

"GARLAND PERSPECTIVES" INTERVIEW WITH GLADYS NASH PEAVY

MARCH 5, 1986

HAYSLIP: Hello. I'm Mike Hayslip, and I'm your host for this segment of "Garland Perspectives", a series of interviews with some of the special people that have contributed so much to Garland's growth and development. This series is sponsored by the Garland Sesquicentennial Committee in celebration of our state's 150th birthday in 1986. Our guest today in the Storer Cable Studios this March 5, 1986 is Gladys Nash Peavy, who was born August 27, 1896, the tenth of eleven children of Thomas F. and Mary Hobbs Nash. At the time of her birth, the Nash family lived in Dallas where he served as County Judge. But their roots were still in Garland where the family had arrived in the 1850's. Her grandparents, the Thomas Jefferson Nashes, not possessive lived here and Mrs. Peavy's great grandmother was buried here in 1857. In 1917, she married William E. Peavy, Sr. and they moved together to Garland. Mr. Peavy left us in 1966. They had two children, Bill Peavy, Jr. and Doris Peavy. They have five grandchildren and fourteen great grandchildren. Mrs. Peavy is a lifelong member of the First Methodist Church in Garland and the Woman's Study Club. Does this sound like you? Do I have the right person, here?

PEAVY: You do, I have some other clubs, but you don't have to mention those.

HAYSLIP: What other clubs are yours?

PEAVY: Well, you mentioned the Women's Study Club

HAYSLIP: That's right.

PEAVY: Neoteric Club

HAYSLIP: Well, you're holding back on me. You didn't tell me about the Neoteric.

PEAVY: And the Professional Women's Club.

HAYSLIP: I see.

PEAVY: What was another one, The Toastmaster's Club, and the Women's Society at the church? There's another one, but I can't think of it right now.

HAYSLIP: Well, you have been a busy lady all your life, haven't you? Do you have any idea why you're here?

PEAVY: Because you asked me. You have such persuasive powers.

HAYSLIP: Let me tell you why I asked you to come here today. There are a couple of reasons. First of all, you're a member of one of the oldest families in Dallas County much less Garland. Secondly, and more importantly you were one of the first working professional women Garland ever had in a time when that was not as normal as it is today. So you have a great deal to say to us I think about what it was like in those days to be a working mother, and well, there's really a third reason, and that is you've been a girlfriend of mine all my life. I couldn't overlook you.

PEAVY: Well, your family has been one of my closest.

HAYSLIP: Do you have any recollections of why your family came to Garland, or this area?

PEAVY: Well, you see, my grandparents had already settled right out there close to y'all when it wasn't Garland. And, he liked the land, my grandpa did and he bought a lot of land there, and they liked the atmosphere and they had a large family and they just always liked this area.

HAYSLIP: There are a couple of significant things about Garland that your family was very much involved in and I'd like to mention those and see what sort of comment you have on them. One of them is the founding of the Garland Daily News. And, there is a letter in the Garland Daily News files that your father signed and wrote to a man named Cullom in Dallas. Your father at that time was a resident of one of the two early communities that later went into Garland. Those communities were Duck Creek and Embree. Your family was in Duck Creek, is that correct?

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: O.K. And he wrote to Mr. Cullom and told him to get on out here as soon as possible didn't he?

PEAVY: No, he wrote to Jo Abbott, the Congressman.

HAYSLIP: Well, now wait a minute that's about naming Garland.

PEAVY: Oh, the newspaper, oh yes your right. Yes he did.

HAYSLIP: Told him to come out and start the newspaper.

PEAVY: Yes, John Cullom was at that time editing the paper in Mesquite and so my father suggested he come over here, and he did. In a letter he had written or John Cullom had written he mentioned the men had meant so much to him through the years in Garland and your family. Your grandfather, George W. James and others that were related to you.

HAYSLIP: But, it was your father who wrote him the letter and said come on out here and start the newspaper.

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: Now, the other significant thing that your family, the notorious Nash's as I call them were interested in was the naming of Garland, and if I'm correctly informed back in those days Garland as we know it was comprised of two small settlements, Duck Creek and Embree that fought each other all the time. And, they came to peace someday and do you recall how that was?

PEAVY: Well, it seemed that the farmers that were in Duck Creek resented having to go through Embree to the Post Office and they wanted to be able to do business, as I understand it in their own area. And, my father and some of the others decided that if they could have a middle place and change the name and give it a new name that they would compromise, and maybe the feud would be settled. And the people, all that was, it was a regular feud all between the people of Embree and Duck Creek, there were many who were friends you know with Embree.

HAYSLIP: Right.

PEAVY: And liked each other but there was that difference.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Now for the younger ones of us Duck Creek at that time was on basically what we know as the north side of the Garland Square, wasn't it? And Embree was on the south side of Garland Square?

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: So they could glare at each other across the square and fight.

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: And, the Post Office that we had was in Embree at that time, which was what? A mail sack on a door knob in the Santa Fe Depot. Is that what...?

PEAVY: (Laugh) I'm not sure which it was.

HAYSLIP: You don't remember what it consisted of. But, at any rate they didn't get along. And so, your father wrote the Congressman.

PEAVY: He wrote to Joe [Jo] Abbott at Hillsboro. Asking if he could come over and meet with these people.

HAYSLIP: Now, Mr. Abbott was our Congressman at the time.

PEAVY: Yes he was, at Hillsboro. The Attorney General was out of Garland and the...

HAYSLIP: May I interrupt here...The Attorney General of the United States, is that what you mean?

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: That was Augustus H. Garland.

PEAVY: And, of course I guess he would be the one that had to decide if it would be legal to do that. And, so many people had thought through the years that it was laying for maybe the Postmaster. But, it wasn't. It was suggested that it be named the Post Master General of Garland.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Well, now Mr. Garland was Attorney General was he not?

PEAVY: Attorney General.

HAYSLIP: Under President...

PEAVY: Grover Cleveland

HAYSLIP: Alright. Do you know if Augustus H. Garland ever came to this town or not, or did we just name it after him.

PEAVY: No, I don't know. But, you know this letter that came from Hillsboro to my father that you have there he didn't know if he could come because his wife was ill, but he did come. And he did get in touch with the Post Master General, and it was suggested the name.

HAYSLIP: Why did he do that? Because Augustus H. Garland had no enemies here is that the reason?

PEAVY: (Laugh) Well, I guess that he thought if he was going to be the one to make the decision that was satisfactory to everybody and manage it amicably that the name would be acceptable to both sides.

HAYSLIP: Apparently it was. And, we still use it.

PEAVY: It was.

HAYSLIP: O.K. By the time you were born, your parents the Thomas F. Nash's had moved to Dallas.

PEAVY: Yes, they moved to Dallas in 1892 when my father was serving as County Judge and I was born in Dallas and I was the first one while in Dallas, and there was just one other besides me. And, that was in 1896. August 27, 1896.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Now we have a photograph of the Thomas F. Nash family home in Garland shortly before you were born.

PEAVY: Yes, that's before I was born. I was born later.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Your family home in Dallas was on Routh Street?

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: And, that's where you were born?

PEAVY: That's where I was born.

HAYSLIP: But, you didn't forget your old friends in Garland.

PEAVY: No, if you'll read my diary I was reading it last night.

HAYSLIP: You have a diary?

PEAVY: Oh yes.

HAYSLIP: Do you keep it locked?

PEAVY: (Laugh) No, it's too tame for that.

HAYSLIP: What are your first recollections of Garland?

PEAVY: Oh, I just loved it. I just always had the best time down here. The young people could just walk everywhere, you know and walked down to the square and see everybody. It was quite the thing to do. Just walk around the square.

HAYSLIP: You mean they didn't drive cars down here?

PEAVY: Not then. You could walk wherever you wanted to go. Only thing, if it was raining and those boardwalks was slippery, that wasn't much fun.

HAYSLIP: Where were the boardwalks?

PEAVY: Well, I remember the boardwalks mainly on what we call now Garland Avenue, going down on that right side of the street. And, that's the street where if you were going to turn to the left you'd go right up to the Christian Church. Then, we would go on to the Hickman house, it was down a little further. Do I tell you the main places we'd like to go?

HAYSLIP: Sure, go ahead.

PEAVY: Handley's drug store had the best lemonade you could imagine.

HAYSLIP: Was it fresh squeezed?

PEAVY: Yes, and they had little ice cream tables there, you could sit there and one or two boys, young men would come in and in fact that's where...

HAYSLIP: Are you telling me that you came out from Dallas to cruise out here in Garland?

PEAVY: Cruise around... (Laugh) And, oh, have you heard of Souter's Cherry Cafe?

HAYSLIP: No, but I think you're going to tell me.

PEAVY: Oh, that chili! I was sick and he didn't have anything but chili, but I read in my diary last night that he had the best apple pie alamode that you could imagine.

HAYSLIP: Do you remember what it cost?

PEAVY: Oh, I think it must have cost about 15¢ or 20¢.

HAYSLIP: So, you could have a date for, or a guy could have a date or find some girl down there waiting for him, he could do that for less than 50¢.

PEAVY: Which you'd see everybody you knew, you know going in down there. Everybody knew each other so well, and the families all seemed so close, even if you went to a different church. When they had these Revivals or Protracted Meetings it didn't make any difference which denomination you all went.

HAYSLIP: What was a Protracted Meeting?

PEAVY: That's a Revival meeting.

HAYSLIP: Long-winded preacher or what?

PEAVY: Well, it would last longer. Really, we would call it a Revival Meeting today. But, they called them Protracted Meetings.

HAYSLIP: Well, that was a nice way to say it wasn't it? If they had told the truth people might not have come down there. Tell me something else. How did you get out here? Now, you lived on Ruth Street in Dallas.

PEAVY: Well, we came out on the train as a rule. Lola and I was going back and forth all the time on the Santa Fe. And...

HAYSLIP: O.K. Now that would be Lola Watson.

PEAVY: Lola Watson, your grandmother. And Oneida came some too.

HAYSLIP: We need to give full names here, because they are going to write this down. Are you talking about Oneida Watson?

PEAVY: Oneida Watson.

HAYSLIP: O.K. The three of you cruised around the square on the Boardwalk looking for the local guys down there and they could have a date with you for 50¢.

PEAVY: And, it was so nice after leaving Handley's, if you were going over to the railroad station the boys would carry your suitcase. That's where I met Bill Peavy. Lola introduced me to him and he and Lee Handley took us over to the...

HAYSLIP: So, apparently the boys in Garland were looking for you all just like you were looking for them.

PEAVY: Yea, Bill was older. He was six years older than I was, but that didn't make any difference then.

HAYSLIP: Well no, if he could carry your suitcase that was all you were looking for, wasn't it?

PEAVY: (Laugh) Right.

HAYSLIP: They had manners in other words.

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: They were polite. The guys in Garland even though it was a country town.

PEAVY: They were. They were very polite.

HAYSLIP: Well, why did you cruise around Garland instead of Dallas?

PEAVY: Oh, we cruised in Dallas too, we all had dates and everywhere you went you'd see them stop and talk and you'd see everybody you knew.

HAYSLIP: O.K. That was in Dallas.

PEAVY: That was in Dallas. And, these Garland friends would come down there.

HAYSLIP: Did you ever study?

PEAVY: Well, oh yea, this was mostly in the summertime.

HAYSLIP: Well, how could you do all this at Thomas Confectioners and out here at Handley's Drug and...

PEAVY: Well, we weren't just right at the same week or the same month.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So you spent your time in both areas?

PEAVY: We wouldn't stay too much time, but it was just that no one had to worry that we were out riding in the country or anything like that. We'd just ride downtown so you could see everybody.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So you went to school in Dallas.

PEAVY: Yes. Uh-huh.

HAYSLIP: Do you remember anything about school? Subjects.

PEAVY: About the main subjects?

HAYSLIP: Sure.

PEAVY: Well the main thing I had was a four year straight Latin course. And, I had two years of French, then we had a lot of English and History teachers and I wasn't too crazy about the ones in Physics, and Geometry. We had a wonderful time in school and at that time when I went to school we just had two high schools. The one on Bryan Street, Dallas High and the other one in Oak Cliff. So, we just knew people from all parts of town. They had different elementary schools, they'd come in from East Dallas, North Dallas and South. South Dallas had Forest Avenue and later on North Dallas had North Dallas High, but we were there and you got to know young people all over town. We graduated in 1915.

HAYSLIP: O.K. In 1917, when you married, you moved to Garland. Is that correct?

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: That's what you told me. Now where did you move when you moved out here?

PEAVY: Well, right at the very first we stayed at my husband's mothers. Because he on our Honeymoon, the second day we got there he had an appendicitis operation.

HAYSLIP: Where did you go on your honeymoon?

PEAVY: To New Orleans to the Mardis Gras. And spent the entire time in the hospital, going back and forth and he was desperately sick. After we went home on a train, we stayed at his mother's about two weeks and then we moved together with his sister Myrtice Peavy who was married to Dr. Lloyd Crabb to a house up there that was about where you live now. [Ed note: would've been NW quadrant of present Ninth and Ave. D]

HAYSLIP: Are you talking about on Avenue D?

PEAVY: It was on the corner of Avenue D and Ninth Street. And, it had been originally the home of Ed Cole. And then John Moss bought it after we left, but Ed Cole was who we rented from. She had one side of the house and there was a long hall and we had the other. That's where we first lived.

HAYSLIP: We're up to 1917 now and you've got all these family roots in Garland, you've been born in Dallas, but you've moved back to Garland. Did you know enough people here that you had no trouble working into...?

PEAVY: Oh yes, of course. I had right so many people through the years and then I had an Aunt, my mother's sister, Aunt Sue Jones [Mrs. John T. Jones], I'd visit there awhile and then I went to visit Lowell, that was her grandmother Jane's, and we would, she, Oneida and I would have dates and maybe Oneida would have a guest and we'd all walk uptown from there.

HAYSLIP: What besides walking did you do for recreation, when you came out here in 1917? Now, go easy on this...

PEAVY: Well, the girls had slumber parties. Well, the boys would come over, and the dates in the evening and they had different kind of picnics and one thing that was very strange to me was the possum hunt.

HAYSLIP: Possum Hunt? Did you go on possum hunts?

PEAVY: It would be the girls and the boys and then there would be chaperones.

HAYSLIP: Well, I hope so.

PEAVY: And, it seems to me like the place where we went was all in trees and was out someplace close to Rowlett.

HAYSLIP: So, that's what you did for a hot date was go on a possum hunt?

PEAVY: Yeah. And we would build a campfire there. And, the boys would do the possum hunting. We didn't possum hunt. We would have such good food to eat. And, I just thought they had the most fun in Garland cause it was different kind of entertainment than what we had.

HAYSLIP: O.K. In Dallas?

PEAVY: Garland was a different kind from what we had in Dallas.

HAYSLIP: O.K. You were out here in Garland as a young married woman in 1917 and what did you do with your spare time? Were you a housewife to begin with?

PEAVY: Yes. After I had been here about a year and a half, George Alexander asked me if I wouldn't come down and help him two or three months during the cotton season.[Ed note: George A. Alexander, Sr., a Garland insurance agent]

HAYSLIP: Now, you're getting onto your work experience and if you don't mind before we do that.....

PEAVY: That's what I did those three years.

HAYSLIP: I know, but you had some spare time and you told me about some cultural, educational events that went on in Garland and I believe one of them was the Chautauqua Series.

PEAVY: Oh yes. That was on the ground where our old school was. The first school. It housed both elementary and high school.

HAYSLIP: Are you talking about the area around Avenue B and Ninth Street? Bounded by A and B across the street from the First Methodist Church.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So, we had cultural events back then.

PEAVY: Yes. A lot of times the things they had indoors. But, this at Chautauqua was in the summer. And, that was a high brow affair. You had a tent to keep out the sun in daytime, but the musicians were just super and the men who were the speakers spoke on some lofty subjects.

HAYSLIP: They gave declamations.

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: And played music.

PEAVY: Yes. Well these men came from far away and from distant cities, but they had Chautauqua and we really received some good education from listening to them.

HAYSLIP: O.K. And that was in the 'teens.

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: So, we think we're doing well.

PEAVY: No. Well, yea I was trying to think if anyone came after I was married, But, I guess that was in the teens, I guess. The latter part.

HAYSLIP: O.K. The latter part of the teens and I believe you told me that after you married and you came out here as a newlywed and a young housewife there were other cultural things that went on. What about the language studies that...

PEAVY: Oh, well this was during then. World War I.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So that...

PEAVY: That's why some of our boys were getting ready to go or had gone into service and they were being friends, or I guess some of them were already there and so they decided we would have a teacher to come out and so the couples could take a course and soldiers spoken French.

HAYSLIP: So, we are in the World War I time and they were going to France and you decided that...

PEAVY: I didn't decide.

HAYSLIP: Well, apparently the group did that you all needed to learn some French if you were gonna go over there and fight a war, you needed to know about their language.

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: So, what did you do?

PEAVY: Well, Mrs. Elizabeth Beaver who was Eugene Beaver's wife had a sister in Dallas who spoke French fluently and I guess had taught it, I'm not sure. But, she came out and we had a little book, just about this big and that wide and it was called A Soldier's Book on French. But, there were people of every ages, I remember Mr. and Mrs. Allen Davis Sr. I remember R. D. Murphy's and they were older ...

HAYSLIP: Than you were at that time.

PEAVY: But, there was some that age and then some our age. And, I don't know when we became fluent in French, but anyway we did learn a little bit about it.

HAYSLIP: You knew how to ask where the restroom was or where to go eat?

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: So, you learned those phrases?

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: O.K. What else, and I'm saving the business part for last because that's best. What else have you done culturally or educationally through your life in Garland since 1917? You've been here almost 70 years. We can call you a native, I think.

PEAVY: Well, I don't know, this is contrary, but something I enjoyed was being a member of the Garland Story League, now it's named Lillialma Bradfield Store League after Mrs. Bradfield who was the organizer.

HAYSLIP: Right.

PEAVY: And I wasn't out here the first year that they organized, but I did enjoy that and then I gave one or two book reviews.

HAYSLIP: That's a woman's study club.

PEAVY: Yeah. And time passed. Most of the women that were in it were already gone. Billy was just a little boy.

HAYSLIP: That's your son. Bill Peavy, Jr. O.K. What were the women trying to accomplish with these clubs?

PEAVY: Well, if you would see that first one.

HAYSLIP: Were you in that, too?

PEAVY: Yeah. I was the youngest one.

HAYSLIP: Well, that's another club you didn't tell us about.

PEAVY: Well, most of the women in that were old enough to be my mother. But, anyway that yearbook, I should have brought it along, you would be amazed at the studies that whoever did the yearbook would take poets of the day and the novelist and they would have just beautiful programs.

HAYSLIP: I thought Garland was supposed to be a country farm town back then, and now you're telling me that you had a club called Poets...

PEAVY: I wish I had brought that yearbook. It was just amazing and later on that name was changed to the Woman's Study Club. The two women who really as I remembered it was starting it was Mrs. Peter Handley and Mrs. Lottie Watson.

HAYSLIP: O.K. They started that club for the women in that town.

PEAVY: Uh-huh, there was one before I heard, Mrs. Handley's daughter Fern say, they had a little club before that and then they came into that.

HAYSLIP: So women have always been active in Garland, in your recollections.

PEAVY: Yes they have. That's right.

HAYSLIP: O.K. That's interesting.

PEAVY: Through the years, later on we didn't have any country clubs where they would have

their luncheons or their fairs and later on Nicholson Memorial Hall upstairs was used for the events that were given.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So we didn't have the Performing Arts Center, back then? Oh,

PEAVY: No. How fortunate we are now to have that.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Let's talk about business and economics just for a minute. Making a buck. You were as I said one of the first working mothers Garland had and why don't you tell us a little bit about how you got into the business you eventually did so well in.

PEAVY: Well, I mentioned a while ago about going down to work with George Alexander.

HAYSLIP: This was in 1920...

PEAVY: This was about 1918 / 19.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So in 1919 you went to work for...

PEAVY: He knew I knew how to use the typewriter.

HAYSLIP: Just a minute. Let's read this into the record. George Alexander was an insurance agent in Garland.

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: And he knew you knew how to type.

PEAVY: And his typist, who was the wife of one of our doctors had to quit and he asked me to come down for a few months. Well, it lasted for about 2 years. So, I did learn about insurance, and then later on in years I answered an ad, it was when times were a little bit hard. And, so I answered an ad in Dallas for Hill & Green Fire & Casualty Insurance.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Excuse me just a moment. About what year was this you answered the want ad in Dallas? About, not exactly. Don't worry about it.

PEAVY: Let me see...

HA YSLIP: You had worked for the George Alexander Agency in the late teens here in Garland,

PEAVY: Let's see, about I guess maybe about 1927. Because there was a time in between this was when we lived in Mesquite for two years and Cal Brown told his Ford Agency to tell my brother-in-law in Dallas and he wanted Bill to come over, Bill Sr. and be a salesman with the club. And we did. And Lola and Ray were just coming back from there and so we...

HAYSLIP: Now, that would be Lola and Ray Olinger?

PEAVY: Olinger. Yeah.

HAYSLIP: O.K.

PEAVY: And, we stayed just about two years there.

HAYSLIP: Did you work while you were in Mesquite?

PEAVY: No. I didn't because Doris was a baby and she had just been born in 1924 when we were over there. And, we stayed there and then we came back to Garland when they were starting to make Model A's instead of the Model T.

HAYSLIP: Now, that would have been about 1928, Right.

PEAVY: Well, we got back here about 1926.

HAYSLIP: O.K.

PEAVY: And, that's when I answered the ad after that in Dallas.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So, that's when you answered the ad. And, it was what company in Dallas?

PEAVY: Hill & Green Fire and Casualty.

HAYSLIP: Alright, and what were you to do for them?

PEAVY: I was to be his secretary. Mr. Green's secretary. And, then I was in charge...He had me as the Office Manager for a while. Then, I had to help with the Fire and Casualty.

HAYSLIP: You were living in Garland, but you were driving back and forth. And that was the only way you had to get back.

PEAVY: Yes. So many of us did, we had car pools.

HAYSLIP: You wore a lot of cars out didn't you?

PEAVY: Yes. We did

HAYSLIP: Going back and forth then. But, you had two children. So what did you do...?

PEAVY: Well, I had a young woman to live in the house with us, except on weekends, she would go home.

HAYSLIP: There was no Day Care Centers.

PEAVY: No. There was somebody in the house with them all those times.

HAYSLIP: So, you had somebody in the house you were able to have somebody in the house to take care of those kids and see that they got to school.

PEAVY: They could go right across the street to the school. We lived at a house on the corner of Avenue Band 9th Street. [Ed note: SE quadrant]

HAYSLIP: Alright. You know a lot of women today worry about that. What the effects on those kids were going to be, and when they work and when they have to go away from home and you raised a pretty good family doing that. You did it before it was stylish to do it. You were kind of a pioneer in that area. So, you had gotten into Dallas in the late 20's, you were a secretary and I believe you slipped in a minute ago that you were an Office Manager after a while. So, they spotted the fact that you had some talent.

PEAVY: And, I knew fire and casualty at the time. During that time well I had a solicitor's license

for I could write insurance for some family friends

HAYSLIP: Was that a license to sell insurance?

PEAVY: Yes. It wasn't to be an agent. Cause that would be a recording agent license. That was just a solicitor's license to sell.

HAYSLIP: O.K. You were an insurance sales lady way back then.

PEA VY: Yeah. I didn't go out. It would be mostly from some of my... I had a big family and brothers and sisters. Their car and household goods and things like that, and friends and Bill was selling cars, Bill Sr. and we had some insurance on the car, so...

HAYSLIP: So, your husband sold the cars and you wrote the insurance. And this went on for how long?

PEAVY: Oh, until 1946. Cause that's when we started the agency in Garland. Billy had been in the service...

HAYSLIP: May I interrupt here? Now, we are talking now about the Peavy Insurance Agency in Garland. Is that correct?

PEAVY: Not yet. Well, it would be. It was going to be that yes. In the 1940's. 1946. He came home, he had been Lieutenant in the Navy and he had been over in the South Pacific and different places, and he came home in January of 46. He made connection with Southwestern Life Insurance.

HAYSLIP: Now, this is your son, Bill Peavy, Jr.

PEAVY: That's my son.

HAYSLIP: He came home from the Navy in 1946. You had been working in this agency all along.

PEAVY: Yes, and in July I had been working for the agency in Dallas. And on July 1, 1946 we opened our agency. I had to take a recording agents license and the insurance then from Austin who made Dallas its headquarters made an engagement to meet with me on a Saturday afternoon to give me the test, the examination.

HAYSLIP: You were already a solicitor, which means a sales lady.

PEAVY: Yeah. I didn't go out and sell it.

HAYSLIP: Then you were taking an exam to be a recording agent which means that you would be fully qualified to write insurance.

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: Alright. And, it was a Saturday, you took the exam.

PEAVY: Uh-huh.

HAYSLIP: And you didn't flunk.

PEAVY: No. (Laugh)

HAYSLIP: So, you passed the exam?

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: That made you a full-fledged insurance agent.

PEAVY: I give Billy credit for giving me the start. One time when he was home from service from the battleship. He was home on Avenue A and he walked out to the yard to the car and I walked with him and he said "Momma, it just looks so peaceful here, it was such a pretty day and he said "Oh, when I come home let's start an insurance business here.

HAYSLIP: Do you realize that if he hadn't done that, you'd still be driving back and forth to Dallas all the time.

PEAVY: I probably would. (Laugh)

HAYSLIP: But, he did and he came home.

PEAVY: He did and came here and then it was the first year or more he had spent most of his life here and he was the one and he came right in with his insurance and Fire and Casualty and just made a wonderful agent. And, Bill, Sr. was finishing his job out at Continental because the war was ending.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Your husband at that time had worked in one of the War production plants. [Ed note: Continental Motors succeeded Guiberson Diesel in the Forest Ln. plant later acquired by Kraft Foods]

PEAVY: At Continental, yea and several months later then he had finished there and he came into it with us.

HAYSLIP: O.K. When was this picture taken?

PEAVY: The day that we opened up Peavy Insurance Agency.

HAYSLIP: Well, good.

PEAVY: On south 6th Street. And a few, oh I don't know just when it was, but Ben Jackson built a...

HAYSLIP: Now, Mr. Jackson for the record was a Chevrolet Dealer at that time.

PEAVY: Yes. And we moved into his building cause we needed more room.

HAYSLIP: It didn't take you long did it?

PEAVY: (Laugh) That's right. This was on one side of Elmer Newman's office.

HAYSLIP: O.K. Now that was an appliance company at that time.

PEAVY: Yes. We couldn't get the electrical appliances during the war and they just would just come in and worry him to death trying to get a refrigerator or something and if he wasn't in or no one to answer his phone, well I took his calls.

HAYSLIP: That was part of the deal for renting the corner.

PEAVY: For renting...(Laugh)

HAYSLIP: Alright. So, you were a solicitor, you were a registering insurance agent and you were also a telephone answering service at that time.

PEAVY: (Laugh)

HAYSLIP: And you started at that time what is one of the biggest independent insurance agencies in the state.

PEAVY: Well, I don't deserve credit for that now. My men folks do.

HAYSLIP: That's awful nice of you.

PEAVY: They certainly do. My men folks deserve the credit.

HAYSLIP: We still remember who had the license. What do you remember about significant events that have happened in Garland through the years? Let's say...

PEAVY: Well, I remember the tornado and the flood.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So, you remember the tornado or the cyclone which would have been 1927? Is that right?

PEAVY: The tornado was 1927.

HAYSLIP: Where were you then?

PEAVY: At that time I was living on the corner of about 9th Street and Avenue B. That house on the corner. And, when we heard in the night the storm our chimney started falling down and trees uprooted and the wind blew the screens off the doors. But, we didn't have it like the people did on the other end of town.

HAYSLIP: It's a good thing you hadn't written the insurance on that. You'd had a lot of claims to pay.

PEAVY: (Laugh) Yes sir. The flood was in June, 1949. And...

HAYSLIP: Your memory is better than mine. I wouldn't have been able to recall that year exactly.

PEAVY: Well, I remember it because one baby was born a few days before that and Billy's daughter, Kitty [Judy] was having a birthday party at my house and in the back we had a picnic table and that water came up there and washed that picnic table away and the water came up into my house. We lived on the end of Lakeside then. And water came up into the back end of the house. And, we were fortunate that it was not as bad as it was over on Forest Lane and some of those others later on down Duck Creek.

HAYSLIP: What do you remember about the Depression in Garland?

PEAVY: Well, I remember that so many people lost their jobs. Banks failed, people committed suicide.

HAYSLIP: You kept your job, though?

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: You must have been valuable.

PEAVY: No. Mostly just had to have it. But, the thing to me that struck me so, was the bank moratorium when Roosevelt came.

HAYSLIP: O.K. So, that's what we refer to as the bank closing, or moratorium. And, when President Roosevelt took office, he closed the banks.

PEAVY: That's right. In 1933. And, I was in the elevator at the Republic Bank Building where my office was with Mr. Green. The agent I worked for at that time and I was in the elevator with another insurance man and just for fun, we had it on our minds, we just found out that the banks were going to be closed and I asked him, Mr. Southgate could you let me borrow ten dollars, and he said "Oh, sure" and he started to reach in his pocket and I said "No, I don't need that today". But, you just kept wondering how you were gonna make it through this. But, the salaries were reduced and you had to cut out doing a lot of things you were doing.

HAYSLIP: Do you remember how much money you made in 1933? Every month.

PEAVY: In 1933? Oh, I think it was about \$125.00.

HAYSLIP: O.K. And, you did your part on the home and you paid somebody to stay there and that's remarkable thinking back on that. Who were the influential people in Garland in the time that you've been here? The last 70 years.

PEAVY: Oh well, so many.

HAYSLIP: Well, name a few.

PEAVY: Well, I remember A. R. Davis, Tom Brown, John T. Jones.

HAYSLIP: Why were these people influential or important in Garland?

PEAVY: Well, they were important in business. A. D. Jackson was always one of my favorites. And, the doctor, Dr. Pickett.

HAYSLIP: Why are you only naming men?

PEAVY: Well...

HAYSLIP: What about women? Who were the influential women in Garland?

PEAVY: Well, I think Lottie Watson was one of the most intelligent. And, I think Ms. Hickman was brilliant. Now, you hadn't told me you were gonna ask me this. I could have thought up some of these women. Someone very influential even today is Mrs. Ina McQuaid.

HAYSLIP: Right. Mrs. McQuaid in current day.

PEAVY: And, during the years and I think until just recently was Mrs. Bradfield.

HAYSLIP: Mrs. Bradfield was involved in Garland News, of course as well as women's activities.

PEAVY: That's right.

HAYSLIP: What do you think the women did and contributed overall in a balance you say the men were important because of the business and yet you told us about all these clubs that women organized and we know they were busy and active all those years. Do you think they did their part? Were they important in the overall scheme?

PEAVY: Yes, I do. I certainly do. Now, I'll tell you one thing, the person who helped organize the Garland Women's Club was Sarah T. Hughes, and she came out here and took her time. I believe it was Wade Cloud and Jalie Darnell who were the two who had known her first. And, she came out here and spent so much time getting that started.

HAYSLIP: So, the women have been active in Garland for a long time. That's what you're telling me.

PEAVY: Yes, they have.

HAYSLIP: Why do you think Garland grew to be the tenth largest city in the state when it was founded about the same time as Wylie and Sachse and Reinhardt? What was different about us?

PEAVY: Oh, I think it was the people themselves who were just especially energetic or interested or entertaining, and I think that churches have had a lot to do with it.

HAYSLIP: They were very active.

PEAVY: Uh-huh, I think people of the churches here and the Ministers they felt they got so much to make living worthwhile.

HAYSLIP: What are you proudest of for your time in Garland, your 70 years with us? What are the things you're proudest of?

PEAVY: Oh, why didn't you tell me about that first? Whatever I'm proudest of?

HAYSLIP: Sure.

PEAVY: Well, I'm proudest of my family and my friends who are so thoughtful always. So many friends. And, when I haven't been well, the many visits and cards and inspiration and to me it's just something about the town that is very special to me.

HAYSLIP: That's the kind of place it is in other words.

PEAVY: Yes, it is.

HAYSLIP: Do you have any regrets?

PEAVY: Oh yes. I could have done so much more than I did. I've been lazy, I guess.

HAYSLIP: Well, I've heard you called a lot of things, but lazy has not been one of them. I've heard you called smart, talented, industrious. I've heard all kinds of words applied to you, but this is the first time I've heard lazy.

PEAVY: But, I'm proud so of my children. So many people have children who don't seem to care or rather they neglect them, and mine go the second mile every time. And, my grandchildren. I'm so proud of my many grandchildren, who are just as thoughtful as they were the day they married.

HAYSLIP: In August, you're going to be 90 years old?

PEAVY: Yes.

HAYSLIP: After 90 years, what sort of advice do you have to offer to the younger people? Would you advise younger people to move to Garland?

PEAVY: Oh yes. (Laugh)

HAYSLIP: You still feel that way.

PEAVY: It's so close to Dallas. If you needed something you couldn't get here, and maybe some of the unusual things that are there that we couldn't have here. They can get within a short length of time and I would like to tell you one thing, years ago I used to have, you know on the Fourth of July to celebrate these picnics down at the Fair Park and they would have speakers to come out and my father was invited several times to come and one time he and my mother came with the horse and buggy and after he had made the speech and it was all over, he went to his buggy it was stolen and it was found the next day in Dallas hitched to a post at the Santa Fe Railroad Station. Can you imagine that? Driving like they did from Dallas to here, well people had to.

HAYSLIP: You think we have good law and order out here now?

PEAVY: Yes. I do, I think we got good cars and we can get back and forth any time and we have the advantage of both the smaller town idea and the city.

HAYSLIP: Any personal advice you would have to give to a young person today after 90 years?

PEAVY: Oh, just learn all you can about everything, and be sure to look to the Lord to help you.

HAYSLIP: Well, I think that's good advice. Our time is about up and I want to thank you so much, not only for being with us today, but for providing the sort of inspiration you have to a number of us that have watched you through the years and what you have done and I want to tell you we don't agree with you that we regret you haven't done more. We think you've done a great deal.

PEAVY: Well, your family way back has been an inspiration to me.

HAYSLIP: Well, thank you. Thank you very much for joining us.

PEAVY: Thank you Mike for asking me.

HAYSLIP: And, so for Garland Perspectives, this concludes this segment with Gladys Nash Peavy. Thank you very much for joining us and so long until next time.

END OF TAPE