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Audio File

https://library.louisiana.edu/sites/library/files/coll0510_photoGallery_audioTape2.mp3

Run-time: 00:06:53 (hh:mm:ss)

Photo Gallery - Audio

Stebo Pearce – earliest memories of Evergreen.

Transcript

Ed Dugas: Okay, so let's start with Stebo. Stebo, would you come up please, and get started? Don't start your clocks now until he gets up to the front. He needs your attention. They're gonna come back in and work with you on your invoices so I'm not left with any tickets when this is over.

Stebo Pearce: I polled the crowd and I discovered which I suspected that I was the oldest one here. There was one that was pretty close to me, but I had him beat. I guess it being you the oldest, you must know the most. Yeah?

Ed asked me to talk about Evergreen. Well, it's an awful lot easier to start talking about Evergreen than it is to quit talking about Evergreen. But I'm going to give you a little rundown that was from my earliest memories. I'm talking about I'm going back over 75 years.

I was driving my grandfather to Evergreen in a 1931 Chevy when I was 8 years old. But there weren't but four cars on the road, no. Anyhow, you start at the Escude Store across the bayou. You cross the bayou and Mr. Eddie Turner had a service station right on the, right across the bridge. All right. Next to him was Tom Fisher – now that's a story in itself. Across the street was Percy Chambers. All right, you come on down. L' had the store by the ramp. Mr. SL Campbell had the store across the street. All right. Next to him, Robert Tanner had a store on the bayou back. And then there was another store across the bayou and I'm thinking the Wild's had that store across the ramp.

Now, Ford Roberts has, you can get the best stories out of that one. He had a barber chair. Now listen, he wasn't any Cookie Johnson. He had a old pair of hand clippers. He had the chair in the corner of the store and the front door of the store was right here and the side door was right here. So, he'd be cutting your hair and he'd have to spit the tobacco. Well, the clippers were in your hair so he'd jerk you around to where he could spit out that side door. Well, of course, it didn't cost Ford a nickel, so I guess we didn't need to ... [unintelligible]

I grew up less than a mile from Evergreen, so I couldn't ride Ms. Deo's bus. Fact of the matter, I didn't really want to ride the bus. It was only about this tall inside. It was an old wooden, homemade bus. You couldn't stand up in it. So, you crawled in and sat on a bench. If you... [unintelligible]. But anyhow, I

learned an awful lot in that walk. Of course, the Mill was right there and there were over a hundred people working there. And I learned a lot of stuff long before my time.

But I'm going to tell a little story. I think it's one of the funniest ones. It deals with Mr. Smith again. There were a bunch of boys about three years older than me. They were high school boys. And nobody had any money back then, so there wasn't anything to do. But five or six of them would get together and just ramble around on the weekend. Well, the place to ramble around was the schoolyard. Well right in front of the main entrance to the school there was a sundial. Had the brass. So, one morning Mr. Smith gets to school, and he discovered that someone had broken that coil, and the only way to fix it was to just disassemble the sundial and recement it in. So, he called those five or six boys together in his office.

"Oh no, Mr. Smith, we don't know anything about it."

"Well, I know y'all are lying so I guess I'll just have to whip all of you."

And listen, when said whip, he meant whip. When he'd put a lick on you, you'd know it for a day or two. In fact, I think I might still have a scar or two. But that particular morning, he finally after torturing this crowd for a few minutes said "Alright, Hudson." Now all of you remember Hudson Bienville. And he said, "Hudson, you be first." And now, Hudson stuttered if you remember and I mean when he got nervous, he really stuttered. He said, "Mr. Smith, you know what, I didn't break that sundial. Charles O'Brian, you SOB, tell him you broke it."

Ed Dugas: I am honored to be in Stebo's age group because I still remember getting haircuts with those hand clippers. Thank God, Stebo, that Mr. Martin Gallont, who lived right in in the right field at the end of Holland Shed Lane, thank God, he didn't chew tobacco. That's all I got to say. Because I was in tears. Junebug and Earl thought they were tears of joy. I was in serious pain getting that haircut.