

Oral History Interview
with
Paul and Connie Brown

Interview Conducted by
Latasha Wilson
October 28, 2011

O-STATE Stories
Oral History Project

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O-State Stories

An Oral History Project of the OSU Library

Interview History

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The recording and transcript of this interview were processed at the Oklahoma State University Library in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Project Detail

The purpose of O-STATE Stories Oral History Project is to gather and preserve memories revolving around Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (OAMC) and Oklahoma State University (OSU).

This project was approved by the Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board on October 5, 2006.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recordings and transcripts of the interview with Paul and Connie Brown is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on October 28, 2011.

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About Paul Brown...

Paul Brown was born and raised in Oklahoma City, and he attended John Marshall High School. There he met Connie, his wife-to-be, and they continued dating after high school even though they went off to different universities. Paul enrolled at Phillips University and stayed long enough to get some basics out of the way, but he then transferred to Oklahoma State University to major in business. Within the business college, he was a member of Alpha Kappa Psi and the Society for Advancement of Management. He also held down multiple part-time jobs, including one at the OSU Library and a job in Oklahoma City which was handy since he went there almost every weekend to see Connie. Paul and Connie married during his senior year, at which time Connie moved to Stillwater. Living on a tight budget, they saved money but dined out and went to movies, sporting events, and concerts when time and money allowed.

After graduating in 1961, Paul was recruited by Conoco. The job moved the couple to states all over the country, including Wyoming, Washington, Colorado, Georgia, Texas, and Louisiana. Over the years no matter where he was, Paul kept in touch with several of his OSU schoolmates and attended as many OSU sporting events as possible. The couple finally landed back in Oklahoma where they currently reside, and in 2011 they came back to OSU to celebrate Paul's fiftieth class reunion.

About Connie Brown...

Connie Brown grew up in Oklahoma City, attending John Marshall High school where she met Paul, her husband-to-be. She and Paul ventured to different universities after graduation but were determined to maintain their relationship. After a few years, the two married, and Connie moved to Stillwater where she became a Cowboy fan, despite her time spent at OSU's rival university. In Stillwater, Connie enjoyed and thrived on her new married life on campus. Outside of the home, she enjoyed going to sporting events, movies, dances, and concerts put on by Allied Arts.

In 1961, Paul went to work with Conoco, taking a job that moved the couple all over the United States. Moving to various states such as Wyoming, Washington, Colorado, Georgia, Texas, and Louisiana was an adventure to Connie since she had never traveled and had only ever lived in Oklahoma. The couple's son and daughter also attended and graduated from OSU. Their children and the sporting events, especially football, were the bridge that kept Connie and Paul closely connected with OSU, no matter where they lived. After years of transfers, the couple moved back to Oklahoma which makes it easier to get to OSU for all the events they wish to attend. Connie is very proud of her children's achievements and is looking forward to her grandchildren coming to OSU, as well.

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Paul & Connie Brown

Oral History Interview

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Stillwater, Oklahoma



Wilson *Today is October 28, 2011. My name is Latasha Wilson, and I'm with the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program at the OSU Library. Today, I'm talking with Paul and Connie Brown about their memories of OSU for the O-State Stories Project. Paul is celebrating his fiftieth reunion this Homecoming weekend here in Stillwater. Thank you for being with us today.*

P. Brown Thank you.

Wilson *What are some things you're most excited about for your reunion this weekend?*

P. Brown We come back to campus quite often for all the ballgames and other kind of events. When we lived away in the Rockies, in the southeast, we enjoyed coming back, kind of Homecoming, but now we come over quite often. We do meet friends for the games that we also graduated with. It's getting together with friends within a few hundred miles and seeing the campus grow. Then we come over often because both of our kids, Kevin and Teresa, graduated here: Teresa in '84 and Kevin in '88. Then we'll also be coming over starting next year because our granddaughter will also be going here, and hopefully our grandson. It's nice coming back. Stillwater was our first home, two blocks south of the campus, after we got married between my senior year between the first and second semester, so that's kind of fun coming back to our first real home, in an apartment.

Wilson *And you all live in Tulsa now?*

C. Brown Correct.

Wilson *So it is not too far away.*

C. Brown No.

P. Brown No.

C. Brown No, about an hour and fifteen minutes.

Wilson *So are there any events that are going on for your fiftieth reunion this year that are extra special?*

P. Brown Yes, the alumni group has put together a golf cart tour of all the decorations, and there's also a reception this afternoon. Then tomorrow (I'm a graduate of the Business School, fifty years) I get my fifty-year pin, and they'll also have a reception tomorrow. We're also meeting friends that we graduated with tomorrow, so it's kind of special.

Wilson Yes.

C. Brown And we really appreciate the golf cart tour. Our old feet just can't take it these days. (Laughter)

Wilson *That sounds nice, and there is a lot to see. Lots of changes have taken place on campus.*

C. Brown Yes. Hardly recognize the place.

P. Brown We enjoy talking about, you know, the '60s generation when we went here, the different jobs we had on campus, the pay, and seeing friends, so it's really fun.

Wilson *Well, I'm excited to hear about that today. (Laughter) First of all, let's start out with having you tell me each where you were born and where you grew up.*

P. Brown Okay.

C. Brown I was born in Oklahoma City. It was called Wesley Hospital. It's no longer there. I was raised in Oklahoma City then my parents—we moved quite a bit. We moved to small towns around Oklahoma. I never lived anywhere else but Oklahoma, (Wewoka, Seminole, Oklahoma City) and I enjoyed the fact of moving. That's why I didn't mind moving with our jobs we had since we were transferred seventeen times. Well, that was kind of fun. (Laughs)

P. Brown I'm also from Oklahoma City. I was born in Oklahoma City. I lived there basically until I finished at OSU. We both went to John Marshall High School. After we graduated from OSU, as Connie said, then we started moving to a number of locations with Conoco.

Wilson *What year did you graduate high school?*

P. Brown Nineteen fifty-seven. The year that it went from Oklahoma A&M [College] to Oklahoma State [University], in 1957.

Wilson *Did you hear much about that? Were people still talking about it?*

P. Brown Oh, yes. That was a big subject for a couple of years. We were the first class in 1957 that graduated as Oklahoma State for the full time.

Wilson *Were most people thinking positively about that change, or were people still unsure?*

P. Brown No, very much so, very much so because with the classes and the majors, it just encompassed more than agricultural and engineering. I didn't hear any bad comments whatsoever. They were all good. OSU did a good job when they did convert the name, going back to a lot of the A&M graduates, working with them, also.

C. Brown A lot of people called it the cow college for a while, but they soon broke that tune. (Laughter) My grandfather used to raise cows, and he was good friends with the dean of agriculture then. That's all I ever heard him call it was the cow college. (Laughter)

Wilson *So you two meet in high school?*

C. Brown Yes.

Wilson *Do you remember how you met?*

C. Brown Yes.

P. Brown We met in class, but we kind of laugh about it. We met near Sadie Hawkins Day, so I was invited on the first date. I was kind of shy, so I don't know if I'd have ever asked her out. Of course, I was watching her in class [since she was so pretty and fun].

C. Brown He was very shy. He changed a lot. (Laughter) That's what I liked about him, because he was shy. (Laughs)

P. Brown But we never went to the same school awhile when I was going up here

and she was at OU for a couple of years. When we did get married and lived here, I converted her, pretty much. She's a "Go Pokes!"-type gal now. (Laughs)

C. Brown This is a very friendly campus, very friendly campus.

Wilson *Well, how did you initially decide to come here?*

P. Brown Actually, I started at Phillips [University] at Enid and met a friend that had gone to OU for one year. We decided to just transfer to Oklahoma State basically because of my major and his major. We're glad we did.

Wilson *Where did you live when you got up here?*

P. Brown I lived in an apartment, did not live in the dorm up here. We did have an apartment. Then at mid-semester my senior year, we did marry, and we found, actually, a new apartment just south of Theta Pond about two blocks. We lived there until I graduated, then, in May of 1961.

Wilson *Is that the location you were saying is now Party Pics?*

C. Brown Is it still Party Pics? I thought it was gone now.

Wilson *Oh, I haven't been there in a while. (Laughs)*

C. Brown I think so.

P. Brown We've not taken the time to drive by, but we are today because it was pretty new, the upstairs-downstairs duplex-type apartment.

C. Brown Our daughter thought it was gone, too, but then she had Party Pics—I mean, we had to let her Party Pics come in the house, took up so much room. She had a good investment in that company.

Wilson *So did you room with this boy that came?*

P. Brown Yes, we did until we got married. At Phillips my first year, I did live in a dorm. I just decided to live in an apartment. We were lucky what we found each time.

Wilson *What did you do about food, living off campus?*

P. Brown We ate at the library an awful lot.

Wilson *Really? (Laughter)*

- P. Brown** Not the library. I'm sorry. The cafeteria. At the time, it was a little different style. It was the old style cafeteria with two lines. A lot of times breakfast, lunch, and dinner we ate, actually, in the cafeteria. We would make The Strip sometimes. Of course, that was before a number of the other locations here. We also ate at some of the rooming homes. Rooming houses would have family-type meals. About once a week we would go for a family-type meal. I think it was like a dollar and a quarter for a big family-style dinner.
- C. Brown** The cafeteria also had ice cream made with the dairy products from the dairy school here. Oh, man, that was good! You couldn't buy that ice cream anywhere else. It was delicious.
- Wilson** *Wish they hadn't quit that. (Laughter)*
- C. Brown** I think it was fifty cents for a great big dish. It was good.
- Wilson** *You mentioned you would go to The Strip on occasion. Do you remember any specific places there?*
- P. Brown** No, it really hasn't changed that much. Of course, at that time we could not visit some of the beer locations because we were underage at the time. It was primarily pizza and the quick-type food-type places. That's one reason we ate in the cafeteria in the Union so much.
- Wilson** *Did you have a job while you were here?*
- P. Brown** Yes, I had several jobs. One of them we were laughing about was at the library for two years. It was interesting because at the time, the pay in 1959, '60, '61 was fifty cents an hour, and that actually paid rent. A nice apartment was fifty dollars, so a hundred hours. Then I would go to Oklahoma City about every other weekend and work a couple of jobs with a printing company and an advertising company. So I'd run down there and work one day and come back here and make as much as I made in two weeks. I learned a lot in the library. Actually, I did enjoy the work.
- Wilson** *Were you working with the books?*
- P. Brown** Working with the books, stacking books and straightening up and whatever they had that came up that would be kind of heavy work. It was fun. I enjoyed it.
- Wilson** *It sounds like you had a car?*
- P. Brown** Had a car, but on campus I always lived close enough—I did have a

bicycle, so I went about everyplace on that bike. Probably like it is now, I know the parking is fairly limited. After you found the parking close to your apartment, you'd like to stay right there. I had a bicycle the whole time I was at Oklahoma State, so whether I was going to work at the library or studying or whatever at the Union, well, I rode that bike.

C. Brown What was gas then, twenty-five cents a gallon?

P. Brown Oh, about thirty cents a gallon.

C. Brown Thirty cents a gallon. We saved even on that. I bought the bicycle for him. (Laughter)

Wilson *So you two were dating throughout the time that you were at different schools?*

C. Brown Yes.

P. Brown Yes.

Wilson *Would you just meet up in Oklahoma City, or would you go to Norman much?*

P. Brown I went to Norman a number of times, but we would, on the weekends, meet in Oklahoma City. Actually, at banquets and that type of thing here on campus I'd go down at that time to Central State where she was going. I would pick her up, drive her up here for a banquet, then take her back to campus that night, late. We burned that highway up quite a bit between here and Oklahoma City. (Laughter)

C. Brown I bet if you turn her loose, she can make it by herself. (Laughter)

Wilson *Before coming here to college had you been on the campus before?*

P. Brown One time. One time when I was a senior in high school I did visit the campus and really liked the campus, but then I got a scholarship to Phillips the first year, so I tried that. Actually, my best friend at the time and I both went to Phillips with one other high school friend of ours, so there was three of us out of John Marshall. Just because of the programs and degrees they had is when I decided to switch back over to Oklahoma State, but as far as the basic English, math, and those types of things, I did that at Phillips University.

Wilson *So you knew early on that you wanted to major in business.*

P. Brown Yes.

- Wilson** *What were some business classes you remember once you got here?*
- P. Brown** I enjoyed Dean [Edward] Burris that was a professor of business law. I had Dean Burris for about three different classes over a couple of years, the statistics and those type classes. At the time, programs at the business school, there was a lot of case study and team case study in the various management classes. That provided a chance to work with other students and come up with a plan on a particular problem and this type of thing, so I enjoyed the case studies also. I think at the time, the case studies in the early '60s and late '50s, as far as the college, it was kind of a management-type plan.
- Wilson** *Were there any other professors that had an influence on you?*
- P. Brown** Actually, at Phillips I was talking about our math courses. They had a very difficult math instructor that I respected, quite so. He was a Dr. Mason. I learned enough math, as far as statistics in those classes, it was a really good background. Then, like I mentioned, Dean Burris, he was really a special professor. I enjoyed that very much. There was a number of professors that we had from the East Coast and then moved back, kind of transitioned, when I was still in school.
- Wilson** *What were you majoring in?*
- C. Brown** Nursing. I really liked it, but the second semester I said, "I'd rather be married than go straight into nursing on the floor." I was on the BS-RN. You had to completely leave school, go on the floor, and work. I thought, "I'm not going to be able to see Paul any at all." So, I thought, "Well, I'll just change my major." Mother said, "If you back out, that's it. No more help from home." I said, "Well, I can't make it by myself without scholarships," so we got married.
- Wilson** *And it worked out. (Laughs)*
- C. Brown** And it worked out for fifty years. (Laughs)
- P. Brown** She would come to the library with me every evening whether I was working or studying, so we spent a lot of time in this library.
- C. Brown** Everybody said it would only last three months. (Laughter)
- Wilson** *What would you do in the library when he was busy?*
- C. Brown** I would read. I would read.

- P. Brown** And then help me.
- C. Brown** One time, a friend and I were acting pretty silly. At the staircase before you go out, we stood there and talked gibberish. It sounded like some foreign language. People would walk by, “Wonder what in the world they’re talking.” We had fun that day. We were acting silly. (Laughter)
- P. Brown** We had some close friends that were also couples that married about the time we did that we would visit and study with, also.
- Wilson** *What has changed about the library?*
- P. Brown** Well, the computer sources are just remarkable. That’s the main thing because at that time it was books, the paperbacks. In fact, I did have a computer class when I was a junior, and it was the old IBM 650 that would actually fill this room up, and that was their basic starting. But the computerized everything that’s available anymore is big, and the library, I know, has stayed close with that.
- C. Brown** I did actually get a job on campus, and I was to start on a Monday. It was in the science lab. It was the highest paying job on campus. I felt kind of bad, but it was true. They called me and said, “Is your husband graduating in May?” I said, “Yes.” They said, “Well, we just can’t afford to train you and lose you and have to train somebody over.” I understood that, but we managed to make it. No problems. No help. When we would go to the grocery store—there was a little grocery store on Main Street. We spent twenty dollars a week on groceries. We didn’t go over a penny. Sometimes we got by with less. Of course, we didn’t go to the show but once in a blue moon. We ate well. We had steak once a week. They even gave S&H Green Stamps, and I got birthday presents for his mother and my mother saving green stamps wherever we went.
- P. Brown** We visited Hideaway about once a month. That was a special dinner. (Laughs)
- C. Brown** That was like going to a steakhouse. (Laughter)
- Wilson** *What do you remember about Hideaway in the early days?*
- P. Brown** Well, we didn’t realize it was going to grow. We still go to several Hideaways in Tulsa, by the way, but it was kind of special at the time.
- C. Brown** There was no Joseppi’s or any of the other restaurants we have. Just that one little store, down at the middle of the campus.
- Wilson** *Was pizza a strange concept at the time, or had you had that in*

Oklahoma City?

- P. Brown** No, when we were dating in high school we went to a couple of locations. Sussy's in Oklahoma City, so that was the big date then, there in high school.
- C. Brown** First time I ever ate pizza I didn't like it because it was so strange.
- Wilson** Yes.
- C. Brown** We were seniors in high school, I think, but it grows on you pretty quickly. (Laughter)
- P. Brown** It sounds like we didn't study, but we studied a lot. (Laughter)
- C. Brown** He would have study classes over at our little apartment. We had one little tiny TV set, and on Thursday nights—what's that program?
- P. Brown** Elliot Ness.
- C. Brown** Elliott Ness. All the kids would come over and watch that. It was cold in the apartment, so in the wintertime they'd all be sitting with their coats on, watching Elliot Ness. (Laughter)
- Wilson** *Where would you go to the movies if you ever went to the show?*
- P. Brown** On the corner across the street from the fire station, and then one downtown, on Main...
- C. Brown** That one is a furniture store now, I think.
- Wilson** *Furniture Showcase.*
- C. Brown** Yes.
- Wilson** *Would you ever do anything else around town?*
- P. Brown** We enjoyed basketball. We enjoyed the wrestling, of course, so we made most of the wrestling matches.
- C. Brown** And the concerts they'd have here. They had good ones.
- Wilson** *Through Allied Arts?*
- C. Brown** The Wills Brothers.

P. Brown Through the Allied Arts, yes.

C. Brown Yes, those where fantastic, and they were free!

P. Brown We stayed pretty close to campus really, stayed within budget.
(Laughter)

Wilson *You showed me a photo earlier from the prom. Do you want to tell me about the prom? We don't have those anymore.*

P. Brown This was kind of a big thing. At the time, we'd just found out that she was pregnant, just barely, so that prom was kind of special. We found out later that, I guess, they had stopped the proms. But at the time, the band was a big band. It was Les Elgart. A lot of people would recognize the name during that time.

C. Brown Old people will. (Laughter)

P. Brown But it was fun. It was time to dress up and go to a dance, which we enjoyed, so that was quite nice.

C. Brown They didn't wear too much formal attire. It was just nice Sunday-type clothes.

P. Brown Suits and that type of thing.

C. Brown It was better on the budget. I'm sure some of the sororities and fraternities had their big formals. I know when my daughter was here, it was buy a formal every other week!

Wilson *Yes. (Laughter)*

C. Brown I started having them made.

P. Brown Of course, we still had high school proms, junior and senior proms, so that was just kind of an extension. Like I say, it was enjoyable.

Wilson *Did you have to pay anything to attend the dances?*

P. Brown We did, and I kept thinking the prom was like five dollars or something because they did have a quite nice band. They could play rock-n-roll and this type of thing.

Wilson *Were you involved in student organizations?*

P. Brown Yes, there was two, actually, through the business school: Alpha Kappa

Psi and SAM [Society for Advancement of Management], I was members of. Then as far as any other organization, it would be kind of a one-time thing that a class would get together and some program, even for high schoolers coming through, we would actually meet with at times about the types of degrees we had, that were looking at the various campuses at the time.

Wilson *That's nice.*

C. Brown Both of our kids joined sororities and fraternities. Our son was a Pike [Pi Kappa Alpha] and our daughter was a Zeta, but they enjoyed it and had fun. I spent as much time on campus that they were beginning to think I was one of the students. (Laughs) I loved to stay over at the Zeta house and do the things they were going and doing and stay in the room with them. She even kept baby ducks over there for a week, and they didn't find them. (Laughter)

P. Brown I can't recall exactly the tuition at the time, but sixteen to eighteen hours, it was running, if I remember it, less than \$250. Of course, then the books. That was probably another \$100 or so. At the time, it seemed about right, but right now as you look back, it was pretty cheap education.

Wilson *What about buildings on campus?*

P. Brown The new Business Building, (I say "new," it's what, twenty years old now or so) the Morrill building was most of the business. And the Classroom Building, we had many classes in the Classroom Building. Really, it's about the same now except as far as engineering and some of those courses. The newer Business Building is quite nice, and the trading floor in the Business Building is quite nice.

Wilson *Have you heard they're planning to improve the Business Building?*

P. Brown I did. I've seen the plans, and that really looks nice. Looking forward to that.

Wilson *What about Old Central? Did you have any classes there?*

P. Brown I did. I had a couple of lecture classes in kind of the main auditorium of Old Central. Sure did.

Wilson *Did you spend much time in the Student Union?*

P. Brown Yes. Really, pretty much every evening, Saturday afternoon, Sunday afternoons. A lot of time in the Union was study, especially in the upper

floors. They'd have rooms that we'd go to study in, in addition to the library. With some of those, you could converse back and forth if you were on a team-type approach. But yes, we spent a bunch of time in the library. Even after we got married, we still ate in there a number of times. I made most breakfasts through the Union.

C. Brown Paul used to keep a budget, and I still have the sheets. If he bought a pack of gum he would put it down, five or ten cents. He did that for years while he was going to school, so he'd know what to budget for and how to keep track of what was going where. As a result, he saved a lot of money. He still does it, too. (Laughter)

P. Brown I guess an average, I had probably about three part-time jobs.

Wilson *Wow.*

P. Brown The most hours was here in the library, those hundred hours a month. The other jobs were twenty or thirty hours per month.

C. Brown Today's kids just will not budget money. They don't know where it goes. "Oh, I spent fifty dollars this week."

P. Brown That may just be our kids. (Laughter)

C. Brown Oh, just our kids. (Laughter) They just will not budget their money. They say, "Mom and Dad will give me more. Why should I bother?" [Our kids were thrifty like their dad.]

Wilson *Yes. That's sure smart to start young. I'm impressed. Well, it sounds like you were super busy.*

P. Brown I stayed pretty busy.

Wilson *You said you attended some sporting events. Do you have any memories?*

P. Brown Coach [Henry] Iba was still here, and then the wrestling program was—let's see. The years I was here I guess they won two nationals. Of course, in the middle '40s, of course, they won two NCAA championships. It was really an experience going to the games and watching Coach Iba. Very respectable, he was a respected man.

Wilson *What about Homecoming? What are some of your Homecoming memories?*

P. Brown We missed a lot of Homecoming events. The parade was always

especially nice, and in 1960 we had two gold medal wrestlers. Shelby Wilson and [Doug] Blubaugh, both Ponca City wrestlers, were gold medal winners from Oklahoma State, so that was big. The parade was quite large, and then, of course, the ballgames. Had to make the ballgames, so I managed to work around the hours to at least get to go to the games. I did make one parade, and I was kind of impressed. It was a lot larger than I expected.

- Wilson** *And then with your children both being involved in Greek life...*
- P. Brown** Oh, yes.
- C. Brown** We have brought more food to this campus on football and basketball game day, and that was before—what do you call it when you eat out of your trunk?
- Wilson** *Tailgating.*
- P. Brown** Tailgating.
- C. Brown** ...before tailgating was popular. I fried chicken, made baked beans, deviled eggs. You would think I was having lunch for the poor out there. (Laughs) It was.
- P. Brown** We would park on the south side of the stadium, between the stadium and, at that time, the armory. We would bring a station wagon full of food for the guys and the gals. We always had fifteen, twenty, twenty-five other students. (Laughs)
- C. Brown** This one poor kid he would eat a drumstick. I mean, he would eat it all but the middle part of the bone. I said, “You don’t eat that.” He said, “You do when you’re hungry.” (Laughter)
- P. Brown** But yes, we made all the Homecomings. We lived out of state. When you’re in Spokane, Washington, or the Rockies or Atlanta you just miss a lot, so when we’re here and we can drive within a few hours, we’re going to make everything. At that time, it was difficult even to get the scores in the Rockies, Washington, or Georgia. Now, of course, with ESPN and the computer generation we can keep up with the scores. So when we’re living close we make the games. When we did live out of state, when we were able to make any of the out-of-state games of OSU, like Lafayette, Louisiana, we’d make that when we lived in Houston. We made a number of out-of-state games in addition to the bowl games. We just won’t miss a bowl game as long as we’re well enough to go. (Laughter)

C. Brown Yes.

Wilson *Have you kept track of how many Homecomings you've attended?*

P. Brown We really haven't, but I could say three, eight, twelve, fifteen, maybe as many as twenty.

C. Brown Twenty, yes. We've kept the same seats for how many years?

P. Brown A long time. A lot of the part of the Homecoming we've missed, except for the game, is because our son played football all through grade school and high school. Those grade school and junior high games always came on a Saturday morning.

C. Brown Twelve o'clock.

P. Brown We'd be driving down from Ponca City, and Kevin would be back there changing clothes so he could go to the game. We would even bring the whole team down sometimes if we could find cheap enough tickets.

Wilson *Oh, wow, that's neat. You mentioned you've stayed in touch with friends that you had here fifty years ago.*

C. Brown Yes.

Wilson *Do you want to talk about that any?*

P. Brown Arthur and Kay, they live in Marietta, Oklahoma. They were married the same break that we were married in our junior and senior year. Ever since then, if we're reasonably close we still meet in Oklahoma City or some place and kind of celebrate in between. Theirs is one weekend, and ours is five days later. We still share that, and we are going to tomorrow.

C. Brown We're meeting for dinner or lunch before the game, be it basketball or football.

P. Brown In the last fifteen years we haven't missed one. We do drive a number of miles to do that. Then the college friend that we discussed and came up here together and graduated, we visited with him in Fort Worth, Texas, two weekends ago. He's in city administration, and that's the reason he came here in the first place. So we still visit quite a few. Then also a couple of high school buddies I also went to college with, we still keep up with each other. One lives near San Diego. We still talk and send emails weekly and visit fairly often. Then with having our fiftieth wedding anniversary in January, quite a few of those, and even at our wedding, three of people in our wedding were our close friends, also,

OSU grads.

C. Brown They went to Hawaii with us.

P. Brown Yes, they did meet us in Hawaii, so it was kind of fun.

C. Brown That was special.

Wilson *Yes, it is!*

P. Brown So we stayed very close to a lot of the grads.

Wilson *What are some of the most special memories you recall from your time here?*

P. Brown Of course, the graduation was quite nice. It was fun, because I never really had to struggle on grades that much. I studied a lot, and that helped. Another thing I think everybody would remember, for the 1961 graduates, we had Vietnam, and the draft was still in at the time. Most of us just took our chances after graduation. Three of the fellows I roomed with and still visit with, actually, all three of them went to officer school. I was the only of the four that did not, so that was kind of on everybody's mind at the time. If you made your grades it was a big help.

Then it was really fun after we did finally get married. We didn't have to drive back and forth to Oklahoma City. That helped on grades and helped on studying. She's quite a good cook, so we ate in the apartment a lot. Then by the time we left Oklahoma State, just before we left Oklahoma State, then we found out she was expecting, so that was really kind of special. They all came down here. Teresa came down here, and so did Kevin, in the '80s graduates.

C. Brown They had so much fun, especially Teresa, when they first put the Astroturf down. She remembers walking on the turf, getting to feel of it and test it and jump on it. She just couldn't believe that was fake grass. (Laughter)

P. Brown I was proud of it, and I loaded them up in Ponca City and brought all of them down here so we could look at the new surface at the football stadium. (Laughs) Of course, it's a beautiful location right now.

Wilson *Did either of your parents attend college?*

P. Brown Her mother and father, both, OU. Her dad's a graduate of OU. Well, let's see, a graduate of SMU and went to OU law school. My father went to Central State for one year. Another reason I looked at OSU, I had an

uncle that's a graduate engineer from Oklahoma State, Oklahoma A&M at that time, so we were kind of leaning that direction.

Wilson *I read that you are interested in genealogy.*

P. Brown Yes.

C. Brown Yes, that's his love.

P. Brown I've been doing that. I've slowed down a lot, but that's been kind of a twenty-five year process. Now it's an easy process with online information, and so much information now is available. Those are one of the late-night or in the middle of the winter when you can't play golf, that's what I do.

C. Brown He hasn't found any bad men, cattle rustlers, or horse thieves or anything like that.

Wilson *I'm surprised. Most people have a little bit somewhere in there. (Laughter) What about Theta Pond?*

C. Brown Oh! (Laughs) Tell the truth, now. (Laughter)

P. Brown Well, I did get pitched in Theta Pond. It was easy, though, of all things. It was frozen, so they made me go out quite a ways and lay down in it, four of my good friends.

C. Brown You said they went with you.

P. Brown Well, that was when I was at Phillips.

C. Brown Oh, that was at Phillips, okay.

P. Brown This was a marriage-type thing. Yes, that's the only thing. Then of course, Theta Pond, we walked around it many times since we were just two blocks south after we got married.

C. Brown I used to love walking around it. I thought it was so pretty just to walk around it and sit down and enjoy the scene and watch the ducks and all the pretty flowers they had.

Wilson *Yes, it's a real special location. What is it about Oklahoma State that sparks loyalty in its students and alums?*

P. Brown I think that's just the campus people themselves.

C. Brown The friendliness of the campus.

P. Brown The friendliness of the campus, all the way from working with the professors. I guess we're far enough away from a large city that when you go to Oklahoma State, you pretty much live here. You live on campus or around campus, and that helps, versus going to a school where you can commute and this type of thing. Even being in a fraternity, I still have a lot of good friends from high school that went here. As far as meeting people and meeting people in class and the activities they had, it's really like—I think with the campus people living around the campus and very few commuting, you get a lot of interaction with activities around campus. They do have a lot of activities.

C. Brown That's true because when I was going to school in Edmond, we called it the suitcase college. Everybody left on weekends. If you were left up in a dorm, you were by yourself, practically. Nobody around, nothing to do, just study, which might've helped. But the friendliness of this campus, because not that many do go home, it's just a big happy family situation.

Wilson *There are always things going on.*

C. Brown Right, there's always things going on.

P. Brown And OSU, President Hargis and all of them, they kept track, they kept current with the classes, and they kept current with facilities, the educational-type facilities. That was a big part.

Wilson *You've touched on this some, but how has OSU impacted your life?*

P. Brown Before I was recruited on campus by Conoco, actually Conoco Pipeline, (there was a number of us that were recruited, actually, for the same training program that I went on) just with Conoco recruiting on campus, a larger-type campus, that was a big impact. The people you meet and some of the instructors that you're close to, you really want to do good for them. They really notice if you're working, if you're working for a grade or not, if you're working to learn. As far as us going to work for Conoco in 1961, we were still just coming out of a recession. The job recruiters, there were a number of them, but they were down. We were quite happy to get a couple of offers, and the Conoco one we accepted. From there, they had a number of managers and engineers also from OSU. That was one of the big impacts. We're just proud of our Oklahoma State graduation and degree.

Wilson *Could you tell me a little bit more about the actual graduation ceremony or the day you graduated?*

P. Brown It was interesting. For quite some years, you have a lot of pictures available, and my graduation, and the robe and this type of thing, there's a picture of me in my robe and hat, two blocks south of campus.

C. Brown By our little apartment.

P. Brown We did graduate in the stadium at that time. It was Lewis Field. It was nice weather.

Wilson *Did you say yellow robe?*

C. Brown No, black.

P. Brown Gray. A dark, dark, dark gray. Of course, everybody had their different colored tassel, depending on which school they were in, which major they were in. At the time, it was—I forget the total. I think it was like five or six thousand that graduated that day or walked across. Now, of course, I guess they're breaking it down by Business School, engineering, this type of thing, which is so many. We had enough we all graduated in Lewis Field, and we were lucky it was nice weather.

Wilson *Did your family come?*

P. Brown Yes. Yes, they did.

Wilson *And then how long after graduation did you all move?*

P. Brown Two weeks. (Laughter) We packed up and moved to Oklahoma City...

C. Brown We didn't have much.

P. Brown ...where both of our families lived. I think we started in Casper, Wyoming. We made quite a few moves early in the training program and some construction projects. We went from Casper to Cheyenne to Spokane and back down to Ponca City and Louisiana, and ended up in Atlanta, Georgia. We made quite a few moves in the first ten years. Then after that, they slowed down quite a bit. It was fun. We were looking forward to graduation, ready to go to work, accomplish something.

C. Brown With his penny pinching and saving, when he moved he actually had enough money. The company offered to pay for the move. We had a few chairs and things like that. He said, "No, I'll pay for it. I have enough. You can reimburse me."

No, they reimbursed me. (Laughter)

P. Brown I just said that. They reimbursed him, but he was so proud that he had enough to say, “No, I’ll pay for it myself.” (Laughter)

C. Brown *Yes, that’s nice. What area did you work in at Conoco?*

Wilson At the Conoco Pipeline. It was a subsidiary of Conoco, operating a common carrier pipeline system, also terminal basically from coast to coast and north to south. When I say operation of pipelines, it’s remote control. The actual pump stations, the lines themselves, it was the actual operation of that pipeline system as a common carrier.

P. Brown No, he didn’t dig pipelines. (Laughter)

C. Brown We did go on the construction projects, which we enjoyed, at various locations.

P. Brown I’d never traveled, and this was so exciting to get to see all these places. My family never went on vacation, and that was so exciting. My mother had always been ill, and we had to watch our Ps and Qs so she could stay close to home. So I got to see the world. Before, I hadn’t seen anything. I didn’t mind moving.

C. Brown Another thing, mentioning that and talking about the impact, is this article that’s in a magazine. I’ve been fighting male breast cancer and pushing people, men, to check for male breast cancer for ten years. Connie had it last year, but we still made...

P. Brown All the sports events and the basketball games.

C. Brown ...all the activities.

P. Brown There were times when I was hanging on to things and grabbing. Two of the staff workers saw me, and they thought I was going to pass out. They emerged on our little stair steps, and I said, “I am going to show them I can do it.” (Laughter)

C. Brown But it was kind of a goal to make those OSU visits and visit those OSU people. That’s a big help.

P. Brown *Talk about loyalty. (Laughter) Do you want to talk about your experiences with that anymore?*

Wilson Hers was quite serious at one time, and she’s clean now. I’ve still got some work to do, but what I’ve been trying to push for years is to educate men. It’s very simple to check for. I don’t know. I had probably

P. Brown

nineteen or twenty physicals while I was working and before and after, and they didn't catch it until it got in the lymph system. So I've been pushing what I can in Tulsa to get, not the facilities, but the people in those facilities need to train men to look for male breast cancer. Granted, there's not but about three thousand, thirty-five hundred a year. That's what's found, not what's out there. They lose nearly 20 percent of those because they are so far advanced. You'll see me every once in a while just pushing those guys to check for themselves, have their wives or girlfriends or whatever. It's a simple, simple test. You can't catch all of them, but at least they recognize it before it gets in the lymph system.

His is still in the lymph system. He had to have a mastectomy, and a radical one at that, where they go in under the arm and take out all the lymph nodes. They took seventeen positive ones out...

C. Brown

Wow.

Wilson

...so they have to watch that now. They've been watching him with PET scans and ultrasounds and different sightseeing tests they do.

C. Brown

It was kind of a point we made the OSU events. That was just kind of one thing we would push for.

P. Brown

A lot of women just don't want to go to the doctor and face the facts that they're not well, but it's your life and you're worth it. You need to go and do a biopsy or a PET scan, whatever they can do. Mammograms definitely every year after forty-five, some before. The government is trying to push, "Well, we don't think but every five years," but I disagree. We need it every year.

C. Brown

But anyhow, bottom line, as far as OSU, it did help. Just having the friends and meeting with the friends and continuing. The travel was reduced a little bit, but we would still make all the events here. We missed a bowl game this last year, but we'll catch up. (Laughter)

P. Brown

I don't look it now, but I did lose forty-five pounds because I just wouldn't eat. The food, I just couldn't stand it. The thought of food just turned me upside-down.

C. Brown

But you made the sporting events.

Wilson

But I made the sporting events, yes. (Laughter)

C. Brown

That's wonderful.

Wilson

And pop, I couldn't stand the taste of pop, but now I have to watch it.

(Laughter)

C. Brown *Well, what advice would you give to OSU students today or to students thinking about coming to OSU?*

Wilson First, they're going to get a very recognized degree. I don't care what school they're in, engineering, business, or even education like our daughter was, they're going to be leaving with a very recognized school.

P. Brown That was one reason I transferred up here. So I'd say, "Come up here, apply for a scholarship, and get ready to start to learn. You're going to meet a lot of friends and be able to attend a lot of activities and really see a lot of people worldwide." Every state we travel to, there is really a large alumni association in about every place we've been to, plus the office. Of course, the Conoco offices have had quite a few. I'm really proud of my degree from OSU and both my, I say "kids," forty-nine and forty-six.

They're still your kids. (Laughter)

Wilson Always will be.

C. Brown They're very proud of theirs also. My daughter has been in education, a teacher, since '84, since she graduated here.

P. Brown Her degree was in FRCD, Family Relations and Childhood Development. She's been a kindergarten teacher, and she really loves it.

C. Brown She's done that. She just thinks there's nothing better than kindergarten kids.

P. Brown When she graduated, in the teaching profession there was just not a whole lot of openings. I honestly feel that OSU graduation had a lot to do with that. I would definitely come back. We didn't have to push very hard for both of our kids to come here. The one granddaughter will be here next year. We didn't have to push her very much because she comes over a lot.

She'll be here tomorrow.

C. Brown She will be here for the Homecoming.

P. Brown Or tonight, too.

C. Brown *Does she live in Tulsa?*

Wilson Yes.

C. Brown Yes, yes.

P. Brown She's a good student, too. Works full-time.

C. Brown She's a good student. She looks forward to coming over here.

P. Brown *Well, we're excited to have her.*

Wilson We're all real tall, and we call her a munchkin because she hits us about right here. (Laughter)

C. Brown Good kid.

P. Brown *Well, is there anything else that we haven't covered that you all would like to talk about?*

Wilson No. You covered the things that we really wanted to say. We really love OSU.

P. Brown Is there anything else you want to ask us? (Laughter)

C. Brown *Not that I can think of.*

Wilson You've pretty much covered everything. You've got the things that's really special to us from OSU. Then I did want to get out what campus salaries were then, which is kind of fun. We enjoyed it.

P. Brown I don't think the students could make it on twenty dollars a week nowadays, though. (Laughter) That'll last one day, maybe.

C. Brown *Maybe two meals. (Laughter)*

Wilson It's a different system, but we appreciate all of it.

P. Brown *Well, thank you so much for visiting with me today, and have a wonderful Homecoming weekend!*

Wilson Well, thank you!

C. Brown Thank you.

P. Brown ----- *End of interview* -----