

## Wayne Creasy

The Insurance business gave Wayne an interesting life which included real estate, Roy Clark, and Branson, Missouri.

### Chapter 01 - 1:29

#### Introduction

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**Announcer:** If you want to know the story of the Wayne Creasy Insurance Agency, you must listen to Wayne tell you about selling vacuum sweepers. While waiting to go back to school for his PHD, he answered an ad for a sweeper salesman and went to Kansas City, Missouri to be trained. He eventually made a sale in the home of an insurance agent who thought Wayne would be perfect for the insurance business which in time led to the Wayne Creasy Insurance Agency. Before moving to Tulsa, Wayne met Jim Halsey in Independence, Missouri and helped Jim in his music promotion business. When they were both living in Tulsa, Jim Halsey convinced Roy Clark to think about moving to Tulsa. After staying in the Oakwold home of Wayne Creasy, Roy said "If you can find me a home like this I will live in Tulsa". Over the years, Wayne, along with partners Roy Clark and Jim Halsey owned and operated two radio stations and a large apartment complex, built several office buildings, and purchased a large ranch south of Tulsa.

It was real estate entrepreneur Jim Thomas who introduced Wayne and Roy to the concept of an entertainment venue in Branson, Missouri, suggesting that Branson would be a good place for Roy to open a theatre.

In 1983, the Roy Clark Celebrity Theatre opened, becoming known as the "birthplace of Branson celebrity theatres." But it was the selling of vacuum sweepers that sent Wayne on a very interesting life as told by Wayne and his wife Martha in this oral history interview on the oral history website [Voices of Oklahoma.com](http://Voices of Oklahoma.com).

### Chapter 02 - 10:17

#### Life in Missouri

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**John Erling:** My name is John Erling, and today's date is February 20, 2020.

Wayne, state your full name, please.

**Wayne Creasy:** Wayne Harland Creasy.

**JE:** Your date of birth?

**WC:** Two/nineteen/'twenty-six.

**JE:** February 19, 1926. So yesterday . . .

**WC:** Was a holiday and also a birthday for me. [both laughing]

**JE:** And all of Oklahoma celebrated it, didn't they?

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** You were ninety-four years old.

**WC:** Correct.

**JE:** That make you feel good?

**WC:** Oh, boy!

**JE:** You never thought you'd ever live to be this age?

**WC:** I really didn't think much about it one way or the other.

**JE:** Nobody would take you for ninety-four years old.

**WC:** Oh, thank you.

**JE:** Right. Where are we recording this interview?

**WC:** In my home in Bolewood Acres, Tulsa.

**JE:** And this lady beside us, who is she?

**WC:** She is my wife.

**JE:** And her name is Martha. Martha, thank you for joining us.

**Martha Creasy:** Surely.

**JE:** How long have you and Wayne been married?

**MC:** Forty-three years on the 28th of this month.

**JE:** All right, celebration time here again, going back many, many years, I don't know what you were doing. But in time, didn't you become an educator?

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** A teacher?

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** Can you tell us what you did?

**MC:** I was a reading diagnostician originally in Stillwater, after I got my master's at OSU. And I worked in the high school there. Then I came to Jenks and worked in the grade school system there. Before Jenks I was at Whitney Junior High, behind Hale, here in Tulsa. And they lost their funding.

So I called my dad, who was director of placement at OSU, and he said, "They've got an opening at Jenks tomorrow."

So I went from one to the other. The last I worked was in Jenks as the reading diagnostician for the grade school—when I met my husband.

**JE:** What made you go into teaching?

**MC:** My dad [laughs].

**JE:** Because?

**MC:** My dad had been a teacher, then a principal, then a superintendent, then he worked with OSU as director of placement. And he had three daughters and one son. And to the daughters, he said, "Be a teacher, so if your husband becomes ill, you'll have a job." And I'm the only one who did what he wanted.

The other one became an artist, a very good well-known artist. And the other one became an architect.

And I kept going, "Gosh, I could have maybe done something else." But I really did love teaching.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** So it worked.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** And of course, my brother had the option of, now he has to go and do something, well, he got a National Merit scholarship and went to MIT, was a physics major. And our dad told us, "You get a scholarship and you can go wherever you want to."

**JE:** But you enjoyed a career over there?

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** Wayne, where were you born?

**WC:** Carthage, Missouri.

**JE:** Tell us about your mother, her maiden name and what kind of a person she was.

**WC:** She was a great woman. We only lived in Carthage, Missouri, for about six months. And my father gathered up the other two kids besides me and we all went out to California. I was less than a year old.

We settled in Fresno, California.

**JE:** And your mother's name was?

**WC:** Jones.

**JE:** And your father's name?

**WC:** Bernard Creasy.

**JE:** Why did they move from Missouri to California?

**WC:** Well, I was told that the business he was in, which was the barber business, they had a great demand for people trained that way, and had good wages. Of course, I didn't know what was going on, I was just a baby.

But anyway, we all packed our stuff, went out there, and was very happy about it.

**JE:** Frank Phillips, at one time, was a barber. I didn't know if you knew that or not.

**WC:** Frank?

**JE:** Frank, early on.

You went to California, and what happens to the family out there? Is that where you stay and grow up?

**WC:** Well, they had a hard time. My father started drinking. He had just been out of the service, he thought he was going to go back and join the service, but he didn't do that. And this causes a lot of friction in the house, I was told. At some point, they really hated each other, couldn't stand each other, which precipitated my father just drinking more and more.

So my mother decided she could come back to Joplin, Missouri, where her mother lived and pull me out of school. I was in the first grade. The feud between my mother and my father was getting very intense. So we got on a train and come back to Joplin and stayed with my grandmother. Her names was Jones.

She didn't drink at all. We settled down there and I went through the fifth grade, sixth grade, and then we went to North Junior High School and had a good relationship with the teachers and so forth.

The war come along, one of my two brothers had already been in the service. The CCC and several other government enterprises allowed him to go ahead and go to work for them. He went down there when he was fifteen or sixteen. And then to follow through his life, he went into the Marine Corps, Hickam Field, December 7, 1941. And that was Bill Creasy. And he didn't get hurt, he was very lucky.

The other brother had already been in the service in the army and there wasn't too many people, or too many young men, at that time, trained to get on a ship or start getting acquainted with what you do on land [laughs].

Anyway, Leslie and Bill both were in the service and I'm back in Joplin, Missouri, with my grandmother. Right off the bat, my Grandmother Grant, she's Nordish, I think, Nordic, and she was very tight with her money and my mother wasn't. So this precipitated a conflict of interest over this. We got by.

But my mother sold Fashion Frocks. That was about three or four years she was with Fashion Frocks, which was two dollars and a half.

**JE:** And what that, Fashion . . . ?

**MC:** It's like a pattern, like they used to have dress patterns, they still do, probably. I can remember myself getting a dress pattern and then cutting out the pattern. His mother would sell those patterns on the street corners, you said, and stuff.

**WC:** Well, she was all over Joplin.

**MC:** And she'd take an order for a dress and then the people would write it up and they would send it in. And the people would make the dress for the people. But that was what his mom was doing to make money.

**JE:** So did she earn enough money to help?

**WC:** She didn't earn enough money but she would go down to the WPA or something like that—

**JE:** Yeah.

**WC:** . . . and get flour and dry goods and so forth, which helped out the budget. It was a very nice home, it's still up there in Joplin. I think it sold for \$145,000. Anyway, they completely disassembled it and put it back together because somebody lived there, liked the house, and wanted to do something with it if they could.

**MC:** And this was your grandmother's house, right?

**WC:** It was my grandmother's house.

**MC:** While—

**WC:** And when she died, then my mother took charge of it. It was a two-story house. It was about six blocks to Columbia Grade School, so from where we lived to Columbia Grade School, where I went for the full six years, was about six, seven blocks from the grade school.

Went to the junior high, which was North Junior High, was very happy at North Junior.

**MC:** Tell about the shoes, how when your shoes would get holes in them, his mom would put the shoe down on a piece of cardboard, trace it out, and cut it out, and put it in the shoe, to let it last a little longer.

**WC:** Well, that was a very common practice.

**MC:** It, yeah.

**WC:** My grandmother was at the time, working at Crispen's Dry Goods, which was at 6th and Main Street, there in Joplin. And she had occasion to bring home scraps of the various types of wool, especially suede and things like that, pieces of it. And she would at night, with a sewing machine, put them together and come out with a pretty nice pair of pants. I really resented the fact I almost had to dress like a girl, but, of course, who didn't? But we had pieces of material all over the floor, up on the second floor.

The second floor wasn't heated or air-conditioned or a fan, so we stayed up there. My mother and I stayed up there in that second floor. And there was a basement runs a real small coal furnace. My job was to keep coal in the furnace.

As I got older, I was able to make money. I started making money at age twelve. Then went down to the drugstore, and this was when, I remember, and I didn't read that good, so they just let me go. And that was the first time I was let go, because I didn't read fast enough.

When I went to North Junior High School, that was the grades seventh, eighth, and ninth, I got really interested in chemistry. That's where I got the big scar on my hand now, it's still there. We were doing some experiments in front of the class of about thirty kids, showing how the fire extinguisher worked, by putting water in a glass container—so you could see what was going on—which was crazy. And we went ahead and put the water in

the glass container and a cap at the top had a little partition there we could put sulfuric acid or any type of acid. And so we put the acid in there.

And my job then was to demonstrate how great this fire extinguisher is. Sulfuric acid in the bottom and about an inch from the top was sodium bicarbonate, or maybe it was the other way around, if whichever one you had.

But one of my helpers, at the time, he went ahead and put too much acid in. It didn't work out—it just blew up in my hands and was quite a cut there.

That defer me from my idea of chemistry and it was so much fun to have in a laboratory and have good teachers. From the ninth and the tenth, eleventh and twelfth, after school, I always went in and helped the teacher out. In fact, in the twelfth grade, I was able to grade papers. And it was not only chemistry, they had biology and zoology in Joplin, it was a good school.

**MC:** Tell about your chemistry lab.

**WC:** The laboratory was made up various doctors' surplus of old bottles, things that they didn't need any more and so forth. So I was able to get a lot of lab equipment. And a lot of times they just felt sorry for me and said, "Here's some stuff you might want to wash out, or whatever. Be careful, because it can harm your skin," and so forth.

So we had a good time in the laboratory, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth.

## Chapter 03 - 3:40

### Military Service

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**Wayne Creasy:** Then the day after graduation, out of the twelfth grade, I, and about half of the high school, were all put on a Greyhound bus and we went up to Leavenworth, Kansas.

**John Erling:** What year was this?

**WC:** That was 1944, '42, '43, and '44 was the high school. And then got on the bus, went up to Leavenworth, Kansas. And that's where we were indoctrinated, or that's where we examined and so forth to see if there's any problems.

**JE:** You went in the service then, that's what that was about?

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** You went to Leavenworth to be inducted into the army?

**WC:** Right.

**JE:** Do you remember that day, December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Day?

**WC:** Yes.

**JE:** What was going on? What were you doing that day, Sunday?

**WC:** A friend of mine, John Gray, and I were on a sidewalk doing something with a gasoline mower and fiddling around.

**JE:** Do you remember what your family thought? Did it make you afraid or nervous?

**WC:** Yes, my mother was nervous because at that time, Wesley was up at the Aleutian Islands with the army. They didn't have too many soldiers—

**JE:** Your older brother?

**WC:** ... up there, but anyway, he was up there, Wesley was. And Bill was in the Marine Corps. He was down at Camp Pendleton, and John Gray, and I were out there fooling around on the sidewalk when Mother came running out, saying, "Wesley, Bill, they're going to get killed, they're going to get killed!"

I wasn't too caring, I didn't think it was that big a deal. Well, they'll be able to wipe out the Japanese in no short time. But—

**JE:** But you were fifteen or so when that happened, right?

**WC:** Yeah, I was fifteen.

**JE:** So then the draft board came after you and then you had to enlist—

**WC:** Enlist in the army. Camp Barkeley in Texas is where we landed at. We had several occasions, which were very funny. Old Captain came out with a box and we had about fifty or sixty guys like us, all brand new to the army. I wasn't brand new because I had three years of ROTC, which was very helpful.

**JE:** In high school?

**WC:** In high school.

**JE:** Okay.

**WC:** Yeah. So he put the box down, "Gather round, you guys, get as close as you can," and so forth.

We all got gathered up there. He got the box lid open and took out a grenade, and he said, "Now this is one of your weapons." He went on and on about how the Germans had made one, probably better than this one, and so forth. He says, "This thing holds about," I don't know about how many grams of gunpowder it'll hold and how many of those little knobs were on there. But he almost had us so scared we wanted to just get up and walk away.

He was right there and there's a live grenade he had in his hand like this. So he said, "Never, never go ahead and grasp that grenade unless you intend to throw it away to the right place in the right time." And he says, "Now you guys on the front row, you can see that pretty good, can't you?"

"Yeah, we see it."

About that time, he let loose of the hammer and blows the cap off, which was, you know, like that, anyway, it was a phony grenade and we're all running all different directions with this grenade that the gunpowder was taken out of it.

And it made quite a bit of noise. He might have put a double charge in it, I don't know.

**JE:** Where did you end up serving?

**WC:** Well, I was over in Europe.

**JE:** You were there for two years?

**WC:** Two years and a half. And we were on the boat there in Belgium. This was all near the end. There we were on the boat and we got about halfway to, I don't know which Japanese island we were going to, but that's where we intended to go. And then after three days out on the water, an announcement was made, "The Japanese were surrendering."

**JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**WC:** So we're happy, of course, and we could just relax, and the boat went on up to Honolulu. So we stayed there in Honolulu until we got discharged in San Francisco.

## Chapter 04 - 3:36

### Vacuum Sweepers

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**John Erling:** Where did you go after you were discharged?

**Wayne Creasy:** Went back to Joplin, Missouri.

**JE:** And what did you do there?

**WC:** I enrolled in school in Pittsburg. At that time, it was called Kansas State University. Later, Kansas State didn't like it to have the protégé, or whatever, so they went ahead and after money spent they changed the name to Kansas State and then Pittsburg State University. So I went to Pittsburg State University.

I got out of college in about two and a half, maybe two and three-fourths years with a chemistry major. I went night and day. I had a lot of information I had stored up my mind. Basic chemistry is, it's very easy. So anyway, I took some advanced courses and I corresponded with the University of Wichita, which was where I finally got my master's degree in chemistry.

**JE:** What were you intending to do with this master's degree in chemistry?

**WC:** I wanted to go ahead and get the doctorate. Independence Junior College is where I taught while I was going to get the master's degree.

**JE:** After you graduated from college, then you started teaching?

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** And you were teaching what?

**WC:** Chemistry.



**JE:** Chemistry, of course. Then you went on to work on your master's while you were teaching. Then your intention was to go on and get your PhD.

**WC:** I don't know the dates at all but I just know that I was free that summer. And I wasn't hardly making any money. And I started adding up, *Well, I'm going to be maybe five or ten dollars short this month. I just don't have any money, don't have anything.* But I have to pursue this doctorate degree. So I went to Kansas City and saw one of these ads in the Want Ads, said, "Come on over, we'll show you how you can make ten times as much money as," I was making at school, because I was making very little.

So I go to Kansas City and look the thing up. You go into the store and then here it is, here's all these vacuum sweepers. The guy says, "I have a friend here, Mr. Walt Nigelson [laughs], he will go out with you one day and, I'll guarantee you, he'll make some money and he'll turn it over to you. From that point on, I would think you'd want to go out on your own and see if you'd like to do that. Make a lot more money, because you're not making any money now. In fact, you're always worried about gasoline and so forth."

Anyway, I went out with Walt Nigelson, we saw six different people, three or four of them were housewives. So we knock on the lady's door. She comes to the door. And, "We're in the neighborhood cleaning and tonight we'd like to come out and show your husband and you together this new Kirby machine. The Kirby machine is only fourteen hundred dollars [laughing] during the Depression." Knew we probably wouldn't be able to sell it.

**JE:** How much was it?

**WC:** Fourteen hundred.

**JE:** That was a lot of money.

**Martha Creasy:** Yeah, yeah.

**WC:** Because you get tools with this, you get shovels, you get all that stuff.

**JE:** Okay.

**WC:** The guy just loaded it up.

**JE:** You sold me.

**WC:** He was in the insurance business.

**JE:** What was his name?

**WC:** Z. T. Fisher.

**JE:** Hmm (thoughtful sound).

**WC:** But anyway, we over that night and we sold, not the highest priced, but one of those around the seven or eight hundred dollars. And he said, "Now, Wayne, I'm going to let you have this. I'll show you what I'd like for you to sell of mine."

So we got in his car and drove over to Overland Park. He showed me a little savings plan that worked \$250 a year. You put that much in and in twenty years, you have

eighty-five hundred. This is with a very reputable insurance company and it's was a very exciting thing to me.

The next day, I drove on back to Independence, and out of the eighteen teachers, I sold, I think, thirteen of them, fourteen, which paid a lot better part of a week or two in Kansas City with expenses and everything. So I decided I'd give my resignation at the Independence Community College.

## Chapter 05 - 6:23

### Daughter Died

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**Wayne Creasy:** By the way, I can tell you, I guess, about the girl that we lost.

**Martha Creasy:** He was married at the time to his first wife and they had a small daughter.

Daughter was—

**WC:** Eighteen months old.

**MC:** . . . when she died.

**WC:** Yeah.

**John Erling:** What did she die of?

**WC:** Amoebic Dysentery. Amoebic Dysentery is some little bug you get in there and if you don't nail it and have adequate water in your system, you'll die. Well, I didn't know that and my wife didn't know it. So we got a hold of Dr. Shapei. Dr. Shapei is a young guy out of med school and his father lived there also in Independence. And so the father and son had a good reputation.

Well, my wife, my ex-wife, refused to let her go. She didn't want Patty to go to the hospital.

**MC:** The first wife was really concerned about needles in Patty's arms because she was afraid they were going to feed her intravenously, to get the water back in her. And she was distressed and horribly not herself, overwrought, because they hadn't been able to get her to keep anything down for I don't know how long, at this point.

**WC:** Well—

**MC:** The doctor was suggesting that they put her in the hospital and do this. The doctor basically told both of them that, "She'll probably be okay tonight." He would be back first thing in the morning to check her.

Then the doctor's father died that night. So he forgot, completely, about what was going on.

The next morning, Wayne got her and he headed out the door with her to take her to the hospital because they couldn't get ahold of the doctor.

You said you felt her go while she was in your arms?

**WC:** She just went limp.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** She was eighteen months old.

**WC:** So we were already separated, I think, but went on up to Kansas City and did the sweeper thing.

**MC:** But, you know, the big thing you told me that made so much sense is he said, "I determined at that point, I'd never be without enough money to take care of my family." That's what drove him into, "I've got to succeed. I've got to make money. I've got to keep going." That was the instigation right there.

**WC:** So anyway, we moved to Kansas City and I worked night and day. So then I made some money.

**JE:** When you started selling insurance, did this come pretty easy for you?

**WC:** Yeah, because I had ventured off out of the savings plans and small policies in Western Kansas. And I get out to Western Kansas, and this is a time when they had so much wheat they'd have to put it out next to the silo, let it stack up as high as the silo because they didn't have a place to store it. Johnson, Ulysses, you know, and all these places, those guys out there starting really making some big money. Half of them had their own airplane. So when all the crops were harvested, they'd get in their plane and take the family on down to Florida and stay down there during the winter.

**MC:** Well-to-do farmers.

**JE:** So you started making some pretty good money then?

**WC:** Oh, two or three hundred thousand dollars.

**JE:** Not in a year?

**WC:** Yeah, a year.

**JE:** Back then?

**MC:** Yeah, he did well real quick.

**WC:** Yeah, that's—we had, we had some farmers that were worth so much money and they'd go and talk to a lot of people before they'd buy anything. They'd talk to their attorney and this and that and the other guys out there. You always got to pick somebody that's well respected and so forth. Might even be at the place where they don't want to work anymore on that old combine or whatever.

**JE:** So you really struck it rich then, doing that?

**WC:** Yeah, made a lot of money.

**MC:** He had a lot of agents that worked under him.

**WC:** Yeah. And the farmers that wanted to money in the wintertime.

**MC:** And he got part of their commission.

**WC:** So they went ahead and let me have a general agency contract, which I knew nothing about. Western Oklahoma was good but Kansas was the best.

**MC:** Right.

**WC:** Since then it's all changed completely, there's not any more state tax.

**JE:** So you gave up on your dream of getting a PhD?

**WC:** Yeah.

**MC:** Yeah.

**WC:** And having no money for two years.

**JE:** Right.

**WC:** Yeah.

**MC:** After his daughter died, that's what changed him. From Wayne's second marriage he had a son named Mark Wayne Creasy. Mark is about sixty-six years old. He worked in a lot of different ventures and businesses that his dad got into. Like, I think you told me, he worked in the coal thing?

**WC:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**MC:** For a period of time. He helped in different ways, but he mainly made good money selling life insurance for his dad. But he worked on an alternative phone system, like, all the people coming in with Sprint and everything else, he worked on one too. Developed it originally either in Pittsburg or Independence, I always get those two mixed up. I don't know which place he moved with Janet, his wife.

**WC:** Well, you know what he did? He took over all the telephones in Pittsburg and in all those little towns all around there, he had a very successful company.

**JE:** Nineteen fifty-four, you established your own agency, Wayne Creasy Agency. Then you said you had two other companies?

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** Where was the Wayne Creasy Agency? What town?

**WC:** Independence, Kansas.

**JE:** Tell me about the move to Tulsa. Why?

**WC:** Well, one of them, the insurance company that we were putting together so they could go public, which they did, but I can't think of this guy's name, Anderson, probably. And he says, "You know, we have this proposition. Public Service is getting ready to build a pretty good size dryer to dry all this natural gas coming down." There's millions of feet every day coming down, which actually took care of a good part of Tulsa. A lot of calcium chloride or a lot of this or that had to be put into the system to dry it out.

Well, me and Mr. Eckerts, the guy that has the insurance money in Independence, we went ahead and we gathered up two or three hundred thousand dollars in money to go out and buy a huge generator, the size of that door there, two of them, anyway, they produced a lot of gas. And that was the gas that Public Service was using.

That was one of the reasons I wanted to come to Tulsa was because of that gas operation. Probably a logical thing, before we forget about it, is the insurance company. That's where I made money.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** Yeah, it truly is.

**WC:** Where I actually had a company that started off with almost nothing, NERC Corporation out of Kansas City had a buyout, started off at twenty-five and went all the way up to about seventy-five or eighty dollars a share.

**JE:** Hmm (thoughtful sound).

**WC:** So I turned my shares in, Eckerts turned them in. And NERC bought the little company. Paid a ton of money for it. It was in the area they're in, they're out of Kansas City.

**MC:** Are you talking about Centennial Life? Back—

**WC:** Centennial Life, (indiscipherable) Company anyway.

**JE:** So you sold it out then?

**WC:** Sold it out. Price—

**JE:** And that's where you made some huge—

**WC:** Good money.

**JE:** ... good money on that.

## Chapter 06 - 8:35

### Oakwold

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**John Erling:** Let's bring us to the house we're in right now. In Bolewood Acres. And the name of this house is?

**Martha Creasy:** Oakwold.

**JE:** Oakwold, all right. We're at the southwest corner of 41st and Lewis. And why was it named Oakwold?

**MC:** Because of all the oak trees, so many of those huge oak trees. We've got several in our yard but I've seen them in Bolewood, out in Bolewood, where there's a mass of them. I've talked with neighbors and they've said, "Got to take care of those oaks." Everyone tries to take care of the trees in their yard because they are so beautiful.

**JE:** How long have you lived here in this house?

**Wayne Creasy:** We've lived here probably forty-five to forty-six years.

**JE:** Except for the fact you sold your house to some people who moved in here. Did you carry the loan on that?

- WC:** Yeah, second, third, and fourth mortgage.
- JE:** And how long did they live here?
- MC:** They lived here approximately four years.
- JE:** And then they couldn't continue the payments?
- MC:** They couldn't continue the payments after two years. [laughs]
- JE:** And you allowed them to stay for another two years?
- MC:** Well, the judge allowed them to stay for another two years.
- JE:** Okay.
- MC:** Because it was their homestead. He was trying to let them have the benefit of the doubt. We kept saying we'd rather go ahead and sell the house because we had a home over close to Philbrook at that time. And we also had a home in Florida, Belleair, Florida. So at that point, we were not wanting to gain this house back because it would be too many homes, too many residences.
- When we finally got to the court the last time, they had to turn the house back over to us. At that point, we put all three homes on the market at the same time: this one, the home over on 29th Street, and the one in Belleair.
- The other two sold first—and we had decided we wanted to stay in Tulsa because at this point, our son, who was born in 1980, he was going to be starting school. And we decided once we start school we're going to stay in one location. And rather than Florida we elected to stay in Tulsa. So we knew it would either be this home or the home on 29th.
- And we sold the home on 29th to a Dr. Framjee. We ended up moving back into Oakwold in 1986.
- JE:** So you're glad you moved back in?
- MC:** Oh, we love the home.
- JE:** You would have loved to have sold it, but in the meantime—
- MC:** Yeah.
- JE:** . . . you've enjoyed living here all that time. Let's talk a little bit about it. George S. Bole built the house.
- MC:** Um-hmm (affirmative).
- JE:** He came from England, didn't he?
- MC:** Yes.
- JE:** Then he became very wealthy here, becoming a partner in Phillips Petroleum. Is it true that it was a little Indian boy that had the rights to this land?
- MC:** Um-hmm (affirmative).
- JE:** Tell us about that.
- MC:** Reading that abstract I got to where the little boy—

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** . . . the Indian boy, at one and a half, last name Bell, I think his first name was Aaron. His father maintained guardianship because the little boy, Aaron, was one and a half when he was given the land. So his father took care of it. And later on, it shows where he and his wife, the young boy had gotten old enough to get married, probably about eighteen, nineteen. And he and his wife were leasing off parcels to be used by oil companies. And they gave them so long in which to either be able to strike oil or not.

They weren't able to strike any so the leases ran out. And then he sold off parcels. But he also bought parcels. He did well. I had no idea until I started really reading the abstract. But he sold off parcels.

Now when Mr. Bole bought this area, this was in the country, and 41st Street was a dirt road. But I think there were probably two different owners of the land between the Indian boy and Mr. Bole. Mr. Bole bought quite a bit more land than just this area. And it looked like he slowly cut down to this area.

Then I think it was his wife who cut down to just Bolewood. And then Mr. Glass, who was an owner much later down, he cut down to just Oakwold, which is just the block that the house is on.

**JE:** And what was the name of George Bole's wife?

**MC:** Alweida, I'm not sure the pronunciation but it's A-l-w-e-i-d-a.

**JE:** She became quite active in the community, didn't she?

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** And after George died, he died August 26, 1939, she remarried.

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** She died in '73. She was a Holland Hall School trustee and didn't she donate the house to the school?

**MC:** She sold the house to the school. I have no idea how much because in the abstract it says, "For one dollar."

**JE:** This house then was designed by the architectural firm of Holt, Prize, and Barnes, out of Kansas City. Talk about what it featured outside.

**MC:** There was a racetrack, there was an outdoor servants' home that is still a home across 42nd Street from us; it's now a separate home, of course, but it's where the outdoor servants lived.

The indoor servants lived on the third floor of this house. Then they had the racetrack this side of the racetrack, next to our house, is where Wheeling Street is. And if you go out on our tennis court that is on the east side of the house and you look in to the neighbor's yard, there's a stone patio where Mr. And Mrs. Bole and friends used to sit and watch the horses race.

And then they had a stables. The outdoor servants' house was called a carriage house. There was a farmhouse that is over off of 46th Street. I've gone over there and looked and I know which house it is, it's stone, it's a beautiful lovely home. I don't know who lives there now, but that was a farmhouse on the original grounds.

The double Olympic size pool that went with the house was behind a home that's directly to the south of us, the McManns live there now, and they would have had that pool in their property but the previous owners to the McManns' house was Dr. Moore and Ruth Moore, who are both deceased now. They were alive when I first met Wayne and married him and moved in here.

She told me when they bought that house themselves they were given the option of keeping the pool if they wanted, but it was far enough away from the house they elected to let the other people take care of it. Because they were older and they didn't want to have to maintain a pool.

But the pool is still behind a house that faces out onto Victor Avenue that is just one street over to our west. That pool's still there and the carriage house is still there. Of course, the racetrack and the stables are gone.

**JE:** What's the square footage of this house?

**MC:** My sister, who's an architect, retired now in Colorado Springs, she actually worked up the whole thing. And when you're working up square footage you just do living space. It gets real iffy because when you're getting ready to sell a house or list it you've got to be so careful not to overestimate. But when she worked up the footage it was seventeen thousand. But we have it listed as thirteen thousand, because that's not all living space. It's a furnace room, there's a lot of area that you wouldn't live in, it's more storage.

**JE:** How many stories in this house?

**WC:** Three and a half.

**JE:** How do you figure that?

**WC:** The bottom floor is the basement, but it only goes down a half of a story.

**JE:** Okay.

**WC:** And then you have three other stories: the first, second, and third. So you have three full stories and then the half story.

**JE:** Ahh.

**WC:** And then the furnaces, workshop, and the—

**JE:** Is a basement?

**WC:** It's a basement.

**MC:** It's a basement but it's a full floor. The basement completely goes the full length of the house too.

**MC:** But one side of it was considered for the people who owned the house. The other side



was for the people who worked here. It had a workshop room, it had a kitchen for the servants in the basement for their own cooking. As we have a kitchen on the first floor for our meals. They had a kitchen. They had a furnace room. The home was heated by a coal-burning stove that was converted over years later to the gas that we now have. We still have the coal chute room where they would drive up and shovel the coal into the chute and it would come down into that room where the people would come in and put the coal into the furnace to heat the home—with radiators—which it's now still heated with radiators but by gas.

**JE:** I'm looking at them right over here.

**MC:** Yeah.

**JE:** That covered—

**MC:** Yeah.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** All the radiators in the main living part of the house have ornate or some type of covering.

## Chapter 07 - 5:00

### House Tour

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**John Erling:** Let's talk about some of the rooms. What room are we in right here?

**Martha Creasy:** On the blueprint it calls it the dinette.

**JE:** So you have a library. How many fireplaces?

**Wayne Creasy:** Eleven. See, there's a fireplace. It's beautiful.

**JE:** Yeah.

**WC:** Of course, it's already been sachined up so there's no air going up or down.

**MC:** But it can be opened back up.

**JE:** How many are working fireplaces?

**WC:** Well, three of them that are open now.

**JE:** What's on the top floor?

**MC:** It's where the servants lived. And it's the series of bedrooms. There's one room on the blueprint that says "sewing room." And I noticed why they would call it the sewing room because all the cabinetry has mirrors on the doors that can be fixed to where the woman could get a three-way view of herself while being fitted for whatever they were going to sew for her. Or the gentleman, whoever they were sewing for.

So that was the sewing room. And the rest of them were bedrooms and bathrooms.

They—

**WC:** They had a cedar room.

**MC:** Yes.

**WC:** Which had cedar wood in it so you put your winter clothes away for the summer.

**MC:** Interestingly enough, usually from what we understood and what I've read in the abstract, because I've read the abstract, which is fascinating, it would make a good book.

But, nevertheless, they had families that would live and would be the servants in the house. So they had a group bathroom, I mean, you walk in and there's two toilets, four sinks, and two showers in one room. [laughs] Down the hall there's a private bathroom, just one bathroom, with a tub. It was interesting, I guess they just used jointly or one family would go in. I'm not sure how many they'd have.

But on the third floor on the wall, they have a little panel that has numbers and push buttons and it's up high enough. What would happen is when somebody downstairs would need something they would push a button. Like there's one button on the floor in the dining room underneath the table. There's one in the living room underneath the sofa. And there's one on the wall in the living room too that you could push and it would flip one of those little numbers up on third floor. They would hear it, go and look, and say, "We've got to go down to number thirteen." That's the living room. So they could attend to whatever the people who lived here needed.

**JE:** Hmm (thoughtful sound), [laughing].

**MC:** You know, different world.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** It's almost like going back in PBS time type things.

**JE:** Right. How many bedrooms are in this house?

**MC:** There are eight.

**JE:** How many baths?

**MC:** Five.

**JE:** There were separate staircases down for the servants. Tell us about that.

**MC:** The servant stairwell went all the way from third floor down to the basement. Because third floor was their living area. And on one half of the basement was their working area where they had their kitchen. And right off their kitchen is what they called the "fruit room," for canned goods. And there's little shelves in there still. We don't use it as a fruit room but that's where on the blueprint it said, "fruit room."

Then there is a bathroom down there on the servants' side. And also a workshop room. And then during the era of Russian missile crisis in Cuba, I think that's about when the Bates lived here, Barbara and John Bates. I know their daughter, she's a lovely lady,

they were lovely people. But I never met Mr. Bates. I met Mrs. Bates and both of her daughters.

**JE:** Of Reading & Bates?

**MC:** Yes. Mrs. Bates had a fallout shelter built that was not here with the original house. She had taken part of the workshop in the basement, she had partitioned it off, and lined the walls with whatever it is that keeps you out of radiation, lead?

**WC:** Yeah.

**MC:** But part of the basement is made into a fallout shelter; it's still there, and has little shelves for provisions, if you wanted to go in there and live through that. It's still here at this point, we just use it for storage.

**JE:** And then there's a bar downstairs.

**WC:** Oh, yeah, yeah. As you go down the steps, you go to your right, and below is a bar, which when it was actually built, it covers up all of the liquor and so forth. It's a whole new room, shelves, all different kinds of booze, and this and that. And the refrigerator is our refrigerator, it's an—

**MC:** Icebox.

**WC:** . . . icebox down this side. And over on this side, more shelves and stuff. What's so unique about this place, it was built in '29, '30, '31, and we know that's when we had Prohibition. Originally, that thing was so perfect that you could not detect where the room was. Where the partition was or nothing. It's still almost perfect.

But anyway, it hides the booze if they knew the cops were coming. I'm sure they told them they were coming; they would go ahead and fasten everything down and walk away from it. That is very unique. And it's got four chairs in there to sit in.

**JE:** Yeah.

**WC:** Oh, man, it's something else.

**JE:** And this beautiful wall that hides the booze—

**WC:** Right.

**JE:** . . . this is absolutely gorgeous. To this day, it's beautiful.

**MC:** Yeah, all oak.

## Chapter 08 - 3:50

### Tunnel System

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**John Erling:** And there's a tunnel system here.

**Wayne Creasy:** Oh, boy, you bet!

**Martha Creasy:** Oh, no.

**JE:** Talk to us about the tunnel system.

**MC:** The tunnel goes in underneath the house, and we've had a million people ask us, "Does it go to the carriage house?" Because there was gossip that it did. I've known people who have lived in the carriage house previously and they said they never found any kind of entrance at their end. But the idea was the fact that in the winter, if it was too bad, you could walk through the tunnel to get over here.

But I'm sure that never happened, because when you get down in the tunnel, which I've been all the way through underneath our house, and it's a maze—I'm five foot ten, I could not stand up straight in the tunnel. Probably a person who was five five or five six could walk. And it's lit; you can flip a switch and there's light bulbs and it's lit the whole way. So you can see where you're going.

It was mainly used for piping and the house was built during Prohibition, so it could have been built for hiding things too, I'm not sure.

**JE:** Where does this tunnel go?

**WC:** Oh, it doesn't go anywhere except underneath the house. Now there is one area—he was joking me when I first was married to him and he told me there were pictures of old girlfriends down there. Just to see if I would take the bait and go crawl in there.

And, of course, I did. [all laughing] Here I was, crawling through the basement, trying to figure out where these pictures were. Little did I know that he could flip a switch and the whole thing was lit. So I was with a flashlight going through this. And it's not scary at all. It's very clean.

He had it completely cleaned out when we moved back into the house. We didn't mess with it that much previously when we'd lived here earlier. I only lived with him here for about three years before we moved away. And then we moved back and lived here quite a bit longer.

**JE:** So the tunnel, we don't know why it was built?

**MC:** Well . . .

**JE:** We're just guessing?

**MC:** No, it's got pipes and things that run through it. And I know when I was turning corners it turns and it turns. I mean, it's like a maze, like an English garden maze—

**JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**MC:** . . . where don't quite know where you are. And at one point, I heard Wayne above me going, "Have you had enough?"

**JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**MC:** He was on the floor above me, the ceiling above me. There are four places in the floor in the basement, it's terrazzo on the floors down there. And there's a little metal pull that you can take off and you can pull a big—if you can lift it—block of concrete up. And it lets loose into the basement floor.

So Wayne had, at one point, lifted it up because I couldn't find my way back. I had turned enough times I could not find my way back. But I did come to one place where the tunnel was bricked off. And I noticed it was newer brick than the old. So that led me to believe, possibly, there had been a tunnel that had gone over to the old carriage house.

Because, as far as I could tell, it was on the south wall, which would be in the direction of the carriage house.

**JE:** It had to go somewhere, it had to—

**MC:** [laughing] Everyone wants it to.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** I think it was just with the radiators and the radiant heat and all that, and they had to have piping, possibly easier access.

**JE:** And then it had to be that a man—

**MC:** Intelligence.

**JE:** . . . was going to walk down there and fix it.

**WC:** Right, the whole thing was—

**MC:** Right.

**JE:** They had to have room to do that.

**MC:** Right.

**JE:** So it wasn't just to carry the pipes. So maybe that makes sense. But should we leave it as, "It's a mystery, we don't know"? Or you think you know?

**WC:** I don't.

**MC:** I know enough to know that at one point there was a big hole that had been bricked off by newer bricks.

**JE:** All right. So let's assume it was going somewhere.

**MC:** Yeah, and if it's out there underneath the ground between us and the carriage house, you wonder if it's ever going to collapse and the ground is going to sink in that direction.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** But never have noticed.

## Chapter 09 - 4:00

### Holland Hall

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**John Erling:** Holland Hall comes into play here.

**Martha Creasy:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**JE:** Holland Hall was named in honor of its first headmistress, Winifred Sherman, who was of Dutch descent. So that's why we call it Holland Hall. It opened in 1922, and moved into a new building downtown at 1850 Boulder. The financing was arranged by businessmen including Waite Phillips and Bill Skelly.

The school outgrew the facility by 1932, when it moved to a new location. That's all *Wikipedia* says. So I was wondering if this is the new location?

**MC:** No.

**JE:** Did Holland Hall actually use this as a school?

**MC:** Yes they did, but—

**MC:** . . . I looked it up too, because I have some of the information, like the picture that I have in the dining room of Mr. and Mrs. Bole with Mr. and Mrs. Morgan.

**WC:** You know—

**MC:** The Morgan's grandson had told us some of the history that he knew. And I had written down that Mr. Bole and Mr. Phillips and Mr. Skelly and several other prominent oilmen purchased a location near downtown as a private school for their daughters, known as Holland Hall. That was on—you said Boulder?

**JE:** 1850 Boulder, it said.

**MC:** There's another location downtown. They were in the Spotlight Theater for a short period of time, if you can imagine.'

**JE:** Holland Hall?

**MC:** Their school, just the school. And it was not a boarding school until it moved here. That was in 1938. After 1938, Holland Hall purchased the home from the Boles. And they used our home as the dormitory where the school was being built over on Birmingham, in Eight Acres now.

**JE:** Yes.

**MC:** Remember when Holland Hall was there? I do. My stepdaughter, our daughter, Becky, went to Holland Hall when it was there, for a year or two. Then went back to Edison.

But that was where the school was, and they boarded here. And it was an all-girls school at that time. It was only seventeen women who lived in the house.

**WC:** We have photographs of all this stuff.

**MC:** Yeah, and we've got photographs that different people, since we've lived here, that have had some connection or have lived here in the past, have passed down photographs to us. So that gives us a little information.

**JE:** So a lot of people think that Holland Hall operated as a school in this house and they did not.

**MC:** No.

**JE:** It was a boarding school. They boarded here and then they went to school at Birmingham.

**MC:** Exactly.

**JE:** All right.

**MC:** But this was the only place that Holland Hall ever had boarding. Once they left this house, which was in 1950, it was sent back over to being a private home. And Holland Hall sold it before then, I think. Because as I read, in Google, it was a little bit too much money for them to have to handle. And I know from hearing that at one point, they tried to give it to the Baptist church here in Tulsa as the rectory for their minister. But the church turned it down; they thought it was a little too . . .

**JE:** Ostentatious?

**MC:** Yes. Exactly, that was the word.

**JE:** Was it First Baptist?

**MC:** Uh-huh (affirmative). And it was Hultgren.

**JE:** Warren Hultgren.

**MC:** Yes, would have been the man who would have been living here. And my sister's husband's father, H. L. Rayburn, was on the board to try and get the house for the Baptist church, because that's where he went to church. And he couldn't get the board to agree with him, to let this be the rectory for the First Baptist Church.

**JE:** [laughs] I can understand that. [laughing]

**MC:** Yeah, well, it seems like if nothing else they might have accepted it and then sold it later and made some money off of it or something.

**JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**MC:** But it just went back to being a private residence in 1950.

**JE:** And then Holland Hall moved out to where they are today then, is that true?

**MC:** Aft—I'm not sure what year they did that.

**JE:** Okay.

**MC:** But I know they were still on Birmingham Place. Becky was born in '65. I'm going back in my head trying to figure out—she was there in junior high. So '70s?

## Chapter 10 - 2:00

### Philips and Bole

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**John Erling:** Let's put George Bole in the era with Waite Phillips and Bill Skelly. It's interesting, Waite Phillips built Philbrook and construction began in 1926. The same year that George Bole commissioned this home, 1926, and the same year that you, Wayne, were born, of course. Waite Phillips and George were friends. Both of them were influenced

by Italian design.

**Martha Creasy:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**JE:** And brought Italian artisans here to Tulsa, Oklahoma. That shows you how much money they were able to spend.

**MC:** Yeah.

**JE:** So there's a connection there to Philbrook and this house, in that regard. The house is for sale now.

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** You'd love to downsize, wouldn't you?

**MC:** Ohh, with the two of us being the only ones—our son lives in California, so—

**JE:** And what's his name?

**MC:** Ryan. Ryan's thirty-nine.

**JE:** And he's involved in?

**MC:** Movie making. He wants to be a cinematographer eventually. He works first camera, at this point. He's working on a Will Smith movie coming out about Serena and Venus Williams' father. There's a photograph behind me that shows when he was working on vice. Adam McKay's movie about Dick Cheney. He worked first camera on that.

And he also worked on Clint Eastwood's *1517 to Paris*. His first movie he worked on was *Jersey Boys*, but *1517 to Paris* was the last movie he worked on with Mr. Eastwood. He got to go Venice and Paris. There he is at Venice. He gets to travel a lot.

He just got back at the end of November from Iceland, working on a Chris Pratt movie, who does the *Guardians of the Galaxy* movies. This was done by Universal Pictures though and it's called *The Tomorrow War*. It won't come out until next Christmas.

**JE:** Ryan is the son the two of you had?

**MC:** Yes.

**Wayne Creasy:** Yeah.

**MC:** Wayne's . . . my one and only. He's my one and only child, Wayne's third child.

## Chapter 11 - 6:57

### Roy Clark and Branson

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**John Erling:** You were living in Independence, Kansas. That's where you met Jim Halsey. And then, ultimately, Roy Clark.

**Wayne Creasy:** Yeah.



**Martha Creasy:** Mrs. Titus. Who owned the house Roy and Barbara lived in in Tulsa. It was owned by Mrs. Titus.

**WC:** Yeah.

**MC:** And Wayne knew Mrs. Titus. Because Wayne lived here in Oakwold when he started doing business with Roy. He'd known Jim for a long time. Jim and he officed together off of Norwood Avenue. Their building was the Wayne Creasy Agency Norwood Building, Roy Clark Building. Had all three guys' names on the front, but it was originally just Jim and Wayne.

And Jim started managing people and I know by '75, when I met Wayne, Jim had a huge clientele. If you've ever Googled his name, I mean—

**JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**MC:** . . . he's represented everyone, it's amazing. He had a huge clientele of people and Roy was one of them. One of his big ones. Roy came to visit Wayne and his second wife and stayed here in this house with Wayne and his second wife. And Wayne had a daughter by his second wife, Rebecca.

When he was married to Jolaine, that's when Roy and Barbara came to visit. Roy says to Wayne, "You find me a house like this in Tulsa and I'll move to Tulsa."

So Wayne knew Mrs. Titus, who lived over there on Forest Boulevard, where Roy's house is. And helped work the deal for Roy to buy that house.

**JE:** Again, it's because of Jim Halsey. You knew each other in Kansas. You ended up in Tulsa. And then he brought Roy Clark on and that's how you initially helped him. Didn't you become investors together in projects?

**MC:** In land and cattle.

**JE:** In land and cattle? And was Hank Thompson in on that too?

**WC:** It lasted about a year, a year, maybe two years, because we kept spending money.

**JE:** Whose idea was it to go to Branson?

**WC:** A guy named Jim Thomas who lived at Kimberling City, it's a small town near Branson. Came to me at the office here in Tulsa, and said, "We got a gold mine. We can buy this land so-and-so, and I know you're with Halsey and you're with Roy."

So anyway, we went one time to look at it. It was a good deal; there was nothing there but land and plenty of parking places and no country music in the area.

So anyway, we get to the banks and get to the money. People about that time didn't know Jim, Roy that much. I can't say who was the first, second, and third. I used to know who it was and it drew a lot of people at the sight of Roy. You know, they said, "We want to see Roy. We want to see four or five of the other people."

I said—

**MC:** Mel Tillis.

**WC:** . . . “Put some stuff up on the billboards. They don’t know if Roy’s ever got in town.” And I said, “He’s got these other dates he has to go ahead and . . .” See, Jim wasn’t involved with Branson so he insisted that the stuff he does should be rewarded.

So anyway, Roy and I said, “Let’s just get out of this thing,” which we did. And one month later—I think we each made about fifty grand.

**JE:** Fifty thousand?

**WC:** Dollars. The first time was when they opened up—we went down there to the opening—was a building with nothing in it. They had a bar set up but it had to sanded and painted and this and that.

**MC:** But—

**WC:** So anyway, Roy and I and Jim Thomas got the money together to finance this through the hard times, which was getting some advertising up in Chicago and places where the older ladies, the older market, will wake up to see they’ve got a good place if we can provide good entertainment.

So Jim reluctantly, at this stage of the game, he’s beginning to understand, *I’ve missed the deal, I should have taken it, to be a partner on this particular case.*

**JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**WC:** Because at that time, Jim was everywhere, I mean, he was on the plane all the time.

**MC:** He was in Russia before that time.

**WC:** Well, he and Roy went to Russia with their wives and a few other people.

**MC:** But—

**WC:** So anyway, Roy didn’t need to make any more money at that time. He needed the money he made, he should have put it quicker into the project—

**MC:** The—

**WC:** That’s what it was, a project.

**MC:** Well, the four of us, Roy, his wife, Barbara, and Wayne and I went and signed a huge note to borrow money to build the first theater there, the Celebrity Club Theater, I think is what they called it. I remember signing it and thinking, *I’m glad there’s other people on this note besides just Wayne and me.* But that was the money that was used to build the first theater.

And Mr. Thomas knew that Wayne had this connection with Roy. So he approached Wayne to approach Roy on this.

Roy looked at it and thought this was a good deal. And it didn’t make hardly any money at the beginning. We broke even pretty much, we didn’t lose any money, we didn’t make that much money. But as soon as we sold out, it was within two weeks, that all of a sudden, we heard on *60 Minutes*, the commentator who was talking about Branson, he said, “Last person in Nashville, turn out the lights. Everyone’s moved to

Branson.”

**JE:** Hmm (thoughtful sound).

**MC:** And we went, “Oh, great!” It was kind of startling, but you went, “Well, at least you helped start it, and that’s a good thing.” Because it’s a good place for people out there.

**JE:** Was Roy the first one in Branson?

**MC:** At that time, we didn’t know of anyone else who was there. But I Googled and looked at it and evidently there were a couple of little honky-tonks there.

**JE:** Okay, so—

**MC:** No big theaters.

**JE:** But *he* was the first major name and star.

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** In Branson.

**MC:** Yes, yeah.

**JE:** And how many years was that, that he was there?

**MC:** They began the papers on Branson in 1980, and the theater opened in 1982. But you all sold out in about ’84.

**JE:** So a couple of years—

**MC:** Yeah.

**JE:** . . . he was there.

**MC:** Yeah, and sold out, but then he went back in and bought back his theater.

**WC:** His bar—

**MC:** By himself, without us.

**JE:** Okay. And did he stay there?

**WC:** Twelve years.

**JE:** Okay, so then he was part the renaissance then after you—

**WC:** Born in.

**JE:** So he got to be there anyway.

**MC:** Yes.

**WC:** Yeah, he was there and bought a house. And he played golf every day. He was driving back and forth from Tulsa. And got filled up with old ladies with gray hair.

**MC:** [laughing]

**WC:** And busloads of people from Chicago.

**MC:** Lots of families.

**WC:** He said, “No, they could have fun there. There was no drinking or cussing or anything like that.” And it’s a good deal.

**JE:** Yeah.

**WC:** They probably got rid of me by just saying it’s not making any money.

**MC:** I don't think that was the case. It wasn't making any money at the beginning but Wayne has invested in a lot of businesses that if he's not on the premise—

Yeah, so, and he can only be in so many places at the same time.

**JE:** Right.

**MC:** But it wasn't making that much money at the beginning. And he and Roy together decided, "Let's go ahead and sell out." And they sold out to Jim Thomas, the guy who had started it.

**WC:** He bought our part of it.

## Chapter 12 - 2:12

### Halsey Ranch Party

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**John Erling:** Jim Halsey was inspired by the 101 Ranch near Bartlesville in Osage County and Pawnee Bill Wild West Shows. They'd party with the outlaws and the oilmen. That inspired buying a ranch about twenty-five minutes south of Tulsa. Were you in on that?

**JE:** That 2500 acre ranch?

**WC:** There was Synar, who brought that to us with the idea you might be interested in it because it had cattle on it. It was eighteen, nineteen acres, to start out with.

**JE:** That's where you had a lot of entertainment called "Halsey Ranch Party."

**WC:** Yeah, once a year we'd have about twelve hundred, at one time. They had some very good, very high-priced entertainers like Bob Hope and Fred MacMurray.

**Martha Creasy:** When I first met Wayne I heard about these parties. They'd all happened prior to me meeting Wayne and marrying him. I went to the Ranch one time with him, just to drive by it and see it. And they still owned it at that time, but it was sold and so I've never been out there to a party. But I know they would have all these people come flying in to do the Roy Clark Open Golf Tournament?

**JE:** Celebrity Golf Tournament.

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** Right.

**MC:** Wayne had a helicopter and a little jet, a small minor jet plane, but he let them use the helicopter and his pilot to fly the people from the airport out to the Ranch. Also the pilot did some stuff where they had acrobats that were doing acrobatic acts up in the air. We found out later, the pilot did not have a license.

**JE:** [laughing]

**MC:** [laughing] And he was flying people like Fred MacMurray and everybody else out to the

Ranch. And you're going, "Oh, my gosh. God covered us there."

**JE:** Well, the Celebrity Golf Tournament was huge, it benefited Children's Medical Center. Bob Hope would come in and he'd MC the after-party, after the tournament. So you had big stars: Roy Clark, Tammy Wynette, Freddy Fender, Jimmy Dean, Mel Tillis, Hank Thompson, Jodie Miller, and you could probably add to that list. Those, Wayne, had to be a fun, fun time for you in your life. [laughs]

**WC:** Yeah. You go to the opera, enjoy it, you leave the guitar out by the front door and you go to the opera.

## Chapter 13 - 5:22

### Classical Music

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**Martha Creasy:** Wayne's preferences, classical music, opera, he loves opera. When I first met him he said, "You're going to learn how to like the ballet and the opera."

And I thought, *Ballet okay, I don't know about opera.* But I love it. Of course, he took me to the Met in New York, and I was going, "Dang, how can you not like this?" But also he had season tickets, two nights. The operas here would perform three nights on the weekends and we'd always go to the opening night and the last night, for each. And we did that for, I don't know how many years.

**John Erling:** Wayne, where did that interest in opera come from?

**Wayne Creasy:** Well, when I was in about the fourth grade my mother had inherited somebody's old Victrola. It had one record and it was Wagner and excerpts, probably, just one record like that. And what they were playing was *Leibistone*, which is love death. *Leibistone*, that is German. Wagner was the author.

I'd crank that thing up and put the arm and the starter on. Anyway, the king dies, he's slowly dying and she comes across the fjord, or whatever, and gets there in time before he does die. Then we have the most beautiful music and it's love death, where she, I guess, all of a sudden, works up all the energy and all the beautiful things that she's experienced with him and she dies.

The whole thing is that it just keeps climbing up and climbing up until you get up here to the very top of the scale. And when she dies, why, it slowly goes back down again. But that Wagner end thing just got me and if every day I had a chance, I'd go play the thing.

So pretty soon, my mother got tired of listening to it. I don't remember if they broke the record or not, but that was my beginning. Since then any opportunity I have to see a

good classical piece, why, I enjoy listening to it.

**JE:** Hmm (thoughtful sound).

**MC:** And when he was in the service, when they'd hand out passes to the musical shows and the Broadway shows they'd all be gone. But the opera passes wouldn't be gone, and Wayne grabbed them. He got to where—when you were in Honolulu, you'd go in and listen to opera—

**WC:** Yeah.

**MC:** . . . on the records in the libraries there. And having been married to him forty-three years, the only time I've ever seen him cry is when some aria comes on that just grabs you. I can see him, automatically I know, and there'll be tears coming down his face and it's just, ah. And he got me into it. I really understood the love of that kind of music.

**JE:** You're fortunate that you've got into it so much that you can appreciate that, you can taste it. A lot of us can listen and not get into the depth of it like you did. So you were born with a natural interest in that because your parents, while they had it, didn't force you to do that. You kept listening and listening and listening and enjoyed it.

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** So that was, I would say, something you were just born with. You should have been an opera singer.

**MC:** No. [all laughing] Heck, I don't know if he could sing or not, I've never heard him try.

**JE:** So then for you to like all this opera and classical music then be connected with these country western people—

**WC:** Just the money, just the money.

**JE:** Right.

**MC:** Yeah, but he's told me, he's said Roy loved opera just as much as him and Jim.

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** Roy talks about that in his interview—

**MC:** Yeah.

**JE:** . . . on our website. He talked about opera music. And his father gave him the advice, "Don't turn away any kind of music unless you've heard the whole thing."

**MC:** Right.

**JE:** I think is the way he said it.

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** And Roy said that was such a good piece of advice to him, as a matter of fact. But did you end up liking any one country song? Or any one of the performers?

**WC:** Well, yeah, sure.

**MC:** "Yesterday," "When I Was Young."

**WC:** I'll tell you what, "When I Was Young" was beautiful.

**JE:** That was Roy Clark.

**WC:** Oh, yeah.

**JE:** You had to have a few that you liked but your favorite was, of course, classical and opera.

**MC:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

**WC:** Tulsa's had, in the past, really great artists that come to Tulsa.

**MC:** Still do.

**WC:** And still do but not to the extent they used to. Before I met Martha, I'd always go to all three. Used to have one on Thursday and then Friday and Sunday or something, with lots of arias in it and so forth. We had a book in there Luciano personally signed and also one by the Australian gal.

**JE:** Did you personally get those autographs or did somebody else?

**WC:** Well, we sent some money in as a donation.

**MC:** You remember when he came to Tulsa? Luciano Pavarotti? He came to Tulsa and he came because someone offered him a racehorse, as I understand it.

**JE:** Oh.

**MC:** Anyway, he performed and Wayne, previous to marrying me, right before, between wife number one and two, got an apartment off of 55th Street in New York.

**WC:** Sixth Avenue, yeah.

**MC:** Sixth Avenue in New York.

**WC:** It's right around from Carnegie Hall.

**MC:** He'd go up there and go to the opera season, all the time. Oh, besides this, he also was, at that point, dating Patrice McBride, who was the lead ballerina for the New York City Ballet. Another amazing person. And I think you also dated Anne Pohtamo, who was Miss Finland, who became Miss Universe.

**WC:** She came here with her friend from Oklahoma City and then we had a bunch of guys come in to meet them.

**MC:** Yeah.

They all wanted to meet Miss Universe, and Wayne had dated her.

## Chapter 14 - 4:00

### Van Cliburn and Pavarotti

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**Wayne Creasy:** The thing that I can remember more than anything else besides the opera, Van Cliburn came to Tulsa.

**Martha Creasy:** Yes!

**WC:** And it was such a popular deal that every seat was filled up.

**MC:** Van's cousin, and I didn't know Van Cliburn's first name was Van, I thought it was just all one. Van's cousin was from Tulsa, I don't know his name, I don't remember it, but Wayne's ex-wife knew the man. And she called Wayne and she said, "Would you and Martha like to go with him, because they're going to put chairs on the stage right behind the piano, so you can watch from the other side."

And we went, "What!" So we got to go with the cousin, and there were about six of us sitting up there on the stage behind him.

**WC:** Right next to him, like you're there.

**MC:** And watching him play. Then when it was over with, whoever, took us over to a place downtown to have dinner late. And I was sitting right next to him. He offered me a bite of his mousse. He said, "This chocolate mousse is lovely, do you want a taste?"

And I thought, *Oh, my gosh, I'm getting handfed by Van Cliburn.* But then I asked him, I said, "Can I ask you a favor?"

And he stopped everything, gave me full attention, turned to me, and he said, "What can I do for you?"

And I said, "My husband would kill to have my seat, can I change with him?"

And he went, "Well, of course."

So Wayne comes over and, "What's your hardest piece? What's the piece you like best?" [laughing] Had the quiz time down.

**WC:** Well, that's the one I can remember down there.

**MC:** And Pavarotti, I kept saying to Wayne, "Let's take some flowers, and when he's through, I'll take them up to him and get to meet him."

Wayne goes, "Oh, you can't do that, can't do that."

I thought, *They do it in New York all the time.* I'd seen it at the Met. So I didn't do it because I'm too much of a coward anyway. But nevertheless, I noticed at the end, two women and a little girl went up and gave him flowers and he kissed their hands and shook their hands and everything. And I thought, *Ahh, I missed my chance.* But it was great to hear him sing in person, amazing.

**WC:** Oh, boy, yeah.

**John Erling:** Wow! You never thought this life was going to be the way it was when you were born, you lived there in Carthage, Missouri. What a journey you've been on. You have a faith too, don't you? Your faith is strong and—

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** Right.

**WC:** We try to go every Sunday and then every night we say the prayers. Every time we get an argument, we stop and think, *What are we doing this for?*



**MC:** And then we pray.

**JE:** That's good.

**WC:** Anyway, I take it you like classical music.

**JE:** Well, I haven't appreciated it as much as you have, I will say that. I enjoy it but not nearly to the degree you—

**WC:** You have some favorites that you—

**JE:** No, I can't deny you're pinning me down. This is an interview about you, not me. [all three laughing]

**WC:** Oh. That's fine.

**JE:** So what is your favorite classical?

**WC:** Oh, gosh, John, you didn't tell me so I'm not going to tell you.

**JE:** Okay then.

**MC:** Ah, I know it.

**JE:** Okay, mine's Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, how's that? [laughing]

**WC:** Oh, well, yeah.

**MC:** Yeah.

**WC:** And the last movement of the Ninth is really fantastic too.

**JE:** Yes, it really is—no, I'm just kidding because I don't know it near as well as you.

**MC:** Which one is the one you always say is like—

**WC:** Sixth.

**MC:** Okay, it has like the light on the water.

**WC:** Oh, yeah, there's one—

**MC:** Talks about force of destiny, the aria, and force of destiny.

**WC:** Oh, well, yeah.

**JE:** I just admire the fact that you didn't study it.

**WC:** No.

**MC:** Um-um (negative).

**JE:** Didn't go to school, didn't take it in school, or anything like that, but you became a student, obviously, down through the years.

**MC:** And he used to play a game with his friends where they would set a needle down on the record, let it sit down for, like, five seconds, pull it up, and say, "What's that?" He offered me money if I could learn how to do that. I can't do it that quick but it's interesting how much he did influence what all I listen to. And my taste totally changed once I realized what was out there. I just hadn't been exposed. And I got exposed by a guy who made me read the librettos prior to going to the opera, which was a great thing because it got the familiarity going.

**WC:** Yeah, that's the whole key, the familiarity. If you don't know what the guy's saying or

what he's trying to—

**MC:** Yeah.

**WC:** . . . instill in you and so forth.

**JE:** Yeah. It makes sense then, doesn't it?

**WC:** Yeah.

## Chapter 15 - 2:09

### Advice

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**John Erling:** As you think back on your life, your happy times—

**Wayne Creasy:** Yeah, I don't have to say she's my favorite—

**Martha Creasy:** Oh—

**WC:** But I will say she's my favorite and we go along together. We argue quite a bit and then we forget about it five minutes later.

**JE:** Right.

**WC:** I don't know, we can seem pretty loud.

**MC:** [laughing] We are volumous people.

**WC:** Oh, yeah, you—

**MC:** My sister said we were like racehorses, we both are very passionate about things; very passionately angry and then passionate to make up, just works.

**WC:** Yeah.

**JE:** Right. Any advice you have to the young people that are coming along, finishing school, starting business world?

**MC:** What you've always said to Becky and to Ryan both, you said, "Go for what you *really* want to do."

**WC:** Well, sure, that's—

**MC:** Because they'd have to be doing it for a long time. So do what they loved. And Becky, who got a doctorate in Irish literature, she teaches, and probably makes less than the manager at Kinko's. And, Becky, forgive me for saying that, but at the same time, she loves what she does.

**JE:** Yeah.

**MC:** So there it is. And she's happy with what she's doing. She loves the whole working with kids.

**JE:** And that's what we have to do. Well, thank you to the both of you.

**MC:** Um-hmm (affirmative).

- JE:** This was great. Let us come into your home. A lot of people have wondered what this mansion is all about, now they have a better vision of what it is. I know you'd like to sell it, so if we sell it, I'll take a 10 percent commission.
- WC:** You got it. Get a buyer now. Ten percent.
- MC:** And, and make sure they get in touch with Peter Walters, who has it listed.
- WC:** You know that Peter's had this house a year.
- MC:** He's tried to help us several ways.
- JE:** Yeah.
- MC:** But the latest thing we have is we've got a video we're going to attach to Zillow that goes into a little of the history of Mr. and Mrs. Bole, and has some of the original pictures, that we'll show.
- WC:** Yeah.
- MC:** I know, when I went into Zillow one time, I noticed where you can look at photos—
- JE:** Um-hmm (affirmative).
- MC:** . . . or you can flip over and look at a video, if they have it. So we got a video done professionally, and we're going to attach it to that site on Zillow so it can be viewed.
- JE:** Thank you to the both of you and I enjoyed being here with you. Thank you for letting us come in.
- WC:** Well, thank you.
- MC:** Thank you.

## Chapter 16 – 0:33

### Conclusion

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**Announcer:** This oral history presentation is made possible through the support of our generous foundation-funders. We encourage you to join them by making your donation, which will allow us to record future stories. Students, teachers, and librarians are using this website for research and the general public is listening every day to these great Oklahomans share their life experience.

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