

Interview with Layton Gleason, January 7, 2008

(all Q's asked by Cory Gleason, all A's given by Layton Gleason and are in bold.)

1. When you were about my age, what year was it?
1953
2. Where were you living at this time?
North of Belefont, Kansas
3. Who was living in the house with you at this time?
My folks, brothers, sisters
4. Were you going to school, or were you working? Both?
Both
5. What classes were you taking?
Oh took Typing, American History. What else? Biology...that's about it.
6. What sports/activities did you go out for?
Football, Baseball. Was a shortstop in baseball and a tackle in football.
7. What job did you have?
Drove the tractor for different neighbors and stuff
8. How much did that pay?
Five dollars a day
9. What did you use the money from your job for?
For a car. Chevy. 1952.

10. What did you do for entertainment?
Oh hell, rode horses mostly...saddlebronc riding

11. Did you watch movies, tv, or the radio? What shows do you remember?
TV. Oh let's see Amos and Andy for one thing, and Gunsmoke.

12. What did your parents do for a living?
Farmed

13. Did you have enough money?
Well, no.

14. Who was the President?
Truman

15. What was going on in the U.S.?
What the hell was going on...WWII just got over, for one thing.

16. What was going on in the world?
WWII just got over...that's too far back

17. Tell me about dust storms, jackrabbit drives, grasshopper and black widow spider plagues, Black Sunday.
I remember dust storms and jackrabbit drives in the 50's I think it was.

18. Food shortages?

No. We had our own. Had our own meat.

19. How did your mom keep dust out of your homes?

Well, you didn't, you just, you just didn't. She wet stuff down like towels and stuff.

20. Where were you when you got the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor?

You know, just barely, but I was at home. On the radio.

21. When did you enlist the army? What branch? Basic training, where?

Drafted into the 82nd as an engineer. Basic training in Fort Lenardwood, Missouri.

22. Where did you serve? What was your military job? Where were you when you heard that the war was over?

Served? All in the states. Wisconsin and Chicago. Ran a bulldozer. We was in grade school when heard the news of the end, but had many false alarms before that.

23. Did you keep letters that you got?

Yes, a few from my uncles.

24. Where the letters censored?

I don't remember.

25. Questions about battles.

Uncles told stories of times when 2200 men would go into a battle and 120 would come back.

26. Did you talk about the war when it was over?

No.

27. What was the best thing that happened to you during this time?

Heard that the war was over and family and friends were finally coming home. Big celebration at grandma's house when relatives and friends came home from the war.

28. What differences do you see between the way you grew up and the way kids today have it?

Well, A LOT EASIER for you kids these days! Jobs are easier to find and work is easier, more money, just better living.

29. If you could give advice to teenagers today, what would it be?

When you get a good job, good education, and make sure your good job has a good retirement plan.

30. Is there anything we didn't talk about that you would like to say?

One of my uncles was a POW in WWII and was 200 pounds going into captive and came out being 60 pounds from lack of food and nutrition. He told of other POW's being boarded up in walls and left to die there. Friends and three uncles that came back said that if a mouse would have ran across the floor it would have been eaten most of the time. They blew on windows to have it freeze then lick it off to wet lips. Only get so much gas. Gas stamps.