams from troop headquarters that were on the interstate system. We listened to a presentation from two troopers out of New Mexico. They were the first ones that I am aware of that started making these sorts of [drug] arrests on the interstate. I believe they were out of Albuquerque. They were getting a lot of drug busts. These boys had a knack for sniffing that stuff out and the word was spreading. Organizations like ours were wondering what they were doing to be so successful. We invited them to Arkansas and they put on a presentation in Little Rock at one of the hotels down on the river. They gave a presentation to us and told what they were doing and how successful they were. We wanted to put something together that was similar. Georgia was also interested and they had some guys that worked I-95 and were making some pretty big hits. Myself, Major Jackson, [Lieutenant] Colonel Moye, and Major Johnson flew to Atlanta, Georgia to hear a presentation put on by the Georgia Highway Patrol. Then we began putting together our own program. The Louisiana State Police had a group they called the "Wolfpack," which they changed later because the media gave them some problems over that. We asked the Louisiana State Police if they would put together a program for us. They were happy to do that. They sent a Captain who was a great instructor. He had headed up the program in their state. They worked I-10 and some of their interstate systems. They spent a week schooling us. We chose our teams before they got there. We had talked with them beforehand and picked the type of personality that we needed. Each team had a sergeant and one or two troopers. After they were schooled they were put on the road. Their duties were regular highway patrol, but they had expertise in detecting narcotics. I was the first commander of that, and it was good because I could go to the various places and visit with my teams. What happened to my CAPs team? It kept dissolving. We kept getting threats of civil suites. I know I got named on several because

they would sue anybody they could think of. We got a lot of threats. We had some attorneys in Little Rock that were convinced we were doing everything illegal [sic] and then lying about it. We had to do an unbelievable amount of research just to satisfy their requests. That fell on me and my secretary. They were wanting numbers on race and things that we never kept records on. It seemed like we kept conceding to some of these attorneys. We would say that we weren't going to do this or that and the program rapidly eroded. It got to the point where it wasn't real effective. It really bothered me, and that is one of the reasons I retired. I just hated to see what was happening. I felt like we were giving up too much. My argument was make them take us to court and make a federal judge tell us we were wrong. We weren't wrong and there have been court rulings since that backed that up. I don't know if pressure was put on by the Attorney General's office or by the Governor's office or if our Colonel just decided that it wasn't worth it. I just know that we were losing it and I hated that because we were really making some good busts. I remember one time I got a call from a sergeant in Forrest City. I could tell that he was excited. He said, "We need to see you." I asked him if I needed to come there and he said, "No, we need to come to Little Rock." I told him if it was important to come on over. He told me he would be here in an hour. They came up to my office on the second floor of the "new" headquarters. They had a four-wheel cart carrying a blue suitcase that zips in the middle. The thing looked like it couldn't hold anything else. It had just over \$500,000 in cash! We weighed it and it weighed over eighty pounds. We put the money out on a long conference table and it was full. None of us had ever seen money like that before. We were making successful stops and busts. We had gotten to the point that we were slowing down and I think people had just decided not to do it anymore. Another reason I decided to retire was the incentive plan that the legislature put together that one year. All of us who were eligible had to leave. We referred to it as forced retirement because it practically made you retire. I had less benefits than anyone else, but it was still

too good to turn down. I wonder if our CAPs program had been going like it had [earlier] if I would have retired, because I really liked it. We were policing! It went even more downhill after I left. Then they finally put it back together by including cameras and other things. I wish they had [had] cameras when I was there. That is the greatest thing—in my opinion—for the police. [It provides] protection for both sides. We didn't have them [cameras], and they [defense attorneys] thought we were making the stop and then manufacturing probable cause. That is the attorney's job, I guess—I don't agree with the way a lot of them were doing their job. The media was not on our side on that either. The Arkansas Gazette was pretty vocal on that. They get on you if you don't make arrests and they get on you if you do. In 1983, we started the first underwater recovery team and I commanded that. I was chosen as one of the five divers even though I was an old man. Twenty-seven of us went to school up at Norfolk Lake. The trainer was Bill Burns. He put twenty-seven of us through a series of tests on that morning. In one test we had to swim a quarter of a mile carrying a buddy. In another we had to tread water or float for an hour. In another, we had to be in water over our heads, submerge and swim seventy-five feet underwater to a buoy. If you could dive and then push off it wouldn't have been so bad, but when you are treading water and have to swim seventy-five feet underwater to a buoy, it is difficult. Out of the twenty-seven there were a lot that didn't get there [to the buoy]. I know I got there because I hit the buoy and bruised my forehead and my nose! I made the cut and since I had the rank I was placed in command. I had the western highway patrol, the CAPs program, and the underwater dive team. The underwater dive team kept me out a lot.

ML: That answers most of my questions, do you know of anything that is important that I should know about?

KM: No, not really. I do remember one thing Dale Bumpers told W.A. Tudor one day. He said that the State Police appeared to be the most grumbling, griping, disorganized organ-

ization he'd ever seen, but when something happens he'd never seen anything that worked as smooth or as effective as we would work. During his time we were growing a little and getting better personnel. When I hired on you just had to have a High School diploma or a GED. You had to be five feet ten inches and weigh one hundred and seventy-five pounds. The consent decree knocked out the size. Under Ralph Scott, the State Police initiated a program requiring two years of college or you would sign an agreement that within five years you would obtain the necessary credits. We would put you in an area where you could obtain schooling. We were one of the first states to have a mandatory two-year requirement. Then the consent decree came along and eliminated all of that. When I was in Personnel, Catherine Ransel was the troubleshooter [with the Justice Department] out of Washington D.C. She came down to inspect us and I complained that we were forced to hire people that were not well educated and couldn't compose sentences and paragraphs because of this consent decree. She said that she didn't care and that we should teach them that in troop school. I asked her if we should hire a person who couldn't read just to meet our percentage. She told me yes, and that my job was to teach them to read if they couldn't. She didn't have a whole [lot] of common sense or reason—she had her instructions and that was what she had to do.

[End Of Interview]

[JD]