

The background of the cover is a photograph of the Gray County Veterans Memorial. It features a tall flagpole with an American flag in the center, flanked by two semi-circular structures with columns. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a clear blue sky.

# Gray County Veterans Memorial & Archive

## ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

**Fredrick P. Kramer**

*August 22, 2014*

INTERVIEW  
YEAR

**Fredrick P. Kramer**  
**2014**

## **GRAY COUNTY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW**

NAME: **Fredrick P. Kramer**  
DATE: **August 22, 2014**  
PLACE: **Cimarron, KS**

INTERVIEWER: **Kathleen Holt**                      TECHNOLOGY: **George Martinez**

PROJECT SERIES: **Korean Era Oral History Project for Gray County**

FUNDING: **This project is funded in part by a Kansas Heritage grant from the Kansas Humanities Council (KHC) for the “Gray County Korean War Veterans Oral History Project.” The Kansas Humanities Council is a nonprofit organization that supports community-based cultural programs, serves as a financial resource through an active grant-making program, and encourages Kansans to engage in the civic and cultural life of their communities.**

### **BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:**

**Frederick (Freddie) Kramer was born December 20, 1933, in Cimarron, Kansas, where he was raised and still resides. Mr. Kramer was drafted into the U.S. Army and served from June, 1953 to July, 1961. He was two years active duty with six years in the Reserve. A PFC, Kramer was a helicopter mechanic US 55-415-127 1955 MOS. He entered the service just two weeks before the Korean War ended. He was at Fort Riley, Kansas and was at Chafee in Arkansas for Basic, but was pulled for the Helicopter School at Fort Sill, OK. After that, Kramer was transferred to Fort Sam in San Antonio, TX and to Brocks Air Force Base in Texas.**

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED: **Helicopters; Burn Unit Stateside**

COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW:

SOUND RECORDING: **Digital**

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: **27:41**

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: **None**

TRANSCRIPT: **24 pages**

**ORAL HISTORY**  
**Frederick P. Kramer**  
**Interview Date: August 22, 2014**

**Interviewer: Kathleen Holt (KMH)**  
**Interviewee: Fredrick P. Kramer (FPK)**

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**GM (TECHNICIAN)** - We're recording.

**KMH** – Okay. This is Kathleen Holt. I'm interviewing Freddie P. Kramer at the Cimarron City Library in Cimarron, Kansas. The date is August 22, 2014, and it is about 2:30 in the afternoon. Freddie, why don't you go ahead and introduce yourself and then we'll get to talking.

**FPK** – Okay. My name is Fredrick P. Kramer, K-r-a-m-e-r, and I live in Cimarron, Kansas, 411 North Main, P O Box 728, and I was born and raised in Cimarron.

**KMH** - You said you were born right across the street from where you live.

**FPK** - Right across the street.

**KMH** – Wow.

**FPK** - And my birthdate is December 20, 1933, and I was in the U.S. Army and, and I was drafted in 1953, and I went to Fort Riley KS to be sworn in and for my clothing issue.

**KMH** - How did you find out you were drafted? [Laughter.]

**FPK** - Notice through the mail. [Laughter.]

**KMH** – Yup.

**FPK** - Yeah, well, actually, I Richard Warner got drafted, and was going in, and they had a buddy system then, and you could volunteer for the draft and go with them.

**KMH** – Oh.

**FPK** - And Art Thomas and I went, volunteered we went to the Army. Richard got tonsillitis and stayed home for three months.

**KMH** - Oh no, and the two of you went on?

**FPK** - Yeah, we went, we went on.

**KMH** - Oh my gosh.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Did you get to stay together then, was that part of the deal?

**FPK** - For ten weeks.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - Then I, I went to helicopter school and, Art went in he was in, in supply.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - That could've been a good deal, huh? [Laughter.]

**FPK** - It was for him.

**KMH** - Yeah, so you, where did you go to basic training then?

**FPK** - Camp Chaffee, Arkansas.

**KMH** - Wow, was, had you traveled a lot out of state before that or?

**FPK** - Me.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - Oh yeah, Colorado, California, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Illinois.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - Illinois. I wasn't a worldwide traveler or anything, but I . . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - I went to other states.

**KMH** - Going to Arkansas was not a big deal.

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - Yeah. That was the first time ever there? Yeah, what did you think of it?

**FPK** - It's hot and windy and dry.

**KMH** – Oh.

**FPK** - It wasn't good. [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Not good.

**FPK** - Hard work. When I went in to the, Army and I went to basic, I weighed 145 pounds. When I got out of basic training, I weighed 168 pounds.

**KMH** - Oh my gosh.

**FPK** - And we worked hard in basic.

**KMH** - Bulk up huh?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Was it the food or the exercise? The muscle?

**FPK** - Well, I had three regular meals I guess and, and, what we had to drink.

**KMH** - Yeah, that might have had something to do with it. What, what was your impression of basic?

**FPK** - Well, you know, we went to the rifle range a lot.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And, I wore glasses most of my life and I had a pair of glasses from the Army. I was shooting an M-1, and I had a "Medal of Marksmanship." And my eyes got tired so I put my glasses on and all I got was "Maggie's Drawers".

**KMH** - What?

**FPK** - I was shooting high to the right! [Laughter.] They called it "Maggie's Drawers".

**KMH** - Maggie's drawers. I've never heard that term.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** – High and to the right.

**FPK** - High and to the right.

**KMH** – [Laughter.] Did they replace your glasses or did they put you in a different job?

**FPK** – No. No, it wasn't the glasses. I sighted the rifle without 'em.

**KMH** - I see, I see.

**FPK** - And when I put them on, I'd see different.

**KMH** - I see. Did you get over that? [Laughter.]

**FPK** - Oh yeah. Yeah, that's no problem.

**KMH** - So you were in basic training about how long?

**FPK** - Ten weeks.

**KMH** - Ten weeks, then what?

**FPK** - Then I was transferred to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, to helicopter school.

**KMH** - Uh hum. Did that surprise you? Was it something you kind of wanted to do?

**FPK** - Oh no. I took aeronautics in high school, and I. . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - I tested well in the tests they gave us.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - When we went in.

**KMH** - Where'd you go to high school?

**FPK** - CHS.

**KMH** - Really? We had Aeronautics then?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - My gosh.

**FPK** - One year . . .

**KMH** - I had no idea, one year.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Boy that ended up being formative for you, didn't it?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Goodness sakes, so --

**FPK** - It gave me a good career in the Army.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah, Fort Sill. So and it's where?

**FPK** - Oklahoma.

**KMH** - What, what part? Panhandle?

**FPK** - Oh, it's about 300 miles straight south of here.

**KMH** - Oh, OK. So what was helicopter school like? Did you live in a barrack?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And we marched back and forth to school every day.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And then they were training helicopter pilots there, also.

**KMH** - Oh, Okay.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - So this was what year, '50?

**FPK** - 1953.

**KMH** - '53.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - And, so, how did that fit with the Korean war or conflict?

**FPK** - I went in two full weeks before it was over. Then they signed the armistice.

**KMH** - Goodness, right before.

**FPK** - Yup.

**KMH** - But did you? What was that process then?

**FPK** - You know, I don't really remember.

**KMH** - Huh.

**FPK** - But when we got out of helicopter school, we were headed to the Far East.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - And, two boys went AWOL out of school and they brought them back and sent them to Korea in mine and this other kid's place, 'cuz we had the top grades in the school.

**KMH** - Oh my gosh.

**FPK** - And from there I went to Fort Hood, Texas. We put together ten helicopters together for the National Guard.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - And when we got them done, I went to Fort Sam Houston. And, then we formed a new outfit called the 82<sup>nd</sup> Medical Helicopter Detachment which is like the show M.A.S.H.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - You know those helicopters?

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And well, what we did down there was -- they brought burn patients in to Fort Sam.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And we would pick 'em up from the airplanes and fly 'em to Fort Sam. And also when a downed air plane from Kelly or Lackland -- which ever one's an airfield -- I think it's Kelly -- and, we would go out and search for it.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - But, then, I was stationed at Brooks Air Force Base in San Antonio and it was an airbase for National Guard.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - Had a squadron of P-51 fighters down there.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - Watched them fly every day.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - And I basically flew about every day.



**KMH** - Wow, on a helicopter.

**FPK** -Yeah, 'cuz I was the crew chief on it, and, it was fun.

**KMH** - Wow, from '53 until when?

**FPK** - It would've been '53 to '55.

**KMH** – Wow.

**FPK** - I got out in 1955 plus six years Reserves.

**KMH** - Every day -- what was that like flying burn patients?

**FPK** - We just put 'em in little pod.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - Strap 'em in and on a stretcher.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And haul 'em and the medics were there to take them off.

**KMH** - Yeah, wow.

**FPK** - Medics put them on.

**KMH** – Yeah.

**FPK** - We didn't -- we just hauled them.

**KMH** - So where were they coming from?

**FPK** – Korea or wherever they got burned.

**KMH** – Huh.

**FPK** - All of them. Where ever there was a burn.

**KMH** – Wow.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - They flew them all the way back there for the burns.

**FPK** - Yeah, on “MATS” – Military Air Transport Service, you know.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah. Wow, that's pretty amazing. Um, so when you did that, you pretty much did that for that whole time period.

**FPK** - Uh hum.

**KMH** - Any kind of, adventures that stick out in your mind from that time period? Either close calls or pretty funny exciting things?

**FPK** - Well one time when I was tracking the rotor blades on the helicopter . . . We had tie downs out on our runway -- supposed to tie down. I was running the helicopter, and I took it off about '15, but I landed it safely, so. . .

**KMH** - Oh! [Laughter.]

**FPK** - But it was, you know, that was a total surprise! [Laughter.]

**KMH** - [Laughter.]

**FPK** - 'Cuz in the outfit I was in, there were only 22 people.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - And, we had five pilots and five helicopters, 12 medics and five crew chiefs.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - And the rest were . . .

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - . . . crew chiefs.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - And, it was just a small outfit, though. We had a lot of fun.

**KMH** - You must've gotten pretty close though, with that group.

**FPK** - Oh yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah. Yeah. Did you stay in touch with them after you were out?

**FPK** - For a while. Yeah. But you know it's just like everything else, you grow away from . . .

**KMH** - Uh hum. Seems like it would be so intense. So all that time, did you live in base housing?

**FPK** – No. Barracks.

**KMH** – Yeah.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - So how did day to day life take place? How'd you eat? Who did the laundry, all that kind of thing?

**FPK** - Well, fortunately, I never had to walk guard, and I never did KP. We ate in the Air Force mess halls.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And they hated us! [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Really? 'Cuz you didn't have to?

**FPK** – AP – Airforce Police -- would maybe catch us not wearing a hat you know, and give us a ticket, and they'd send it to the company commander and he'd just tear it up . [Laughter.]

**KMH** – Oh! [Laughter.]

**FPK** - 'Cuz they – See, we didn't do anything for them. They thought we did, though.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah.

**FPK** - We were just there.

**KMH** – Yeah.

**FPK** - And I guess they just called it sponging off of them.

**KMH** – [(Laughter.)]

**FPK** - I don't know.

**KMH** - Did you just like have to be on duty on call most of the time? Or did you have a regular work schedule?

**FPK** – Oh, we had a regular work schedule. Yeah we went over there every day and, and took care, cleaned them up and serviced them, got 'em ready to fly. And we were on-call.

**KMH** - Uh hum. Wow. Have you used any of those skills since? I don't see you flying around in a helicopter often. [Laughter.]

**FPK** – No. When I got discharged, I got interviewed from King Ranch, which is big.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - Most everybody knows where King Ranch is.

**KMH** – Yes.

**FPK** - They used them to heard cattle and. . .

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And check fences.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And all that, they offered me a good job, but I said no, I want to go home (Laughter).

**KMH** - Yup, yup.

**FPK** - And I also had an interview, with, with another outfit that wanted me to go to someplace out of the United States, and it was real good pay, but I still wanted to go home. [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - I'd had enough.

**KMH** - What was your communication like with your family? When you signed up, was your mom happy?

**FPK** - You know, I don't know.

**KMH** - You didn't ask?

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - Didn't talk about it?

**FPK** - I'm sure she didn't really care for it, because of, you know they were still fighting over there.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - But I was going with my buddy, Art Thomas and. . . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And so I didn't have a problem.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - But it didn't last long! [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Yeah, where did Art go?

**FPK** - He went to Korea.

**KMH** - Oh he did?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - In supply.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - But the war was over when he went over there.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah

**FPK** - So.

**KMH** - But you didn't see him much after that?

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - Then you said you were in the reserve?

**FPK** - Yeah for six years.

**KMH** - Wow, did you worry about getting called up?

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - I guess it was a little pre, pre-Vietnam, wasn't it?

**FPK** - No, I never did, I never even thought about it until I got my official orders to discharge.

**KMH** - Well, how did that come about?

**FPK** - Through the mail.

**KMH** - Oh, and tell me about that.

**FPK** - It was a big packet.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And it said "official orders" on it. U.S. Army and all that and I thought, "My gosh, I've been drafted again!"

**KMH** - Uh oh.

**FPK** - 'Cuz that is when the Vietnam was really just starting and getting going.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And helicopters over there at the time were important.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And I thought I had the right MOS to go and . . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - I thought I had been drafted then, till I opened it and got my discharge.

**KMH** - [Laughter.]

**FPK** - Then I took it down and filed it at the courthouse and had it recorded.

**KMH** - Oh good, good, you wanted that filed.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Um.

**FPK** - Oh, by the way I never ever got any rank because I moved around. I never was with a company. When I got down to Fort Sam, I was out there on one time working on the line and Major Hammit came out and said "Kramer, where are your stripes? How come you don't have them sewed on?" I said, "I don't have any. Nobody's ever given me any." And he made me a PFC right then.

**KMH** - All right!

**FPK** - He put me in for corporal but I didn't have enough time to make it.

**KMH** - Oh oh.

**FPK** - It didn't bother me. I did what I did and liked it.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah.

**FPK** - I didn't need a stripe on my arm to fly.

**KMH** - So you were, pretty close to home the whole time, I mean.

**FPK** - Well, San Antone. That's about it.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - I suppose about a thousand miles.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - But yeah, I was in the United States.

**KMH** - Did you exchange mail? I mean what was communication like in those days?

**FPK** - Oh great.

**KMH** - Yeah?

**FPK** - Yeah, I could call. We had a telephone in our barracks.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - You know we didn't have a lot of people in a two story barracks (Laughter).

**KMH** - Yeah, oh my gosh.

**FPK** - And, I got letters from home, you know, from sisters and my mother.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - I have a big family.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - You know there was ten of us.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - And, my sisters would send me cookies, and they, they would pack them in popcorn, well the popcorn always went first (Laughter).

**KMH** - Oh yeah (Laughter).

**FPK** - And then we ate the cookies.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - And you, you share them with everybody.

**KMH** - Yeah, that's pretty good, I hadn't thought of that advantage, of a big family.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Did you write letters back?

**FPK** - No, I made telephone calls.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - I didn't like writing letters. I did write some letters.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - Yeah, but I never was very good at it.

**KMH** - Yeah. Did people save the letters? Do you know?

**FPK** - Not to my knowledge.

**KMH** - Huh.

**FPK** - Could be.

**KMH** - They might show up some day. [Laughter.]

**FPK** - My brother, Squirt, he was in World War II and his letters that he wrote home were all saved.

**KMH** - Wow, where was he?

**FPK** - He was with Patton in World War II and with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division.

**KMH** - Oh, oh

**FPK** - And he -- back when he went in, you could sign up for three years or the duration and six months.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - He said he thought the war would be over real quick, but he was in, I think, six years.

**KMH** - Oh my gosh.

**FPK** - And . . .



**KMH** - Oh my goodness.

**FPK** - Yeah, and he got a lot of experience.

**KMH** - He got surprised, didn't he?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Wow. So what birth order were you in the family? Were you the youngest?

**FPK** - Actually, I was the youngest boy.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - And next the youngest. I have a younger sister.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - She's the baby of the family. She's seventy eight.

**KMH** - Wow. [Laughter.] Were there any other members of your family -- you mentioned your brother Squirt in World War II. Any other members of your family in the military?

**FPK** - Yes, my brother Pete.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - He went in the Navy in forty nine.

**KMH** - Oh, Okay.

**FPK** - And he made two trips to Korea.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - He was on a repair ship.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - On a ship.

**KMH** - Uh huh. Is he still living?

**FPK** - No, he died of cancer.

**KMH** - Oh.

**FPK** - And everybody thought it was probably that asbestos.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - 'Cuz he was a pipe fitter.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And he was in it. Never wore masks or anything.

**KMH** - Oh yeah, yeah.

**FPK** - And, he died of lymphoma.

**KMH** - Wow, yeah. There are all kinds of things like that.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Hu. When you came out of the military, 'cuz you were in the Reserve, did they talk to you anything about telling your story or give you any advice about that, or did you stay in any kind of Veterans group or anything?

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - Participate?

**FPK** - I've belong with the American Legion for . . .

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - Probably 60 years now.

**KMH** - Uh huh, yeah.

**FPK** - And, nah, they didn't talk to us about much. They tried to get us to re-enlist.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - That was a waste there.

**KMH** - Yeah. What do you tell your family members about that time?

**FPK** - Not much. I wasn't any hero or anything, I just. . .

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - I just served.

**KMH** - Did you use any of those skills? *[shaking head]* Not a one of them? Not one, but would you fix my helicopter if I ask you to? *[Laughter.]*

**FPK** - I probably forgot how. [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Let me look and see here. What was it like when you were away from home to celebrate holidays and things like that?

**FPK** - That's the loneliest time when it's not around family.

**KMH** - Uh hum. Did you all get together and do things or what?

**FPK** - No. My mom and Art's mom and dad came to Camp Chaffee when we were in basic to see us.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - That's the only time. I got to come home on leave you know.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - Leave.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And I'd come home.

**KMH** - It sounds like you were home sick some of that time.

**FPK** - Hmm, not really. I had activity all the time.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And we had everything we needed on the base.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - Movies and. . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And, PXs.

**KMH** - Uh hum. When did you get married in that time period?

**FPK** - Uh, 1964.

**KMH** - So after you came back?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - I even went back to college after I got out.

**KMH** - Really?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah? Is that how you got in your current -- what is your current career?

**FPK** - I'm a . . .

**KMH** - Like I don't know.

**FPK** - I have an insurance agency. I still have it. I still work.

**KMH** - Uh hum. Yeah.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Well, good.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Everyday?

**FPK** - Everyday.

**KMH** - Well, good! How did you get into that? When you came back you just . .

**FPK** - Well, I liked road construction. I ran a road grader and little bulldozer and all that, and I liked that, but, I could see there's no future in it because when the job was over it was, "We'll call you when they have another job."

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - It was nothing permanent .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - So, I decided I would go to college and get some education and then I was a book keeper at the Co-op.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - For four years.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - And I was down there and I got an opportunity to work for an insurance company, as an agent.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And I, I could see a future there, and I took it.

**KMH** - Wow.

**FPK** - Where'd you go to school?

**FPK** - Me?

**KMH** - When you came back.

**FPK** - Dodge City Juco.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Uh huh. We've got a couple of those.

**FPK** - Yeah, I've got a lot of diplomas. [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Yeah?

**FPK** - I went to book keeping school in Manhattan for the Co-op.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And I got a helicopter . ...

**KMH** - Yes.

**FPK** - You know, diploma.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And I got a high school diploma.

**KMH** - Yes.

**FPK** - And a college diploma! [Laughter.] I never put a whole lot in to use when I got into the insurance business.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - It was all a new education.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And, company schools and . . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - You know.

**KMH** - Uh hum. Were any of your kids in the military?

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - Fortunately, no.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah, you say fortunately no, why?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah. Why do you say that?

**FPK** - Because I wouldn't, I wouldn't want anybody to be in Vietnam.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - That was a bad place.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - Agent Orange and all that.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah, a lot of people are still going through that.

**FPK** - Yes, they are.

**KMH** - Yeah, that's for sure. What do you say is the biggest lesson you learned from that experience?

**FPK** - Discipline.

**KMH** - Huh, in what sense?

**FPK** - You did what you were told.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - The penalties were stiff if you didn't. [Laughter.]

**KMH** - Uh hum. Did that influence your parenting?

**FPK** - It did, and by the way, I have three great kids.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - And one of them is an architect.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And two of them are pharmacists.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And they fight once in a while but, my daughter graduated from Manhattan. The two boys graduated from KU.

**KMH** - Oh yeah? Oh well.

**FPK** - On my tag it says, "a house divided."

**KMH** - [Laughter.] Oh! [Laughter.]

**FPK** - I've got a Jayhawk and a Cat.

**KMH** - Hey, how about that. Huh, I think the cat's outnumbered! [Laughter.]

**FPK** - They can't out number her.

**KMH** - Oh, oh! [Laughter.] She's too strong. Anything you would tell people about that experience in the context of your whole life?

**FPK** - Hmmm, I don't know. Hopefully it made me a better person.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And, you know we had all of the opportunities we wanted. We'd go to church. Did that you know. Even out in the field, we would have a mass.

**KMH** - Really?

**FPK** - Yeah, we'd go out for 36 hours and we'd have - when it was on Sunday, we'd have a mass on the back end of a pickup.

**KMH** - Wow, so you had a chaplain traveling with you?

**FPK** - Well, you know, military, yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah, yeah. Huh.

**FPK** - He wasn't traveling with us but he. . .

**KMH** - He was just there.

**FPK** - He would go out .

**KMH** - Yeah, huh, that's pretty cool.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah, what'd you do for recreation?

**FPK** - A little bit of everything! [Laughter.]

**KMH** - I see, okay. Well you were, single.

**FPK** - Oh we had, you know, in our barracks we had pool tables and . . .

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - We played a lot of cards, pinochle.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - And, you know, played poker. We'd go to town. San Antone at the time I was there was a town of 300,000.

**KMH** - Uh hum.

**FPK** - Now it's, several million.

**KMH** - Yeah.

**FPK** - There was only one loop called Loop 13.

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - Now there are a bunch of loops.

**KMH** - Oh yeah, yeah.

**FPK** - And I have never been back.

**KMH** - Really?

**FPK** - Nope.

**KMH** - Even though you did some reunions or something? You didn't ever go back to the base?

**FPK** - Never went back.



**KMH** - Huh, do you have any desire to?

**FPK** - Nope.

**KMH** - Huh.

**FPK** - I don't like big towns.

**KMH** - Oh well, okay.

**FPK** - My daughter lives in Grapevine, Texas, which is by Dallas, and traffic is awful.

**KMH** - Yes.

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - That's enough huh?

**FPK** - Yeah.

**KMH** - Yeah, well you are in the insurance business though. [Laughter.]

**FPK** - Oh yeah. I do like that.

**KMH** - Yup, so, I think that's it, anything else you want to tell us?

**FPK** - Nothing that I know of.

**KMH** - Did you know that it was 2:00 on the dot?

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - You said you had some place to go at 2:00! [Laughter.]

**FPK** - I do. [Laughter.] I appreciate your keeping track of the time!

**KMH** - Yeah well. I was just kind of chuckling, 'cuz I looked up there thinking, "He's winding up!" I think we've got all the things we need if you don't have anything else.

**FPK** - No.

**KMH** - Well okay. Again I'm Kathleen Holt. It's August 22, 2014, and I'm here with Fredrick Kramer.

**FPK** - We don't have to go through the rest of it.

**JM** - Okay, we're recording.

**FPK** – Okay. I am 81 years old and I have never in all my life -- there hasn't been a war somewhere with involving the United States. You know from the Bay of Pigs . . .

**KMH** - Uh huh.

**FPK** - To Korea to Vietnam. All these scrimmages that we're in. And why, I don't know. We get our young men killed. *[emotional]*

**KMH** – Yeah.

**FPK** - See ya.

**KMH** - Yes, thank you.