

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

With
Ken Cheesman

Conducted By

Tom Miller

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW - KEN CHEESMAN

Today is October 19, 1993. It is shortly after 10 o'clock in the morning, and my name is Tom Miller. I'm the interviewer for this interview. And we'll be talking to Ken Cheesman, long-time resident of Glendale. Ken, let's start with the first question that the City has asked us to discuss. And this is a very informal, conversational kind of interview. You can simply tell me your memories and stories of as a child, and a young man, and current man and so forth. Let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

Ken: I was born in Santa Paula, California on May 27, 1923 and six months later my father obtained a job as the Boy Scout Executive for the Verdugo Hills Council of the Boy Scouts. So we moved to Glendale in December of 1923.

Tom: Was your father in Scouting up in Santa Paula?

Ken: Yes. He was the Scout Executive there and was offered a promotion and transfer.

Tom: Great. Was that when the Boy Scout office was on Grandview as it is now?

Ken: Well no. I couldn't say where it was in 1923 but through the '30s there was a Ralphs Market located on the northwest corner of Orange and Broadway, and his office was upstairs.

Tom: Oh, in the supermarket?

Ken: It was upstairs above the market.

Tom: Oh I see.

Ken: Then just about 1940 we moved over behind where the National Guard Armory is now on, it was on, it actually faced Elk. They were there and then I went overseas. I don't know when they moved to Grandview.

Tom: Well then, I guess you've been a Glendale resident since you were six months old?

Ken: Yes. Except when I was overseas in the Marine Corps for two years, and I was away at Arizona State University in Tempe for two years. And I worked in Salt Lake City for three years as a field executive myself for the Boy Scouts.

Tom: But you've been here an awful long time.

Ken: Right.

Tom: Okay. As, back when you were a child, I realize you don't remember back as, just the age of six months but you probably remember two, three, four years old or so. How would you characterize your family's lifestyle in Glendale when you were a child?

Ken: Well, when I was five years old, my real mother died of tuberculosis in 1928 and at that time we were living at 1614 Ridgeway Drive. It's up near Cumberland and a block west of Pacific. After my mother died, my father moved and built a home at the end of (Briggs?) Terrace in La Crescenta. Then, he began courting the then Vice Principal of Roosevelt Junior High, Carol Duncan. In 1931, actually December 12, 1931 they were married and at that time we relocated in, my father bought a home at 1229 East Wilson Avenue, behind the playground of John Marshall Elementary School. So for kindergarten I went to Eugene Field(?) Elementary School. The first and second grade I attended La Crescenta Elementary School. The third grade through the sixth I attended John Marshall Elementary School.

Tom: Hmmm.

Ken: I graduated in June of 1935. In the fall of '35 I entered Woodrow Wilson Junior High and at that time it was connected to Glendale High School at Glendale High's present location. Wilson Junior High faced Verdugo Road, just a little bit south of Glendale High School. There were no tennis courts there in those days. There was Woodrow Wilson Junior High. I attended Woodrow Wilson Junior High for the seventh and eighth grade, then my father had by that time got on with the trauma of my mother actually dying in the home at 1614 Ridgeway Drive.

Then in the fall of, no, the summer of 1937 we moved back to 1614 Ridgeway Drive. I went to Toll Junior High School for the ninth grade and graduated from Toll and attended Hoover for one year and a half. Then, after I completed in February 1940, my parents again moved back to 1229 East Wilson so they could rent out 1614 Ridgeway Drive to the minister of the church we attended, The First Congregational Church of Glendale. I attended Glendale High the last year and a half graduating in June 1941. I remember working at Ralph's Market in the vegetable department on the corner of, the southeast corner of Colorado and Verdugo Road. And I was paid 50 cents an hour.

Tom: What year was this?

Ken: Well I started my job after school in the spring of '41 and then the job lasted through the summer of '41.

Tom: What were your duties? Washing and stocking?...

Ken: My main duties was following the housewives around and in those days in 1941 a housewife would come and she would get a basket at the front of the store and then I would literally have to follow her around and wait on her. If she said "I wanted two pounds of tomatoes", I bagged them for her. If she changed her mind and said "No, let's see, at five cents a pound I better only buy one pound today", why I'd have to take one pound and then if she needed so many string beans and so forth.

I remember in the summer of '41 it was a common practice to plug the watermelon for the housewife. If she liked it she could taste it. If she liked it she bought it, and if she didn't like it then I'd have to plug one till she did like it. Then the others we cut in half and sold them as halves, that's all. But in those days it was customary to allow the customers to come in and sample a fruit. They could bite into a peach or an apricot and that was just expected. Then we hoped they follow through by buying a couple of pounds of them. So I found that a very interesting job for fifty cents an hour.

Tom: Fifty cents an hour?

Ken: Yeah, that's all they paid in those days. And then in the fall of '41 I enrolled in Glendale College and I majored in Psychology and minored in Business Administration. I became manager of the Glendale College Football Team.

Tom: Really?

Ken: Guess who the coach was? His name was (Tommy Ryan?). Subsequently, his sister Pat Ryan married President Nixon.

Tom: No kidding?

Ken: Yeah! So Ryan became the brother-in-law of first the Vice President, and then the President of the United States.

Tom: Okay. That Pat Nixon?

Ken: Uhum.

Tom: She just passed away not so long ago.

Ken: Yes, that's right.

Tom: Let me ask you to back up for a moment. You mentioned Carol Duncan...

Ken: Yes.

Tom: Was the principal of Roosevelt?

Ken: No. The Vice Principal.

Tom: Vice Principal.

Ken: The principal at that time was Walter Bennett.

Tom: Do you, have you ever become acquainted with Don Duncan or Chuck Duncan, the Administrators?

Ken: I know who they are. They, at one time, he was principal of Hoover High or Glendale High.

Tom: Don Duncan is now.

Ken: Oh, okay.

Tom: Chuck Duncan just retired from the Unified... Do you have any idea, are they relatives of Carol Duncan?

Ken: I seriously doubt it. Carol Duncan's father was a medical doctor that practiced in 1905, medicine down on San Fernando Road near Brand. And at that time they called that Tropico.

Tom: So it had not been annexed to the City yet. It was a separate area?

Ken: Well I couldn't say that for sure. But it was known as Tropico.

Tom: That's where the Tropico strawberry was founded, wasn't it? didn't they discover the Tropico strawberry there?

Ken: I'm not sure. I haven't heard that one before.

Tom: You have a wonderful memory for names and dates and locations. As a child, what landmarks, no, as an adult, what landmarks do you remember really stick in your mind that you use to frequent as a child?

Ken: Where the Glendale City Hall is right today on the northwest corner of Broadway and Glendale Avenue there was an open food

and vegetable market run by a Japanese family. And you could pick up some bargains. I think they sold vegetables and fruits probably a little bit less than Ralphs. They had a little better selection. Also, on the southwest corner of Broadway and Chevy Chase, caddie corner from John Marshall Elementary School was the Old Red Car Barn for the Pacific Electric Railway. I remember we used to walk down from Wilson Avenue and catch a wooden streetcar for 5 cents. It would take us to Brand and we'd walk a half a block to the Capitol Theater and watch the movies and serial, whatever they had on for Saturday afternoon for kids. It cost 10 cents to get into the show.

Tom: Now the Capitol is still there. It's not upgraded.

Ken: No. They decided it just wasn't turning a profit.

Tom: What were your favorite movies, actors or stars back then?

Ken: Well I'm going way back now. Tom (Mix?) was my favorite western star. Later, Hopalong Cassidy. Well of course Randolph Scott in the later '30s was a very good actor. I remember John Wayne very well. Of course, John Wayne graduated from Glendale High School in 1925 and his name was Morrison at that time. His father operated a pharmacy.

Tom: Is that right? He was a pharmacist?

Ken: Yes. He picked up some extra change delivering on his bicycle prescriptions all over Glendale. I have this, we have this in the Glendale News-Press.

Tom: What about favorite parks or places were you go play ball, or...

Ken: When I was in the ninth grade at Toll, we used to come down and they had a plunge at Fremont Park. And we could go swimming.

Tom: Like a swimming pond?

Ken: Yes they did. Also, another place we swam was what was called the Arden Plunge which is in the rear, where the Moose Club is today. On just about 347 Arden in Glendale.

Tom: Now, was that a natural pond or is that man-made?

Ken: No. that was a man-built swimming pool. It wasn't very deep and it wasn't very large but it was there and I think they

only had one tennis court at that time or may be two. They didn't have it like it is today. They had, the Glendale Parks and Recreation program at that time for kids. We played (arrows?), ping-pong, horseshoes. Different things that were set up there for the kids.

Tom: And did you have a bicycle in those days? Or did you walk?

Ken: Yes. I had to earn that bicycle. I earned that bicycle. In the ninth grade my father said if you want a new bicycle you need to go out and earn it.

Tom: How much did it cost?

Ken: \$28.50 at the old Matthew's Bicycle Shop on Maryland. Now that would be where the Exchange is today. But on the west side of Maryland was Matthew's Bicycle Shop.

Tom: \$28.50?

Ken: For a brand new Columbia bicycle.

Tom: Brand new. Gee. Did you earn that money from your job at the store?

Ken: Yeah. I've got, I had such famous customers. I had the (Harriman Express?), not the Glendale News-Press. My older brother Don had the Glendale News-Press route. I had the Harriman Express route that covered from Central Avenue to Pacific, and from Kenneth Road to the mountains. And I had some very famous customers. Like Jesse Smith that operated the Ford dealership. Mr. Hough that operated at that time the Chevrolet agency on Brand Boulevard. So I was paid, I think earned approximately \$10 a month delivering the Harriman Express all over.

I remember the Johnson family which they were above Cumberland, in those days there was just a big vacant lot behind the homes were George Bentley lived at one time on Cumberland between Pacific and Ridgeway. Also Mr. (Zeke?) who ran Zeke Shoe Store, he lived directly behind us. His house faced Pacific. He had an indoor swimming pool. But he didn't ever invite us over. He was too busy working.

Tom: Now that shoe repair place is still in Glendale at Orange and Lexington?

Ken: I think it's on California. The north side near Orange.

Tom: A lot of things changed. But then there's a lot of things that stayed the same in Glendale. I had a hell job also as a kid. I ended up writing for the Herald Examiner many years later as a writer and editor. But anyway, this is your interview, not mine. What other...Brand Park, did you ever go to Brand Park? The other landmarks?

Ken: Yes. Yes. Now, in 1938 and '39 there was a, the reservoir is still there today. It was a huge, it was full of water in those days. Someone on Ridgeway Drive that was become in their 80s I believe, they gave me a canoe, an old canoe. We used to take that old canoe up and actually paddle around. That's how large the reservoir was.

At that time there was a private family living in the Brand Estate. As long as we didn't bother them, they raised chickens, their caretakers raised chickens over on the west side of what would now be Brand Park. There was a city road going up to the rest of it. I remember the big white mansion, where the (Bayless?) family lived, Bayless Cadillac. They lived in a big white mansion, two-story Mediterranean mansion just west of Brand Park.

Tom: I've seen that mansion many times but I didn't realize that was the Bayless mansion. So, you've done a lot of Brand Park trips?

Ken: Yeah. We hiked all around. Then another place we hiked was, my first cousin by marriage was Edward Cate and his father was the manager of all business activities for the Glendale Unified School District. His name was John Cate. I used to go up and visit my cousin and we would go crawdad fishing on what is today Verdugo Park. The river still runs through there when there's enough water.

But in the '30s we had a big flood. I think it was 1934 that drainage system wasn't that good in Glendale at that time. The water was from above the curb on both sides coming down Chevy Chase Drive. That's how high the water got. So therefore, that reservoir I was talking about in Brand Park was flowing also. There was a large stream and a small, well I couldn't call it a lake, but a small pond in Verdugo Park where we would go buy a nickel's worth of liver, that's all. Just a nickel's worth and tie it on to a string and the crawdad would attack that, we'd pull him in. And they were good eating.

Tom: Took 'em home?

Ken: Yes.

Tom: How big? 3 or 4 inches?

Ken: Oh yeah, about 6 inches wide. And they could bite with those claws, they could get you if you weren't careful. I remember those.

Tom: Do you have any scars left on your fingers?

Ken: No. They weren't that close. I just had to watch myself.

Tom: Now, you've talked about your schooling. And you've attended probably half of the schools in Glendale or maybe at least in those days, what do you recall about the student bodies? Hoover and Glendale, especially you having gone to both Hoover and Glendale. How would you contrast the two schools, the student bodies?

Ken: Okay. In my day in 1939 and '40, even though I lived in the so-called wealthy area, my father was far from wealthy. He was the Boy Scout Executive and that's a non-profit corporation. But other kids, they called it kind of a clique. Which kids cliqued. I noticed that Hoover High in particular more so than at Glendale High. They had their wealthy kids cliqued and unless you were from a certain area in Glendale, you just went to that particular clique. Or if you were a star at sports, I remember. I think his name was George Treaty(?). Could run a 100-yard dash in 9.8 which was very fast in those days.

And then I remember I used to like to go, I finished my paper route as fast as I could in the spring so I could go watch the track meet. And Vic (Ramsay?) is probably the best track coach that Glendale has ever seen at either school. His track team usually won. They beat Glendale High when I was a senior I remember that. I remember in 1941, Hoover High School had the All-CIF championship basketball team. Now those kids had played from the eight grade on up at the YMCA. And by the way as a boy, of course I belonged with the Boy Scouts but I also belong with the YMCA and that's, through a friend I learned how to swim.

At Glendale High, I don't know, would seem more friendly. Of course I have gone through most of my school with many of them that came out of John Marshall. And of course they remember me from Wilson High. In the yearbook, it says Kenny from Hoover High. Those schools as far as I'm concerned were

excellent in those days. I felt frankly more comfortable at Glendale High.

Tom: Now, as you talked about athletics, certainly you must have been a pretty good athlete. Riding a bicycle, you must have been in great shape as a kid.

Ken: Actually, I run out for city track for Hoover High, I run out to run the 660. Coach Butterfield was the coach. By the time I had run the 440 I was just out of gas and so I never made the track team. I was not an athlete. I took boxing for a year at Hoover High under Coach Crow. There was one of the best coaches Glendale ever had also. He was so under-standing.

In the ninth grade and then going into the tenth, I was the little 97-pound weakling that they showed at the Atlas commercial. I was just a little guy. I went once to Coach Crow and I was admiring the men that were lifting weights. Young men, they were seventeen and eighteen, seniors and juniors at Hoover. And I said, "How can I get a build like that?" Just pointed at the equipment and said "There it is. It's up to you. No one can give you a build like that. You've got to earn it."

Then I told him about a kid, every time he saw me, he would cork me at the arm and say "Hi Cheesy." And I didn't like that and I didn't tattle, I simply told Coach Crow what was happening. And he said "Well, why don't you sign up for boxing?" So I did. I took a year of boxing. My brother took wrestling, Don, who later operated Don's TV on the northwest corner of Brand and Harvard. That's my brother. So he took wrestling and I took boxing.

About, after I transferred over to Glendale High, this boy saw me again. I hadn't seen him for over a year. And he'd come up and tried to cork me. And I hauled off and beat the heck out of him. Nothing felt better. He said, "My gosh what happened? Where did you learn how to fight?" I said "Never your mind, don't ever hit me again."

Tom: And he never did?

Ken: No. That felt good. That was, thanks to Coach Crow.

Tom: Well, it's thanks to you. He simply guided you but you did it.

- Ken: And I went to go out for basketball. Coaches were rather blunt in those days, and Coach Butterfield said "Cheesman, you're just too clumsy. You couldn't make it". When I watched, again, when I wasn't taking boxing, my favorite sport to participate in, we were required to take fifty minutes of gym everyday. And I like to play basketball. That was my favorite sport to play, actually play. But I was never good enough and when I watched our team play I knew right away I'd never get in. As Coach Butterfield said I was just too clumsy. I didn't have the coordination that was required.
- Tom: Sounds like you got into plenty of other things. Scouting, paper routes, Ralphs job, and all the rest of the things.
- Ken: Speaking of athletics, I'll never forget Dick ??? who could run the mile when, that was in the spring of 1941. He could run the mile in 4 minutes, 38 seconds. He would run three and a half laps of a mile and then he'd hold up his arm like that, like almost like a ???. Then he would sprint in as if he was running the 220. For the last 220 yards he would sprint in. Our runner from Glendale High was Jesus ???. We called him Jesse. Today Jesse runs the Glenoaks Garden Supply on the southwest corner of Glenoaks and Pacific. Jesse could not beat Dick. But he beat others in other track meets. The track coach at Glendale High was Lanier ???. He was also a good coach. But I think related to Dick a little better.
- Tom: Let's back up to high school and then come forward a bit to your young adulthood and you know, your current life. You were in Boy Scouts. Your father was a Scout Executive. How high did you achieve? Were you an Eagle Scout?
- Ken: No. I became a Star Scout. That's as high as I could go. I think the Eagle Scout in those days, you had to be able to pass lifesaving. I just wasn't that good of a swimmer. I didn't learn how to swim 'til I was 12 years old.
- Tom: Was it in one of those plunges?
- Ken: Yes. Between the Arden Club and the YMCA, a friend of mine whose father owned the Crystal Ice Plant. People may remember where the Mormon Statehouse(?) is today on the southside of Wilson Avenue just west of Chevy Chase. That was the Crystal Ice Plant. All through the '20s and '30s. Robbie was my best friend all through John Marshall.
- Tom: What was his last name?

- Ken: Johnston. They were a wonderful family. I don't know if you want me to tell about that family.
- Tom: Whatever you'd like to talk about.
- Ken: Well, Johnston, DW, came from Ireland and his wife (Fredricka?) came from Poland. They met in the 1898 Gold Rush in Alaska. And everything that man touched turned to gold. First they had an ice plant in Santa Maria, and they came down and bought the Crystal Ice Plant and ran that. Subsequently, they bought three ice plants around Phoenix, Arizona. They bought a 180-acre ranch about three of 'em south of Blythe in a little town called (Ripley?). They were extremely successful people and they were both immigrants to this country. The ??? family lived next door and that was the mother's brother. Their son, Roy graduated only from Glendale College. Didn't go to a four year college. He became a general in World War II in the Air Force. He was just a natural leader. It was a very fine family.
- Tom: Well you went to Hoover, and then to Glendale. You graduated from Glendale in 19..., what year?
- Ken: I graduated from Glendale in June of '41.
- Tom: '41 and you enrolled in Glendale College, Psychology and a minor in Business Administration?
- Ken: Yes. And then I dropped out of school for six months. I was kind of confused then. My father and President Roosevelt at that time urged anyone in college to stay in college. But I had this girlfriend I met from Oklahoma that lived in Lancaster. So I dropped out of school and moved up to Lancaster living in a separate apartment, actually a chicken ranch.
- I worked at the Safeway store again for \$25 a week. There were no unions then. They would force you to clock out, say, six o'clock each weekday and then they would have you work until six thirty if you wanted to keep your job. You had to sweep up the store. And on a Saturday night, you clocked out at 9, but then you had to work there till about a quarter of ten mopping the floors. I'll never forget that. At Lancaster. Well I can understand why there's unions, believe me.
- Tom: So you worked up there for how long?

- Ken: I'd say roughly three months. And then my father obtained a job for me in the summer of '42 helping to build a road to Mt. Wilson in La Canada. We lived in an old CCC camp that had been abandoned. It's up on, the Los Angeles City School District owns it now. It was called Clear Creek Camp. When you go up to, go up Angeles Crest Highway, and instead of continuing on to Wrightwood or Switzer Falls you turn left to Palmdale. It's a mile down the road to your left after you've made the turn off to Palmdale. They paid us ninety dollars a month plus room and board. Your room consisted of, you slept in a sleeping bag in a CCC bunk. That was a pick and shovel job. It was hard labor. And they worked six days a week. They did feed us good meals.
- Tom: And there were showers I take it?
- Ken: Yes, they had showers there and all, CCC camp. Then in the fall, I guess my conscience began hurting me. Everytime I go down on, after you were through. I think we finished come to think of it around noon on Saturday. So they let us have off on the weekend except that we had to be at work at 8 o'clock on Monday morning for sure. So what we did was our own business. I had a '37 Ford convertible then. I was dating at that time a girl by the name of Gloria. Her father was a CPA, lived on Kenneth Road. About 224 West Kenneth Road. Anyway, I'd see the servicemen in their uniform in 1932 and my conscience hurt me so bad that finally I went down and joined the Marine Corps on September 18, 1942.
- Tom: Can I ask you to back up a second? So you helped to build the road up through LaCanada and over the pass to Palmdale?
- Ken: No. I guess I didn't make myself clear. I helped build the road that led up from the Angeles Crest Highway to Mt. Wilson.
- Tom: Oh you did say that.
- Ken: But we did live on the road that you turn left to go to Palmdale. We lived there in an old CCC camp that's now operated by the City of Los Angeles school system.
- Tom: Oh, okay, you did say that. So you left that job and joined the Marine Corps.
- Ken: Yes, and then I was stationed in San Diego. And then I went to Quartermaster School after boot camp and then we went overseas in April of 1943. We were all guessing, where are they gonna take us? Which one of the islands in the South

Pacific are they taking us to? We knew we were going to some South Pacific Island. We ended up in New Caledonia which forms a triangle with New Zealand and Australia.

Then I did MP duty but not the kind that goes around and arrests disorderly servicemen. I was in an MP Company that guarded government property. We marched around all night with a rifle and protecting it from anyone who might try to steal from us. Then the captain found out that I could type 50 words a minute and he asked if I wanted an 8 in the morning till 5 job as one of the company clerks. There was the top sergeant and then a corporal and myself. I was a private at the time. I passed there, they had a written test in those days. I had to pass that to become a Pfc. So I was a company clerk overseas for I'd say eighteen months of the two years I was over there.

Tom: Now, how did you learn to type 50 words a minute?

Ken: We had a very strict typing teacher in Wilson Junior High, Mrs. Tate. She'd come around and if you weren't typing she'd smack your wrist with a ruler. You can't do that these days. They did. Believe me, I picked up typing, then I took another year from a Mrs. Hoffman in Toll Junior High. So I had typing in eight grade and the ninth. The two years of typing in the Glendale schools, and I got very proficient in typing and I could still to this day, I can type about 50 words a minute.

Tom: No kidding?

Ken: That was good in the Marine Corps.

Tom: I would think so.

Ken: So then, after Guadalcanal was all secure, our whole company, we were at headquarters company under Colonel Lesser. We were backing up the First Marine Division. We were their backup. We furnished their supplies and everything. I ended up in a motor transport company up on Guadalcanal starting in January of '45. Then on the point system, I remember the Navy, they had, they've got to come home eighteen months. But in the Marine Corps you had to stay a minimum of two years. So in April of 1945, I came back from overseas and was stationed in Terminal Island in San Pedro and again did guard duty walking around.

Tom: Down in San Pedro?

Ken: Yes.

Tom: And then you were cut loose when?

Ken: In July of '45.

Tom: And where did you go? Come back to Glendale?

Ken: Well yes. I came back and lived with my parents in Glendale. I enrolled at Glendale College and went there in the fall of '45 through 1946. Then in the summer of '46 I became the student body president.

Tom: Really?

Ken: Just for the summer session of 1946. I was again majoring in Psychology under Dr. Johns. He was a wonderful Psychology and Philosophy teacher. And then in Business Administration we had Ms. Meane. She was my Business English teacher. I can't remember all the teachers. By that time, Tommy Ryan had given up being a football coach. But he was in Aeronautics. And one thing that I really admired about Tommy Ryan, he never asked for any special favors from his important brother-in-law. He stayed right there in Glendale College teaching vocational subjects.

Tom: So you were the student body president the summer of '46? And what memories do you have about that? Was it a great experience?

Ken: Well, yes. We had a big school dance. It's still there today at Glenoaks Recreation on East Glenoaks. It's a large room and we were able to rent it. We had a large dance. We used to be able to go down to what we call Castle Rock in the Santa Monica Beach. In those days you could have a weiner roast or marshmallow roast right down on the beach. So those were the two main events I remember as a student body president.

Tom: So did you stay in school and follow '46 and '47?

Ken: Well, in the fall of '46 I moved over with my friend Robbie whose parents owned the ice plant. They had purchased one in Phoenix. One reason I chose Arizona State University in Tempe was, two reasons. Number one, in those days in 1946 it was rather small. Then also I had a sure job again at a dollar an hour. Well, no. This time I was making a dollar an hour at the ice plant working for Robbie who was the manager. His father owned it.

I had met a girl, a Mormon girl here in Glendale. I don't know. I just couldn't concentrate on my studies. I dropped out of college. Came back and took on a job first as a teller trainee at the Bank of America. At that time that was on the southwest corner of Brand and Broadway. The manager was Mr. (McVicar?), an old Scotsman. He was a good boss.

I remember in those days they would not hire any man who had tattoos on his forearms. They just wouldn't. You had to wear of course a strict business suit, everyday. I was only making \$175.00 a month then. I didn't feel that was enough. I looked around and found a job as an iceman, by then Crystal Ice Plant had been sold. And they were living in Phoenix. I worked for a unionized company there for seven months as an iceman.

Tom: Now what does that mean? You made ice?

Ken: The company made the ice. You backed up your truck at 4 in the morning and loaded your truck with how much ice you need. And I know that one of our best customers was Lockheed Aircraft. In those days, for drinking water they didn't have electric coolers. They had ice coolers. You dropped half of a twenty-five pound cake which they called a shooter. You cut a shooter in half and each drinking fountain got about half every other day.

Tom: And that would melt, and it would provide the water?

Ken: No. The water came up through and the ice kept the water iced cold. It's hard for people to understand but only the wealthy could afford a refrigerator in those days. I'm talking about right after World War II. Most of the people were taking either a 25 pound block or 50 pound block of ice everyday.

Tom: Everyday?

Ken: Well, the route was every other day. Every other day.

Tom: So you use to have those big ice picks? Like scissors, they look like scissors?

Ken: Ice tongs you're speaking of? We joked that every man had his wife but the iceman had his pick, the ice pick. But anyway I was too busy to fool around.

- Tom: So you had a route and you would deliver ice. And you threw those things up over your shoulder? Is that how you use to carry them?
- Ken: Yes, that's right. We put the 50 pound block on our shoulder and we had a leather strap device that would keep the ice cold water off of our clothes. And we had to wear a uniform. The ice company required it, and they had a union. They paid us fair. I went from \$175 a month at the Bank of America as a teller trainee to where I was making close to \$235 a month. But I worked awfully hard for that. We usually finished our route around 2 in the afternoon. So we worked from 4 in the morning till 2 in the afternoon.
- Tom: What were your afternoons like then? How old were you, early 20s?
- Ken: Yes. 23 let's see. I became an iceman in December of '46 and kept the job through May of '47 and I gave it up. I went back and enrolled at Arizona State University. Then I married the Mormon girl. We went back and raised a son there. Arizona State was nice to its veterans. They had a Veterans Building and for \$27.50 a month, you got a small three room apartment including all utilities. There was no bedroom. Just a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom. They were all lined up in a row. That's the only way I could have made it through college.
- Again, Robbie by that time had come over to manage an ice plant in Tempe but there wasn't enough business where he could use me so I went to Robbie's brother-in-law who was Ken (McConnell?) who was manager at (5 Points?) Ice Plant in Phoenix. I'd drive in mostly on Saturdays and Sundays to work.
- Tom: From here? No, from Arizona State?
- Ken: From Arizona State University in Tempe from Veterans Village. I'd drive an old '36 Oldsmobile that we owned. Big black sedan. I'd drive into Robbie's ice plant. They paid me a dollar an hour. Believe me in the hot summer, that was a real nice job because I could go in and cool off once in a while.
- Tom: So you finished at Arizona State then?
- Ken: Yes. Then I graduated from Arizona State with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology in February of 1949.

Tom: Now, you had, you had been in Glendale College with Psychology and Business. Then you let it alone for awhile. Then you went to Arizona State studying Psychology and Business. Then you left to go into the Marines. Then, you started and stop, started and stop, and then you went back and finished. What prompted you to study Psychology? It's not something that everybody chooses to study?

Ken: My father thought that that would be a good subject to pursue in order to become a Boy Scout Executive. He had his mind set on doing that. After graduating from college, I remember interviewing for many different jobs. Montgomery Ward wanted to put me in a management trainee program for about \$175 a month. Safeway Stores, the ice plant business was so slow in the winter that I had to go to work at the Safeway Store again at a dollar an hour in Tempe, Arizona. That lasted through one winter. I also worked at the Tempe Post Office during Christmas vacation delivering mail all over the country.

I, also, was going to Glendale College, Mr. Green was the Postmaster at that time. All through the '30s. Into the '40s. My father knew him very well. I think they belonged to Rotary Club, the Glendale Rotary Club together. My father was a member of that club for 35 years. It took connections in those days. I was going to Glendale College, I remember even the Christmas of '41, the Christmas of '40, '41. I worked at Glendale Post Office.

Tom: Right on Broadway?

Ken: Yes. Right out of Broadway.

Tom: So you graduated college in Tempe and?

Ken: I was interviewed for several different jobs and my father kept on me and applied a lot of pressure that I should go into professional scouting. So I went through what would be like an Officer's Training School in New Jersey during the spring of 1949 while my wife and baby stayed with her mother in Salt Lake City. Upon completing their course training me to be a field executive in the Boy Scouts of America, I came out and obtained a job as a Field Executive in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Our family at that time lived in Holiday, a small community south of Salt Lake City. I had a sub-office in Murray that I handled myself. Murray, Utah. I had all those Mormons scouting as mandatory in the Mormon church. They have no

choice. If they have at least 5 kids of scouting age they have to have a Boy Scout troop. Whether the District wants it or not.

Tom: Really?

Ken: Yes. Recruiting new troops, that was not difficult. They were there. They have to do it whether they like it or not. So that was a very interesting experience in Salt Lake City. I loved working with the Mormon people. They're wonderful people.

Tom: But you didn't, scouting wasn't what you wanted to do the rest of your life?

Ken: Well, I got tired of their, they were so conservative. They started me out at \$228 a month. Then they gave me 6 cents a mile to drive my little '48 Plymouth which I might mention, I was so green I didn't even negotiate. My father loaned me \$2,000 to buy a car seeing that I was going into professional scouting. I went down to Art Cross Plymouth on Brand Boulevard in Glendale in 1948. He loaned me the money while I was here in 1948. I went down and I didn't even try to negotiate. I just asked how much the car was and he said with the tax and everything it would be \$2000. So we just wrote out a check and bought it. Later I learned that you negotiate when you buy an automobile.

That was a good little car. Little '48 Plymouth Coupe. I drove all over Salt Lake County with that car.

Tom: How long did you stay then with the Scouts up there?

Ken: I stayed 2-1/2 years and then I obtained a transfer through Uncle Bob Hill(?) who was the Boy Scout Executive of San Fernando Valley. District Executive, which was a little higher rank than a field executive. There was an opening in Antelope Valley. And, of course, I had a warm spot for that. I had lived there in 1942 in the spring. So here in November of '51 we moved and bought a home in Palmdale for \$8,000 cash. My father loaned us the money. \$8,000 cash, in Palmdale, brand new two bedroom, one bath home and then I had an office that the County of Los Angeles leased to us in Cedar Street in Lancaster. And I was the District Executive covering the area of Edwards Air Force Base, Rosamond, Kern County, Lancaster, Palmdale, and Newhall and Saugus, Castaic. I had that whole area. That was probably one of the best jobs I ever had.

My wife and I began to have difficulties and subsequently lead to divorce. One of the main reasons was I was a Camp Director. Camp (Whitsett?) in the Lower, High Sierras in the summer of '52. They took me away from my wife and child for two straight months. Women were not allowed in camps. They just had a flat rule. They have the same rule in Salt Lake City. I spent two months out of each summer up at camp near ???, Utah. I don't know, I finally got tired of it. I worked in Pasadena. From there, I transferred to Pasadena and that only lasted a year. Then I just resigned. I had no...My father wasn't very happy about it. I decided I'd rather go into the field of social work.

Tom: So, is that when you came back to Glendale?

Ken: Yes.

Tom: And that was, what year again? '57 did you say?

Ken: By then it was 1954.

Tom: And you moved back to Glendale to this home?

Ken: Oh, no. We didn't move here till 1976. This is a different wife. I divorced the other one. So, I took the, for a while I was a truck driver for the 20th Century Trucking Company. In between jobs, it wasn't that easy to get in the County. Finally, now Roger (Jessup?) used to run a big dairy down here. He subsequently became, on the Board of Supervisors for Los Angeles County and the Chairman. He and my father were close personal friends. So close that after my mother died the two families coup the kids in the back and the parents in the front. We went to Yosemite. I think that was about the summer of '30. Before my father remarried. So they were very close. Roger Jessup was President of the Verdugo Hills Council of the Boy Scouts.

Subsequently, that Camp Verdugo up in the San Bernardino Mountains, he donated a swimming pool which was known as the Roger Jessup Pool. Subsequently, Forest Service became so restrictive of what you had to have and latrines and all of that. It would have cost to bring it up to standard, it would have cost too much so the Boy Scouts had to sell that camp. Then my father met a very wealthy man known as Bill Lane(?) of the oil industry. His mansion is still there in Eagle Rock off of Hill Drive. Huge mansion of about two acres. He donated a camp, Bill Lane, through the Boy Scouts. That was in about 1945 or '46. I remember in the summer of '41 before I got, I guess after I got through with Ralphs, I

was not an Assistant Camp Director but kind of a Junior Assistant Camp Director. I was only 18 at the time. At Camp Bill Lane.

Tom: So you, in the mid '50s, you were truck driving?

Ken: Yeah. and I worked up into their sales department and claims adjustment department and then finally in May of 1958 I passed the Social Workers examination. Took that exam.

Tom: Is that for the County of L.A.?

Ken: And I began working at what we jokingly called a plantation. It was 80% black, 6 story building at the corner of Adams and Grand. 2615 South Grand. It's still there. And it's still owned by the Welfare Department. They still operate it. But I worked there and subsequently got a transfer to the San Fernando Valley District. Again, it's just a small world.

I got a case file as a social worker, covered from (Valverde) which is near the Ventura line, Saugus and Newhall, and Castaic. Well Castaic and Acton, that's the town. I had that whole file for three years of working with in those days, it wasn't AFDC. It was called Aid To Needy Children (ANC). I worked as a social worker trying to get these women to go to work and trying to locate the absent fathers of the children and meet their responsibilities.

Tom: Now, were you living in Glendale during these times?

Ken: No. At that time I was living in Granada Hills.

Tom: So you moved from Glendale to Granada Hills.

Ken: Yeah. For just a few years. We moved back to Glendale in 1965. And then I've been here ever since. But not in this home. I've been in several different homes.

Tom: Where did you live? Where did you move to in '65?

Ken: Well, okay, I lived in 321 Parkwood Lane. It's east of Valley View and north of Stocker.

Tom: Oh, yeah.

Ken: And what I wanted to mention to you was that while I was out in San Fernando Valley, social workers were only making roughly \$400 a month. So in 1960 I took the Real Estate Salesman exam and passed it and went to work for Price Real-

ty. It was just a two-man office. I earned more money in real estate than I did as a social worker. A couple of years. And then in 1965 I passed the broker's exam. And so then I worked for Ray ??? whose no longer in business. His office was in a group of stores just north of Pike's Restaurant. The old Pike's Restaurant. I worked there for a while and subsequently, this is all part-time while I worked for the County of Los Angeles. I was promoted to Supervising Social Worker in February of '64. And then it got to be too much of a drive. The job opening happened to be at my old stomping grounds at Adams and Grand. So then, we moved to Glendale in like I said, it was about June of '65. And I've been here ever since. Being in real estate, that's why I brought that into the conversation, I was constantly fixing up homes and then selling them for a profit. I lived at 1447 Hillcrest. Then we lived at 817 South Adams. Then we moved here in September of '76 and we've been here ever since.

- Tom: So until you moved here, you would move into a home and fix it up, and then sell it and then move into another home, fix that. A lot of people have done that.
- Ken: We lived at 1826 Hillside Drive for about a couple of years that's all.
- Tom: Did you do all the work yourself?
- Ken: Most of it. I could paint but if it required new carpeting, we'd go to Harold's Carpet here in Burbank who has some of the cheapest prices I know of for carpeting. At one time I owned a duplex in Burbank and I remember hiring his men to come over and carpet it and then two months later I sold it at \$6,000 profit by simply painting the outside, painting the inside, putting a new carpeting in a duplex that was right next to the railroad tracks near Lockheed Aircraft on Lincoln Avenue.
- Tom: Was all your business residential, or did you do any commercial?
- Ken: No. It was all residential.
- Tom: All residential. Many people did that I guess.
- Ken: Uhuh.
- Tom: So you got your broker's license. Did you ever open up your brokerage?

Ken: No. I was tempted to in 1963. Charles Price(?) my broker, we just about went in partners and I still have the letter of resignation I submitted to the District Director in the San Fernando Valley District of the Welfare Department. My wife talked me out of it. She said, you've got a secured job, you're still making money on the weekends. Why give up a good secure income? Am I glad I listened to her because today that's my main income, County pension. I still dabble in real estate. I closed two escrows this last year.

Tom: Oh great!

Ken: I worked for (Realty World?)

Tom: Is that down in Glenoaks?

Ken: No. It's at 330 North Glendale Avenue. But I remember when we used to have the train and the railroad tracks by the ??? Lumber Company right up Glendale Avenue. I remember all of that. I remember the wonderful street car system we had all through Glendale.

Tom: And now we're thinking of bringing it back.

Ken: Yeah. Now they see the error of their ways. General Motors sold the City of Los Angeles a bill of goods in the fifties saying that buses would be much more efficient.

Tom: You mentioned your father was in the Rotary for 35 years?

Ken: Yes.

Tom: Were you involved in civic organizations or clubs, or church...?

Ken: Yes. I was. In Lancaster, California. I belonged to the Lancaster Rotary Club from November '51 to February of '53. And then I belonged, subsequently, I belonged to the Monrovia Kiwanis Club.

Tom: Monrovia?

(end of tape, side one)

Tom: Were you ever in any service clubs in Glendale?

- Ken: No. But I did join, in 1980, I joined the Glendale Post 127 of the American Legion. And I became their Commander in 1982. And I am a Commander today. Again, the second time. Before that I was the Adjutant for five years and their finance officer.
- Tom: What kinds of activities are you involved in with that?
- Ken: Well, mostly the American Legion is fighting for veterans' rights. Their right to be in a Veterans Hospital without a (means?) test which they put on. It gets a little bit into politics. Anyway, we also support youth groups in Glendale. I was the baseball club manager for about the last five years. We sponsored a baseball team here in Glendale.
- Tom: Little League?
- Ken: No. Little League is where they play before they come to Legion Ball.
- Tom: Oh, I see.
- Ken: And Legion Ball is for mostly 16 to 18 year olds. The rules say that a boy cannot attain his 19th birthday before August 1st of the year that he's playing with us.
- Tom: So it's a league above Little League?
- Ken: Yes. It's for older boys. Most of our players came from Hoover High's team of last year with Coach Bob ????. We also send boys to Boys State in the American Legion. That teaches them how our legislature operates. We always send six or seven boys every year.
- Tom: Scholarships?
- Ken: Yes. We get, the Rotary Club sponsors one. Northwest Lions sponsors one. The Knights of Columbus sponsors one. Our own post, we don't ask other people to do what we don't do. We sponsor three ourselves. A former Commander and Adjutant left us about \$6,000 in a will. We have that in a savings and loan. The interest of that alone sent three boys, until the interest rates dropped. Now we have to have other fund raising activities. We're gonna have a big pizza party on October the 28th at Straw Hat Pizza. That owner Charlie (Masali?) is so generous to the American Legion. He gives back 1/4th of everything we spend that night.
- Tom: No kidding.

- Ken: The last time, we do it about, about twice a year as a fund raiser. Last time he gave us back \$80. And of course we wrote him a nice thank you letter, he made a donation for us.
- Tom: Yeah, that's very valuable. Just a moment ago you were talking a little bit about the red car, street cars and those things. Do you have any other things you'd like to talk about? That's one of the things that they'd like to talk about, transportation. Any other good memories or comments you'd like to make about the transportation system, what used to be, what it should be?
- Ken: Well, of course they had the railroad, I'm sorry the street-car tracks ran from right up from Atwater right on through, right in the middle of Brand Boulevard. All the way through to Mountain, right to the end. The fare was so cheap. Even after that was, I think you could ride for a dime or something. But it was very efficient I thought. You'd get on, you were there in no time.
- Tom: How frequently did they run?
- Ken: Oh about every half hour. Getting around was no problem. They also had the tracks that went along Broadway and went all the way to Eagle Rock. So you catch the streetcar from Eagle Rock to Glendale, or if I'm not mistaken they even ran to Pasadena. Then there was another line that ran from, several big lines, they called 'em the Big Red Cars. They ran from Los Angeles Terminal to San Bernardino. And they had another line that ran to Venice Beach. And then another line that ran south to Long Beach.
- Tom: Do you ever ride the Beeline downtown?
- Ken: Yes. I've ridden it before. It was nice. It was free and I found it to be quite efficient. The only problem is they have such restrictive routes that unless you're going to a definite place it really doesn't do one much good to take it. I've noticed a lot of elderly, senior citizens in Glendale do use the Beeline. I think they're gonna begin charging them 25 cents now.
- Tom: That started.
- Ken: They also have increased in Glendale, they used to subsidize the RTD bus pass for senior citizens. They paid \$6, now it cost ten. Actually, they used to pay \$6 and senior citizen

only paid \$4. By the way I worked there at the senior citizen center for one year.

Tom: On Colorado?

Ken: Yes. I worked there just part-time for 6 1/2 hours a day for Louise Briley who is still there as the head of that. And Judy Brooks. They were my bosses. I think Nello was the Assistant Director at that time but now he's the Director [of Parks, Recreation and Community Services]. They were fine people to work with. I was kind of a junior counselor there at the desk. If it was a severe problem, we had a full-time social worker that we referred problem people too.

Tom: You must know Angus (McLeod?), Fred ???

Ken: Yes. Very well. They are the presidents of the senior citizens group. I've met them. I don't say I know them well. I've met them. And George (Schweitzer?) who has a senior center there, by the way this Wednesday afternoon they're giving him a citizen award from the Glendale News-Press at the Verdugo Club.

Tom: Oh, are you going to that?

Ken: I'm gonna be playing tennis. I won't be able to go. But he invited me to go. We wrote a letter of recommendation from the American Legion because he's been a long time American Legion member. But George, he's a senior senator. Like I mentioned, he also is a member of the American Legion.

We have another famous member of the American Legion. Carlos Moorehead, our Congressman. Pat Nolan used to be a member but he dropped out saying that he'd only been in the Marine Corps for three days and with the FBI probe... He called me personally when I was Adjutant and explained why he was not renewing his dues, sending his \$20 dues, stating that he was in a Platoon Leaders training group back East somewhere in the Marine Corps. The second day he was there, a doctor discovered he had a bad knee. They didn't want to be responsible for him claiming that gee, this happened in the Marine Corps. So they gave him a medical discharge after three days. So he said that he didn't wanna ever set himself out as a seasoned veteran when he'd only been in for three days. Anyone, qualifications are that you had to serve during a wartime for at least 24 hours. That's all. He was in the, I believe, Korean War for just three days though. And then he was out. He was given a medical discharge. I thought that was very nice of him to take the time, went out of his busy

schedule to call me and explain why. And we still greet each other at different functions like Chamber mixers, whatever.

Tom: Good. He's a very nice guy. Let's back up a little. I'm sorry, have you come up to today pretty much? You said you were in real estate. You still dabble in real estate?

Ken: Well, I actually work part-time as a broker associate for (Realty World?). And then I'm Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Chevy Chase Baptist Church. And now our church has taken on the responsibility of treating the homeless one day a month through the Salvation Army.

Tom: The Lord's Kitchen?

Ken: The Lord's Kitchen, that's right. I'm really impressed with that. I really wanted to participate in the program so last Thursday we went down and did just that. Our pastor was there. Pastor James Schultz(?). My wife was one of the main workers, two other women helped. One of them brought a teenage son that helped serve the homeless.

Tom: Would you like to talk about your wife? When you got married?

Ken: Oh sure. (Jeannie?) and I were married in Santa Paula on April 21st of 1969. Then we moved to 1447 Hillcrest. So we've been married about 25 years, almost 25 years. We have one 24-year old daughter, Virginia.

Tom: Is that here picture over there?

Ken: Yes. She's a registered nurse down at the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. She lives here with us. She's remained unmarried so far. Then we have an older daughter that's my stepdaughter but she's just like a daughter to me. She lives with her husband in Ridgeway, Colorado. We went up and visited them last summer.

(Shawnee?), that's our older daughter, she's probably 36 now. She graduated in the class of '75 from Glendale High School. (Jenny?), our younger daughter, she graduated from Hoover High in June of 1986 and then subsequently graduated from Pasadena City College. They supposedly have a better nursing college than Glendale College. I don't know how true that is. Jenny felt that way. So she went over there and graduated and ended up getting a job at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles. But she's in sleeping right now. She had to work all last night. She worked a night shift.

Tom: I hope we're not too loud.

Ken: No, she can't hear.

Tom: We were talking earlier about the city as you remember it as a child, or a young adult. One of the questions that they suggest we ask you is, if Glendale was, in your mind, a self-contained city, that is, if most of the people that lived here also work here? Or did they mostly work out in the valley or downtown L.A.?

Ken: This was known as a bedroom community and most of the people worked in downtown Los Angeles and they took the Red Car for a dime. You could go down there and be back for twenty cents. I think they even had tokens they sold you at reduced rate. As I remember Glendale, one thing that was significant in my life was that I remember when Jackie Robinson played football, not baseball. He played football for Pasadena City College, and then subsequently played football with Kenny Washington at UCLA. And I came home and asked my father once why is it, well we called them Negroes in those days, why don't we have any Negroes in Glendale?

He said, well there are several reasons. Number one is that many of the people in Glendale came from the Deep South. In the land deeds, which are unconstitutional [today], the infamous Caucasian clause which I have actually seen and read where it's stipulated that any landowner that sold a home to anyone other than the Caucasian race would automatically be reverted back to the original owner which was the builder. Like Mr. Ross of Rossmoyne, you know.

Tom: So it was prohibited?

Ken: It was prohibited. You couldn't, if you wanted to, you couldn't sell to a black person.

Tom: What years were these?

Ken: Well, from the beginning of Glendale right on through World War II. In fact, I remember when I worked for Ray ???, he was fined \$500 for selling to a white Glendale police officer, but he had a Korean wife. This wasn't even a black person. A Korean wife and the Glendale Board of Realtors fined him \$500. And I was saying at the time, I wouldn't pay it. I would have fought it in the courts. 'Cause it was after the 1964 Fair Housing Law. Anyway, Glendale, there had been rumors that there was a sign on San Fernando Road saying

"Nigger, don't let the sun set on you in Glendale". That's false. There was no such sign. But frankly the only black people that lived here in the '30s as I remember and in the '40s, they didn't live here. They might have come in on the Red Car everyday and worked as a servant at one of the homes, the better homes in Rossmoyne in North Glendale. They had their maids, and most of our gardeners happened to be Japanese at that time, in the '30s and '40s. But I asked my father why everytime we play a team with black players we seem to get beat. They slaughtered us. When we had to play Pasadena City College. So that was the reason I was given. It just was prohibited in Glendale.

Tom: We're getting into politics a little bit. A few minutes ago you kind of avoided politics. Let me give you the opportunity if you wish, to talk about local politics. The Glendale politics as you remember. We've got City Council people that go back 80 years. What memories do you have of politics? For example, what thoughts do you have?

Ken: Well, first of all, my parents were staunch Republicans. I know they voted for Hoover and they would vote for any Republican candidate. All I could recall my father mentioning was that the City Council was a pretty conservative group of people. That they were operating, trying to save the city money at all times. I think if I remember correctly my father was encrust with the fact that the City Manager or whoever at that time was very conservative and efficient businessman. They ran the city like a business. I think that's still true to this day. I know you hear their concept of you've got to be one of the good 'ol boys but I think that was, all of that may be partly true. I think they chose people that were good managers.

Tom: Like Gene Perkins, perhaps?

Ken: Oh, yes. He was excellent. He was an excellent manager.

Tom: Did you ever try to fight City Hall?

Ken: Well, I wouldn't call it a fight of City Hall but I went in and, I was robbed in my garage on January 11th of this year. A black man came and held me up at gun point and caught me in my garage. See I lived off on an alley so he cornered me in there and demanded that I lay down, face down on the cement. Then he asked for all of my money and I gave him \$40. I could actually negotiate with him. He wanted my ring and my wrist watch and I told him you don't need those things. You got my money and he kept telling me over and over again "Look

man, don't make me shoot you. I don't want to shoot you." And I kept getting a feel of him. He wasn't gonna shoot me 'cause he had my money. That's all he wanted.

He wanted my wallet with all my credit cards and I said "No. You don't need my wallet. You just got all my money." He was really stupid, took an unnecessary chance. He was so strong. He started to push down our automatic garage door and I was still lying flat on the ground. And I said "Hey man, your breaking my garage door!". He broke a piece of 2' by 4' that was, he broke literally in two. I said, "Let me go around and press the button and the garage door will go down". He says "Don't you follow me, man." And I said "No, I'm not going to. You've got the gun. I'm not following you." We have a large akita dog that I would have liked to (sic) on him but I didn't want get the dog shot and so he actually let me come around and press the button and then I saw his legs going east. He took a dangerous chance. I might have had a gun on the other side of the garage or some weapon.

I was thinking more of getting the police up there so they could do the job. So I ran in the house and told my wife what happened and got on the phone and dialed 911. One thing was that the police were here in 30 seconds. I wasn't even off the phone and they were right here in 30 seconds time. There was a lady officer and a man officer. The man officer patrolled the whole place going up and down the alley looking for this man. But have you ever tried to catch a black man in the dark?

Anyway, the lady officer went back with me to the garage so that I could show her exactly what happened. So I went to the City Council the next day and raised cane with them. I said "You know, you people spend \$80,000 for one day to have a Rose Parade, you gave \$100,000 to the Exchange for the advertising, and yet you can't hire more police officers. We need more police. The FIB has said so. We need one officer for every 1,000 population. We're way under that."

So Larry Zarian was not mayor at the time but he pointed out to me "You mentioned the police were there in 30 seconds?" I said "Yes". I have no fault... He says "Even if we had twenty more officers, Ken, we couldn't have done any better." And I said "Well that's a good point. I'm just saying that I no longer feel Glendale is a safe place to live in." So that's the one time. I'm a good friend of Larry's. He's helped our church. He's a good man. I'm glad to see him as mayor. I'm just pointing out that...

Tom: That was your time...

Ken: That was the one time when you asked me if I tried to fight City Hall. I really wasn't fighting them. Another time was when John McKenna was Director of Zoning. We had an awful time through the American Legion getting him to approve. And he finally had so many stipulations. I think there's eight of them now that made it very rough. But we finally built our building down there with his help. He just had a lot of restrictions. Like we can't rent it out for dances or anything like that.

Tom: But working within the rules?

Ken: Within the rules and we're doing just fine.

Tom: Good. Good. Some of the more, can you give me an idea of your memories of some of the more controversial topics in the city over the years? Downtown was a controversy. The Galleria was a controversy.

Ken: I remember those things. I remember the fight that the people especially along the freeway route. They just did not want to sell their property. They didn't like the eminent domain. They condemned their property so they could buy it.

Tom: This is the 134 right through Glendale?

Ken: Yes, that went across Glendale. We often marvel at Glendale how South Pasadena has gotten away with this for so long. 'Cause when I was a truck driver I used to ask the business owners there how did you do it? How did you keep the freeway out of here? And they said we just took a strong stand. And we've got some good politicians that are fighting for us. Evidently Glendale's politicians weren't strong enough.

Beverly Hills was also very successful in that they had to put the Santa Monica Freeway way south of Beverly Hills. So I remember the controversy that no one wanted the freeway to come through. They didn't need one that went east and west. A lot of them said that. And then there's others that wanted it to go way south to South Glendale and around to connect with the Ventura Freeway.

Tom: What do you think? Has it been...

Ken: I think that that's ridiculous, that we're very content now with the freeway. The only disadvantage is that bank robbers can get away very easily.

Tom: Or people can go out, to your garage?

Ken: Yeah. They can get away. I think this man was on foot. He was a transient. I think he was a homeless person that was hungry. Cold and hungry and he, I gave him enough money so he could rent a motel and buy a meal.

Tom: Yeah. He had a gun.

Ken: It just happened. He had a gun alright. He was threatening me. Anyway...

Tom: Well it's good that you got out of it.

Ken: And then another controversy was at the Galleria. Of course, many people wanted to see Brand Boulevard remain as the business center. Like Webb's Department Store, they just folded up there tent and left. And Webb's. I remember them. They were one of the best department stores.

But another department store I haven't mentioned was on the northeast corner of Harvard and Brand known as the Famous Department Store. And that's where we all shopped in the 1930s. The '20s and the '30s. The Famous Department Store. You might call it a junior JC Penney's. It was similar to Penney's operation.

And then I remember the different theaters in Glendale. The Cosmo, that was down there Maple and Brand. Then there was the Show Shop on Central and Lexington. Just a dime to get in. Even in the '40s it was still just a dime. Then they have the California Theater which was a little more luxurious. They charged 25 cents. Then The Alexander of course tried 35 cents. That was a high class theater. Very rarely went there. Mostly the Capitol. And then the Roxy came into being I'm thinking in the late '30s. And I remember it when it was built.

There is no other thing that I can remember Glendale fighting over the people disagreeing on, other than a lot of people didn't want to see the Galleria built. Now that it's built I think they can see the big advantage.

Tom: A lot of tax money comes from them.

Ken: Oh yes.

Tom: Well, these questions are not necessarily chronological so we're gonna come back to one. The Depression, do you have any particular stand out memories during the days of The Depression?

Ken: Yes, I do. I think my father was earning \$200 a month which was a lot of money then. Most carpenters and plumbers would give anything to make \$100 a month in those days. They didn't have any school lunch program. I remember kids taunting each other "Oh, your ma is on welfare!" They did have a welfare program then. The Police Department I remember was very strict at that time. Kids, if they were out say at 10 or 11 at night, you'd be stopped and asked "Are you going right home now?" and "Where have you been?" and all that. They wanted to make sure we weren't committing any burglaries out late that night. "Do your parents know where you are?" was the main question police asked at that time. I used to go around and mow lawns for 25 cents each in the The Depression. I'm talking about 1933 and '34 and before I was old enough to have a paper route. I sold the Liberty Magazine and the Saturday Evening Post from door to door.

Tom: Really?

Ken: Uhum. In Glendale.

Tom: Subscriptions or just individual...?

Ken: No. You bought it right then. Five cents, Saturday Evening Post. Five cents, and I got a penny of it.

Tom: So you had to lug around all those heavy magazines?

Ken: That's right. Then a lot of teenagers don't quite understand that these days or even elementary school children then the depression. I would go around all morning long either trying to get a job mowing a lawn or collecting wine bottles. Now you could take 'em down to the local liquor store and get a penny each. And if I was lucky enough to get ten wine bottles then I could get into the show.

My father did not believe in spoiling me. He taught me that money did not grow on trees and my allowance in the 4th, 5th and 6th grade was 5 cents a week. How I spent that was up to me. He would not give me enough. He did not like picture shows. Being a Boy Scout Executive he kept telling me it would be healthier if you went on a hike in the mountains. So if I wanted the money I had to go get it and I'd go behind

these apartment houses and get the thrown out wine bottles. And if I was real lucky I got a Canada Dry Ginger Ale bottle which was worth 5 cents. My God that was a lot of money.

Tom: Really? Why was that so much more?

Ken: Oh it was a big quart bottle. Wine bottles only brought a penny. But Robbie's mother, she liked her Ginger Ale Canada Dry, and sometimes she'd say "Robbie, why just take what you want so you and Kenny can go to the show." Often times I would get treated because the Johnstons were quite wealthy.

Tom: They had lots of bottles.

Ken: Uhuh.

Tom: Wild animals. They ask about wild animals. Do you remember wild animals being a problem in the city?

Ken: Yes. We've had coyote problems. Deer used to come right down to where we could see them in the Verdugo Mountains. I used to climb to the mountain, to the top of Mt. Verdugo maybe once a year especially from the ninth grade on. I also collected snakes as a hobby.

Tom: Still?

Ken: No, I don't today. My wife put her foot down. In the tenth grade I started collecting, you could catch gopher snakes and striped razors. And, of course, a rattlesnake I would kill. I don't collect rattlesnakes. In the Glendale mountains right up north of Cumberland there was all kinds of snakes. Different, harmless type. Mostly gopher snakes.

I remember I had about ten different varieties in my backyard. And then my father had me go to a Boy Scout Camp and kiss my 87 year old grandmother who was left there in the house at 1614 Ridgeway. And the next door neighbor to the south called the pound and complained that there was some snakes over there. I was also, hard to understand in Glendale, I was raised in 12 plymouth rock hens and a rooster right there at 1614, just south of Cumberland. It was perfectly alright to have chickens in those days, in the 1930s. In 1938 and '39 I was raising chickens again to make money. I could sell eggs for 25 cents a dozen around the neighborhood. Once I did catch a live rattlesnake and I sold it to ??? Robertson at (Eckels?) Drug Store and that was a six foot rattler. A huge thing.

That was a drug store located at the southeast corner of Brand and Broadway. My father knew Mr. (Eckels?). He knew very well. My father sold him on the idea-- "Why don't you put the rattlesnake in a cage in the window with a glass in front, then advertise anti-snakebite venom. And so he did. And one of the... clerks jobs were hard to come by then. And one of the clerks says "Either that snake goes or I go". And Mr. Eckels said goodbye. The clerk just walked out. They wouldn't work there with the snake in the store. He only kept it there for about a month. Then I don't know what he did with the snake. But I sold it to him for three dollars. It was a huge snake and \$3 was a lot of money in those days.

Tom: Yeah, I bet.

Ken: I found out as a hobby, you know, I'd go out to Brand Park and get all kinds of water snakes, king snakes. Then in the desert with Robbie we would catch the red razors. They bite the heck out of you. They were non-poisonous. They had the big bull snake which is the same family... So as far as wildlife I remember the deer and my brother and I in 1934 used to go up where the Police Department had a firing range. We were allowed in those days to have .22 rifles. And we shot rabbits.

We also trapped them at night. Trapped 'coons, possums. The shooting range used to be today where Glenoaks runs east of Verdugo Road on the northside of Glenoaks. That was all a big group of oak trees and the shooting range for the Police Department there, we'd go up there and collect the lead after they were through firing and come home and melt it and make different things out of it by putting it in a little cast. Make little lead soldiers. From the bullets.

Tom: Well that about exhausts my questions, but I'll just leave it open to you. Is there anything you haven't talked about that you'd like to?

Ken: Well, I'd like to address the subject of how strict the schoolteachers were in those days. We had a lady that we referred to (not very respectfully) as Old Lady Ryan. She was a big fat woman that was Principal of John Marshall in the early 1930s. Probably back into the '20s. And her method of punishment, and I was a brat I'll admit it 'cause my stepmother was then raising me. But I never dared ditch a day of school, that's for sure. With the former Vice-Principal as my stepmother. She was an excellent stepmother. Anyway, Old Lady Ryan if I misbehaved and the teacher sent me in to the Principal's office, her favorite punishment was to

stand us against the steam heater for fifteen minutes and that just about roasted us.

Tom: Oh, no!

Ken: Uhum. That's right. I'd just be sweating, I'd be wet when I'd leave. And she'd say "After this you're mine! Don't you talk in class." I think the most serious offense was talking in class. The sixth grade teacher had never been married, she was extremely strict. She'd come around and if you weren't paying attention she'd smack you with a ruler.

Tom: On the back of your hand, or on the head?

Ken: Any place. On your back, on your head, on the wrist. It depends on what she felt like. In the positive sense we had Mrs. (Bastine?) in the fifth grade. Although she was a very rotund woman, very fat. She was an excellent teacher. Ms. ??? was our librarian for John Marshall Elementary. And she was excellent with the children. Just excellent.

Then we had a Mrs. (Blankenship?) as a gym teacher. I'll never forget how we were practicing some folk dance inside on a rainy day, this girl in the fifth grade complained that she had to go to the bathroom real bad. Mrs. Blankenship said we'll be through in about five minutes. Then she wet her pants right on the floor.

Tom: Is this Gene Blankenship's wife?

Ken: No, no, no. This woman, I don't know if there's any relation. She was, I'd say she was in her fifties in the early '30s. We're talking about 1933 and '34. But then, they'd let us go out and play on the schoolgrounds at John Marshall. We really liked the school. Like I say the very strict principal. The sixth grade teacher was extremely strict.

I remember Wilson Junior High, a Ms. (Brock?), was a very pretty young teacher in the seventh grade. She was our homeroom teacher. She married a Mr. (Crumb?) who was a high school teacher. High school history teacher. He was Greek, of Greek descent. They made a very nice couple. Ms. Brock who subsequently became Mrs. Crumb was an excellent teacher. Then an old buddy of my mother's, they worked together at Roosevelt Junior High, Mrs. (Saelstrom?) became Vice-Principal of Wilson Junior High. I'm talking about 1935. The fall of '35 and '36. Mr. (Hildruff?), Elan Hildruff was the Principal of Wilson when I went into it. His son came from Wright School I believe which was then Doran Street school.

Tom: Is it Jack?

Ken: Yeah, Jack. He subsequently became an attorney and, of course, he died many years ago.

Tom: Jack Hildruff?

Ken: Oh yeah.

Tom: A different Jack Hildruff then 'cause I know in the Kiwanis Club there's a Jack Hildruff.

Ken: Is he my age!?

Tom: Yeah.

Ken: He's seventy?

Tom: I don't know if he's exactly your age but he's about your age.

Ken: Must be Jack's son. Because Jack would be seventy but I understood he died of cancer or something like that.

Tom: Maybe there's two Jack Hildruffs?

Ken: No kidding! There's a Jack Hildruff in Kiwanis?

Tom: Yeah. I just saw him Friday.

Ken: Is he an attorney?

Tom: I don't think so.

Ken: Well this Jack Hildruff was an attorney. A USC graduate. Anyway, Jack, I remember him very well. The principal's son. And what's interesting is that Jack, of course I was over at Hoover, but when Jack Hildruff and the other kids went from the ninth grade into the tenth grade, Alan Hildruff, his father, left Wilson and became the principal of Glendale High. So he followed his son right through six years of school.

Tom: That must have been horrible for the kid.

Ken: We remember Mr. Hildruff as being again very strict. But I didn't have any problems with him. But he was very strict. He was not liked as well as Mr. Hayhurst, the Principal of

Hoover High. Normal Hayhurst. Normal Hayhurst came from Arkansas and was first the football coach at Glendale High in 1927. And then subsequently I don't know what all he did through the years..

Tom: He was a track coach, too, I think?

Ken: Yeah, he was at one time and then he became principal of Hoover High School. The kids really liked Normal Hayhurst. He was just a laid back principal, you know. He wasn't that strict with discipline.

Tom: Kind of a normal guy?

Ken: Yeah, that's a very good pun. And his assistant principal did the discipline at Hoover High. Mr. (Pettijohn?). I'll never forget him. He wasn't too well liked by the kids. Then at Hoover High, I mean at Glendale High we had Coach (Sperry?) our football coach, I mean our baseball coach. And he was very good. And then Ambrose (Schindler?) came over from USC and was the football coach when I was there in the fall of '40. When I was senior there. We had some very famous football players come out of Hoover. I remember watching them. When I was a little kid in the seventh and eighth grade I watched the great Frankie Albert play. He was our star quarterback at Glendale High in the late '30's. I was in junior high at the time.

And then what's interesting, we had a star player in about 1934 by the name of Dillinger. And Dillinger subsequently been killed by the FBI. The famous gangster. So it was an interesting name, Dillinger. But we had the (Gussman) brothers- one played for Hoover and one played for Glendale. Subsequently one of them became a sergeant in the LAPD and one of them became, the brother became a sergeant at the Glendale Police Department. The Gussman brothers.

I remember many of our famous football players. Bill (Rinehardt?) who subsequently for the University of California. He came out of Glendale High. We had some wonderful athletes. We had a man by the name of Ward that could run the 440, that's one lap around the track, in 48 seconds. And that is really fast. I remember they timed me once in the spring of '41. They were looking for track material. Coach ??? was out there timing us. But I was in tennis shoes, not in track shoes. And the fastest I could do was 1 minute flat. 60 seconds. In order to make the track team you have to do it around 51, 52. The 440 I'm talking about.

Tom: Gosh that's running about 11 seconds per 100 yards. That's pretty quick, I guess? Ten seconds?

Ken: Well, something like that. I know our fastest 100 yard dash men, they were lucky to do it in 10 or 10.1. The best one was George (Treaty?) over at Hoover High. That was in the spring of '39. I really enjoyed finishing my paper route and going down and watching him run that 100 yard dash. He could do it in 9.8.

Now, in the Marine Corps, the Texans used to always be bragging about their athletic feats. And I said "We had a man in high school that could run a 100-yard dash in 9.5. They said "9.5? You're kidding?" And I said "Oh, no". His name was Frank (Reichhoff?)." And he graduated back in the '20s and then ran in the '28 and '32 Olympic Games...

(end of tape, Side 2)