

Edith Gutierrez
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Transcription of first third part.

Sean Lewis: Hello this is Sean Lewis with the C.H.A.P.S. Program and we're ready to do an interview with you.

Linda: That's fine.

Sean Lewis: And it will be divided into three people.

Linda: That's fine

Edith Gutierrez: Hello Linda can you hear me?

Linda: Yes, I hear you fine!

Edith Gutierrez: Ok so thank you for taking your time today with us

Linda: Good to talk to you.

Edith Gutierrez: Ok so im going to go ahead and introduce all of us to you and then Im going to introduce you ok?

Linda: Sure

Edith Gutierrez: Ok so today is October 14, 2019, my name is Edith Gutierrez and today we have, Maria Sanchez and Sean Michael Lewis. Today we will be interviewing Linda for the C.H.A.P.S. Program.

Linda: that's fine

Edith Gutierrez: Ok Linda I, gonna go ahead and be the first one to ask you questions first.

Linda: ok!

Edith Gutierrez: So, um, do you farm?

Linda: No, um I don't farm. My Grandfather was the farmer and he came to Donna Texas in 1922.

Edith Gutierrez: Mmh

Linda: Um from Northern Minnesota and he bought 48 acres that run, which is south of Donna and 15 acres southeast of Donna. Where he farmed and raised his children because his wife, my grandmother had died just before that when the Spanish flu went all over the world killing millions of people. Unfortunately, she died leaving eight small children.

Edith Gutierrez: Oh no.

Linda: And he raised his children alone and never remarried.

Edith Gutierrez: Wow!

Linda: But she died in 1920, the youngest boy George Robert Kaml, passed away from meningitis, so between the two deaths, he decided to leave uh Minnesota for more, uh I think he just wanted to get away but one of the reasons he said was better educational opportunities for his children.

Edith: Mmh

Linda: So, he went down with the local bank and went on an angle man tour, there was a company down in the valley, there was several companies that did tours and he went down with this banker and they both bought land down there and he liked what he saw and so when he went back to Northern Minnesota he had an auction in the yard and he sold all, almost all of the live stock and sold all of his equipment. Almost everything he had except a few things. So he my dad and my uncle rode the train with a cow, maybe a couple of cows and chickens and turkeys and stuff like that on the train and it took him awhile to get to the valley, I think about two weeks, because they kept getting shuttled off to the side. Anyways and so my aunts the five girls stayed

with their grandmother for four months until they were settled and could all be reunited as a family in Donna.

Edith Gutierrez: Mmh, well that's very interesting. I had no idea about the Spanish flu that was going around that time.

Linda: Oh it killed millions of millions around the world. They claim, who knows? I mean things can just go but they claim that it was the returning veterans who, cause it was all over Europe, of course it started over there uh but it did go around the world including these tiny little place and im thinking how in the world did it get to this, you know even today there's probably not a thousand people in this town, they lived out in the farm, and I said how in the world would it get out there and they claim who knows, that it was the returning veterans, who brought it with them . it was on theii clothes, it was on their luggage, duffle bags you know, I don't know but they claim that it came on the trains

Edith Gutierrez: Right

Linda: But in any rate my dad's uncle, my grandmothers younger brother got the flu and his mother my great grandmother was one out trying to farm and take care of her youngest son and she asker her daughter, my grandmother to help her. Well this was such a terrible killer, they said it would hit and within hours you were dead. You didn't even leave so went she went to the next farm uh to care for her brother, she got sick and died and left 8 small children and the young brother lived and lived to raise the family. But she did not, and they held her funeral in the yard at her mother's house. But you know it was so contagious that I wouldn't know who would've gone except for family.

Edith Gutierrez; Yeah

Linda: That was a terrible time but anyway, that is how we got to the valley so uh my dad's generation were all born in northern Minnesota and my generation were born in the valley.

In Hidalgo county .

Edith Gutierrez: Ok, thank you for sharing that information uh I have another question for you um what would you say are your earliest memories as a child?

Linda: I remember so well my childhood. We went to church every Sunday and I grew up in Edinburg, went to church every Sunday at the First Christian Church. My mother sang in the choir, we'd come home and kill a chicken. My mother would ring its neck and my sister and I would pluck the chicken and we would have fried chicken for lunch and then we would pack up food and all the kids and go down to my grandfather's house In Donna and all the aunts and uncles and cousins would gather there every Sunday this was a tradition in our family and it was so... it just gave us such a feeling of security and we knew exactly what we would be doing and the kids all played and the adults all stayed inside playing 42 or canasta, whatever was popular at the time and then we would all gather for a big evening meal and usually would make homemade ice cream and my dad and my uncles turn the ice cream, sometime I got to sit on the freezer that was a big deal to be with the uh guys cause the children were usually with the mothers. Ya know? But it was such a special time and then we would go home late at night and you know off to school the next day. But this was every Sunday.

Edith Gutierrez: That is a lovely Memory! Um do you remember any hardships while growing up?

Linda: we didn't have a lot of money. Every year I would ask my mother can I take piano lessons, can I take ballet, can I take gymnastics well now they call it gymnastics it used to be

called acrobatics. And it was always maybe next year you know there was not money for uh enrichment programs like the kids have today.

Edith Gutierrez: Mmh uh so um where does your father originate from?

Linda: My father was born In Northern Minnesota. North West Minnesota outside a tiny little town called bager Minnesota.

Edith Gutierrez: Mmh ok, do you remember any techniques growing crops as a child or anything like that?

Linda: My dad would occasionally plant something, we had just a few acres there in Edinburg, but he was not a farmer, he worked for rising constructing and he always had bees. He Started with bees when he was a teenager and my mother would always call him her honey boy.

Edith Gutierrez; (laughs)

Linda: But until he died, he had bees.

Edith Gutierrez: ok so what did you choose as you career?

Linda: I was an executive secretary for a major oil company. I graduated with honors from The University of Texas in Dallas and my degree was in literature.

Edith: That's interesting! What made you choose literature?

Linda I've always been an avid reader and went all through school in Edinburg and started at Sam Houston Elementary and did start college at Pan Am but I finished up here and I've always been a reader. And that's just what appealed to me I took lots of humanities classes, I went to SMU and started but did not complete my master's in literature studies which was all humanities.

Edith Gutierrez: Wow! The next question I have for you is how did you meet your husband?

Linda: I met him at work. I was working for an oil company in midland and he came, he was working for the same company and we met at work and married and moved to Plano Texas. It's

a suburb from Dallas and I lived in Plano until Thanksgiving and in which time I downsized had a huge home and I downsized to a smaller home in Frisco which is a neighboring Town and now uh so now I'm here. I've been I Plano since 1973.

Edith Gutierrez: 1973? And was it very different from the valley?

Linda: Very different from the Valley. Well when I first moved there it looked the same because it was a smaller town then, it was 27000 in 1973 and I would see pick ups with the rifle racks in the back and I'm going oh my gosh it looks like the valley. But it very quickly uh changed. And it's a huge town now more than a quarter million people and very sophisticated people and its not lime the valley at all. But I'm still active in several groups with my childhood friends and we were all students together in Edinburg and we all think that growing up in Edinburg was very much like Maryland or F.A.D. We felt so safe uh you could go into anybody's house, to your friend's house you didn't have to call to make a play date or appointment or anything. We didn't lock our doors, we lived at the main canoe right there on McColl Rd and nobody locked their house, if you wanted to know where the keys to the car was , they wee in the ignition, bit no one locked the doors or brought in the keys like we do now. It was a very safe place to live and now we all have wonderful memories growing up. And one thing I would like to mention is the educational system in Edinburg.

Edith Gutierrez: Ok!

Linda: Our teachers when we look back, most of them had master's degrees but they were all so motivated. I cannot say enough words or praise for the teachers in Edinburg.

Edith Gutierrez: Wow that is very admirable, I mean compared to today there is a huge difference. Mmk so I have another question for you, how come you did not decide to pursue farming.

Linda: Ah well as I said my dad wasn't farming and I left the valley and my uncle, my dad's older brother continued farming in Donna until he died and he died in 1991 but my grandfather uh h lived, they lived together and so he continued the farming tradition and one of my uncles was in growth care for orchards down in south San Juan and Alamo. And his son continued that tradition until he died 2 years ago, so we did have that tradition of farming with my grandfather and uncle and the orchards with my uncle. And then 2 other aunts had growths in the Valley.

Edith Gutierrez: Wow

Linda: and my brother when he quit teaching, my brother Jim kaml who by the way when he was a teacher in Edinburg High School got teacher of the year. He was a great teacher, but he left I'm sure for financial reasons and sold books for Scott Foresman I don't know if yall went and started with the readers we come and go, things like that but that was the Scott Foresman readers and he would sell those to different school districts. When he retired from that he went into growing an orchard and selling the fruit.

Edith: Mmh

Linda: So we do have that tradition in the family.

Edith Gutierrez: The selling fruits?

Linda: Right.

Edith Gutierrez: Mmh, um ok so what I'm going to go ahead and do right now is pass it to Maria. She has her own set of questions she like to ask you.

Linda: That's fine!

Maria Sanchez: Linda

Linda: Hello Maria!

Maria Sanchez: Hello Linda, I wanted to ask you, could you tell me your full name?

Linda: Yes my name is Linda Kaml Bucaram

Maria Sanchez: Thank you um do you have a nickname?

Linda: No I go by Linda. But of course in the family I have children, grandchildren and now great grandchildren they call me mimi.

Maria Sanchez: (laughs) ok, ok When and where were you born once again? I'm sorry

Linda: I was born July 25th 1940 in home in Donna actually South of Donna by the old military highway. All four of us children were born at home. The two boys were born in Donna and my sister and I Marilyn Kaml were born by the old military highway. I'm the youngest of four.

Maria Sanchez: Were there any other family members in the Family before you moved over here? Or your Grandfather?

Linda: No, My grandfather was the first. That was 1922

Maria Sanchez: What was your house like at the farm or In the farm?

Linda: We lived in McColl Rd Right by the curve of the Canoe. A mile and a half down of 107