

Northwest Arkansas Oral History Project  
 Elwin Charles Roe, Jr. Interview Abstract  
 May 7, 2018

Interviewee	Elwin Charles Roe, Jr
Year of birth	1940
Place of birth	Viola, Fulton County, Arkansas
Interviewer	Beverley Helton
Interview date	2018-05-07
Interview location	Bella Vista Historical Museum; Bella Vista, Benton County, Arkansas
Keywords	Roe, Elwin Charles Jr Roe, Kay Roe, Preacher Roe, Mozee Clay Roe, Doc Bruce, Robert Campanella, Roy Clark, Larry Rickey, Branch Robinson, Jackie Helton, Beverley Norfolk, Baxter County, Arkansas Brooklyn Dodgers (Sports Team) Baseball Education Segregation Small town life Trail of Tears World War II
Description	<p>Elwin Charles Roe, Jr.'s interview pays tribute to six generations of his family. Roe's ancestors lived in Ireland and Scotland, some in service to Robert Bruce. Later generations migrated to Tennessee and Kentucky. Some moved on to Liberty, the town that became Norfolk, Arkansas. Other ancestors were part of the Trail of Tears, leaving it to live in Arkansas. Roe's description of his grandparents includes their time as a barnstorming baseball team and owners of a chain of grocery stores.</p> <p>Roe pays specific tribute to three family members: his grandpa (Doc Roe), Father (Preacher Roe), and Mother (Mozee Clay). Stories are told of Doc Roe tapping Roe, Jr. to be a doctor. He let Roe spend time in his office, once asking the young boy (in jest) which way to stitch a lumberjack's ear back on.</p> <p>Father, Preacher Roe, a well-known major league pitcher was famous for his spit ball, league record 22-3 season, and being a Brooklyn Dodger during the time his friend, Jackie Robinson, broke into baseball. Roe remembers this time of his life: living in Arkansas, New York, and Florida during the year and having</p>

	<p>run of Dodger Stadium with his own jersey sporting #28 Junior (Dad was #28).</p> <p>Roe refers to his Mother as both a country girl and sophisticated lady. He tells stories of her strength, love for Roe and his brother, and as a lady who showed the boys how to be educated and cultured. He remembers off-season life in 1940s Arkansas with stories of WWII rationing (beans for school lunch), arrival of TV and indoor plumbing.</p> <p>Roe graduated high school from West Plains Missouri. He then went to Southwest Missouri State where his love of debate and theater began. This love continued throughout his 26 years of teaching these subjects in southern Missouri. He retired in 2010. He and his wife Kay have five children. He spends time playing golf, looking after family, and being active in his church.</p>
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Questions or Comments	<a href="https://nwaoralhistory.org">https://nwaoralhistory.org</a>
Interview sidebar	<p>One night when the Dodgers sat down to dinner, Preacher Roe noticed Jackie Robinson and other players were not at the table. When Preacher Roe found out they (the African American players) could only eat in the restaurant's kitchen, the white Dodger players moved to the kitchen so all could eat together. From then on Dodgers were not booked at a hotel or had dinner where their separation was required. [01:00:46]</p>