

Interviewee: Curtis Campbell

Interviewer: Kaitlyn Jarnagin

Date of Interview: January 26, 2020

List of Acronyms: CC= Curtis Campbell, KJ: Kaitlyn Jarnagin

Transcript

KJ: What year was it when you turned seventeen?

CC: 1964.

KJ: Okay, when... or where were you living when you were that age?

CC: Well, part of the year I was living in Kansas City, Missouri, and the other part of the year I was living in Atchison, Kansas.

KJ: Who was living in the house with you?

CC: Everybody in the house was living.

(Laughs)

KJ: No, who was living in the house? Like your mom or your dad.

CC: I had a brother and sister and mom and dad.

KJ: What did your parents do for a living?

CC: My father was a carpenter and my mother worked at a grocery store.

KJ: What classes did you take in school during this time?

CC: Well, English and, uhh, Algebra and, uhh, hell, I don't remember. That was a long time ago. Whatever it takes to get out of high school.

KJ: What activities did you participate in school? Some clubs or sports?

CC: None.

KJ: Okay, so what did teenagers do for fun?

CC: What did I do for fun?

KJ: Yeah, well, like you and other teenagers during that time.

CC: Well, when I wasn't in school and sleeping, I was working.

KJ: For fun?

CC: Well, that's all I had time for. Once in a while, I would go fishing or hunting.

KJ: What was your form of transportation?

CC: I had a 1957 Chevrolet.

KJ: What were some popular bands or musicians, or what was your favorite?

CC: Well, the Beatles had just come on board in 1963, I believe. That was probably the most popular.

KJ: Was that your favorite?

CC: Well, it was was a favorite. I wouldn't say it was the favorite.

KJ: Do you remember any movies you liked and what were some movies that were popular during the time? Do you remember?

CC: Uhhhh..yes, I would say that "Longest Day" was a good movie, with John Wayne.

And uhh... "Umbrella Schubert"; it was kind of a foreign film. And uh...oh, "Dr.

Strangelove".

KJ: So you said you have a job. What did you do? And how much did you get paid per hour?

CC: Not much. Uh... I worked at a grocery store most of highschool and I threw papers.

By papers, I'm talking about newspapers.

KJ: How much did you get paid, or do you know?

CC: Yeah, I think my first job was a dollar and seventy-five cents an hour.

KJ: Do you remember how much you got for throwing newspapers?

CC: I think I got supper.

(Laughs)

KJ: Do you remember the price of some items? Or like anything?

CC: Bread would have been about twenty-nine cents a loaf. Um, a can of pork and beans would've been probably twelve or fifteen cents. A can of dog food was ten to eleven cents. I think hamburger was maybe twenty-nine cents.

KJ: How much was gas a gallon?

CC: Oh, shoot, cheap. Uh, I remember paying as low as nineteen cents a gallon.

KJ: Who was the president during this time?

CC: John F. Kennedy. He was the president when I was a Junior. Of course, he died, November 22, 1963.

KJ: Um, do you remember when he got assassinated?

CC: Yes, I do.

KJ: What were you doing or where were you?

CC: I was sitting in a car during the noon hour at, uh, the high school, Atchison High.

KJ: Did you or did they have people leave school when this happened?

CC: No, they did not dismiss school.

KJ: Okay. Um, well, what was going on in the news or other things going on during that time?

CC: Space Race was hot. I was always familiar with that.

KJ: Okay, anything else specific? Or do you not remember?

CC: Well, Vietnam was a hot topic and a very dangerous one.

KJ: Okay, now, so what do you remember about the Vietnam War?

CC: Um, the class ahead of me and my classmen, well, boys, were joining the National Guard so they could avoid going, um, and I did not join. I was going to go into the Air Force, and, uh, and the kids that did join that unit ended up going to Vietnam, and they were caught up in a huge battle. And a number of our young men were killed, and they suspended the draft. And, uh, I turned down an opportunity to fly, um, because I wanted to fly jets, and I was too big. I would have to find transport and I didn't want to.

KJ: That's cool! Do you remember when the Beatles came over to the United States?

CC: Oh, yes.

KJ: Do you want to tell me anything about it?

CC: Well, in 1963, everybody was deciding they were going to wear the Nola Pelt jackets and the Beetle boots. And the skin-tight jeans, white shirts, with black ties about this wide or bigger.

KJ: That's interesting. Do you remember Woodstock?

CC: Yes, that was later on, but yes. I think in 1969.

KJ: Um, what did you know about Hippies or what do you remember about Hippies?

CC: Um, they were a bunch of nuts.

(Laughs)

KJ: What about drugs?

CC: Drugs weren't around as much. They were never apart of my high school experience, nor was it in college. They weren't in the middle of the country yet. But kids coming back, men coming back from Vietnam were bringing marijuana with them. My drug of choice was Coors Light beer, Coors beer. And, yeah, I smoked cigarettes.

KJ: Um, okay. Do you remember any body bags, um, on TV?

CC: Yes, lots of them. Roughly fifty-two thousand casualties, of, um, Vietnam.

KJ: Fifty-two thousand?

CC: Roughly.

KJ: Um, do you remember anything about segregation?

CC: Do I know anything about it? Yes, I lived through it.

KJ: Okay, what do you remember about it?

CC: Uh, bussing in particular. I was living in, uh, Kansas City, Missouri, and I was at an almost all-white high school. And, uh, they started bussing back kids to their school, and white kids to their school, and it was just an absolute disaster. Black kids didn't like it and white kids didn't like it. And there were lots and lots of riots and fights, things like that going on. It was not a safe time.

KJ: Okay, do you have any other things you can think of that you remember during that time?

CC: I remember the first landing on the moon in July of 1969. That was a big deal.

Apollo 13, no, Apollo 11. Apollo 13 about didn't make it.

KJ: Well, that's all I have.

CC: Okay.

KJ: Thank-you.

CC: You're welcome.

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