3-28-2012

Interview with Joy Slayton

Joy Slayton

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<th>Lithblau</th>
<th>Ashlee</th>
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**Person Interviewed:** Slayton, Joy

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**Geographic Places as Subjects within the interview:**

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**Events as Subjects within the Interview:**

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**Other Major Places as Subjects within the Interview:**

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**Other Notes:**
Interview with Joy Slayton

Interviewer: Ashlee Lichtblau

3-28-2012
Biography of Joy Slayton

Joy was born April sixth in the year of 1951. She has lived all her life in Arkansas except for the six months that her and her husband tried out living in Georgia and then decided to come home to Arkansas. She has mainly lived in White county and has worked at Harding for twenty-eight years. She and her husband divorced because he was having an affair, and she lives with her mother in Stephens dorm as the dorm mom. Joy is very involved in her grandkids lives and loves them very much. She was raised on a farm and wishes that her kids and grandkids could have the experiences of just slow life like she did.
Lichtblau: I'm just going to start out asking you, did you live in Arkansas as a child?

Slayton: I was born and raised in Arkansas, I have, I guess I've lived in Arkansas all my life but about six months. It was after I got married and my husband took a wild hair we all moved to Georgia. Lived there six months and come home.

Lichtblau: What was it like growing up and going to school and just kinda daily life?

Slayton: Well I lived, we lived over at Greenwood Arkansas. My fathers folks were from Fortsmith and my mothers from Greenwood. And my father passed away when I was three. So we moved to the farm with my mothers parents until I was ten years old and then we moved to Searcy for mother to come to Harding.

Lichtblau: Wow

Slayton: And we have been here ever since.

Lichtblau: So you like Searcy?

Slayton: I like Searcy, I did enjoy, I'd have to say I do have a lot of memories about the farm and my grandparents. And they are all good, there is a lot of funny things that went on that ya know if a part of childhood. So, I would have to say I really think I enjoyed my childhood, I enjoyed everything in Searcy and I'm proud of Arkansas.

Lichtblau: That is so cool. What about your adult life? Like having jobs, raising kids, what was that like?
Slayton: It was good, I, I haven’t had that many jobs. You are gonna get tickled. When I got outta high-school, I decided I wanted to be a beauty operator and I went to school in fortsmith to a beauty school and graduated. And, then I got married, well no then I come home, in Seacry and he got a job and then I got married and then um I was a beautician for oh my, lets see, about four years.

Lichtblau: Oh wow.

Slayton: But I had a child in that time. And the doctor said ok, you either have to do one of two things, you either have to quit or your probably lose the baby. I quit for awhile, but then I went back. And then I got pregnant again and so then I just quit. And then I went to work with Eaton down here.

Lichtblau: Yea, the Industry.

Slayton: I worked there, for a period of time.

Lichtblau: Ok.

Slayton: And then my husband worked for colonial brit.

Lichtblau: Ok.

Slayton: He got transferred to Brinkly, Arkansas. And so we took our whole family and we moved to Brinkly, Arkansas. And we lived there for, I guess it was three years. And then we transferred back to searcy, and by that time I had just had our third child. And we moved back to searcy and I was a stay-at-home mamma. And lets see I don’t think I worked anymore until after, I guess when the baby got to where she was able to go like to pre-school or something, I started Doc Beck’s Kindergarten. And I worked there for several years and then we moved to Conway.
Lichtblau: Oh.

Slayton: And then Lia, our baby got sick, and she passed away right before she was six years old. And how much of this are you gonna put on that thing? After Lia died, about two weeks, three weeks, I guess to the day after we buried her, it came out in the Searcy paper that my husband was in a wreck with another woman and they were drunk and I found out he was having an affair.

Lichtblau: Oh my.

Slayton: But stayed with him, and then our other daughter had to have her tonsils taken out. And we, he didn’t go with me. We had to stay in the hospital a little longer cuz she kinda got dehydrated. We come home a day early, and he was with another woman. So I brought my kids back to Searcy and I started to work back for Doc Beck. My mother was a dorm manager at that time and we lived in some apartments well down the street here for awhile, and we finally moved in with mom. She was the dorm manager with Sears.

Lichtblau: Ok.

Slayton: We moved in and lived with her in, in 80 well 84, this may it will be 28 years I’ve been with Harding.

Lichtblau: Ok.

Slayton: So, 28 years ago, I started to work for Harding as their office manager over at Public Safety. Worked there for fourteen years and now I’ve been in the dorm for fourteen years.

Lichtblau: Oh wow. Which one do you like better?
Slayton: I like this.

Lichtblau: Yea.

Slayton: You know there is, there are hard times here sometimes when girls get in trouble or things like that. But not near like what we get over there. And so I raised my children here, they went to the academy. And my daughter graduated from college. My son went to college up in, he doesn’t like the sixteen hours graduated but he couldn’t decide what he wanted to do so anyway, he got married to a harding grad. And they both grew up, had kids and...

Lichtblau: Now you got grandkids.

Slayton: Now I have grandkids, yes. So.

Lichtblau: Do you have any recollection of some events that happened like ya know like Pearl Harbor or World War two or desegregation on 57?

Slayton: You know when, when I was in Junior High, where the Junior High is, it was a different building at that time, but I can remember so well the day that President Kennedy was shot.

Lichtblau: Yea.

Slayton: We were sitting in history class, of all things and they came in, came over the loud speaker that he was shot. And they played a news on the radio and they played that over the intercom when I was in school. And of course everybody was ya know upset. It was...

Lichtblau: A shock.
Slayton: A shock but I can remember it so well. The others, of course I wasn’t around well Vietnam and World War two, I do remember. My brother was too young to go, he was two years younger. Now my husband’s brother went though. And so we see a lot of repercussion ya know. I don’t care who says they can go over and come back without any emotional baggage. They are crazy.

Lichtblau: Yea.

Slayton: But he was able to handle his, we were lucky he wasn’t hurt, he wasn’t shot. He was in the center of war though and so he saw a lot of things and some things he never would talk about. He did pass away and his father has passed away so ya know so it’s sad but I think the most the one that we most saw was Kenndy’s death. At the age I was it was....

Lichtblau: A big deal.

Slayton: Mhmm.

Lichtblau: Do you remember anything like the whole Little Rock desegregation, all that movement ya know?

Slayton: No. Cuz we really wasn’t in it. We really were no in it.

Lichtblau: Do you have any famous like Arkansans, thats how you say it Arkansains?? Arkansas people like a favorite governor or athlete or?

Slayton: Oh my word. You know I really didn’t get into football or any of that stuff until my son was in school.

Lichtblau: Ok.
Slayton: I coulda cared less. Isn’t that sad? I just, I was not a sports person. I was in band and I kinda did my own thing ya know with the friends I had. But I guess looking back Rockefeller probably was my favorite governor.

Lichtblau: Yea. Why?

Slayton: He cared. He cared, it wasn’t and I think in some ways. In some ways, not near all, but he cared about the people not making a name for himself and that’s kinda what Rockefeller did, he cared. He he would make trips to different cities all over Arkansas, he would come up here. He was not a governor that stayed in Little Rock all the time. Of course we do see Bebee because he lived here at one time. But he was a fair man and uh he didn’t always use his personal opinions. He lived more for the good of the people, but he was a good man.

Lichtblau: Yea. What about a favorite entertainer?

Slayton: Not from Arkansas. I don’t know any entertainers.

Lichtblau: Like Johnny, were you Johnny cash time?

Slayton: Dores Day was was probably my most favorite female movie star.

Lichtblau: Ok.

Slayton: I enjoyed her, and my kids just make more fun of me. I have several of them and I music-wise, yes I enjoy Johnny Cash. Mother and I both did. We both enjoyed him. I liked um, oh good grief what was his name? Honey I am just as blank as a bat.

Lichtblau: Oh you’re fine.
Slayton: I can see his face just as well but I cannot think of his name. I also like Glenn Cambell, some of his songs. I liked Elvis Presley. And of course he was just from over here in Tennessee. I like Lorette Lynn. We had several good singers then.

Lichtblau: What do you think about Bill Clinton?

Slayton: He had something to be desired (laughing). I’m sorry.

Lichtblau: No, you’re fine. You’re totally fine.

Slayton: I didn’t vote for him for governor and I didn’t vote for him for president.

Lichtblau: Yea. Not my favorite either.

Slayton: And I was from Arkansas and people were like no you gotta vote for him, he’s from Arkansas. I was going: you vote for the man, not cuz hes from Arkansas. Anyway...

Lichtblau: Yea, guess that’s pretty much, oh do you like whenever you were growing up or when you were raising kids like what were holidays like, like were they an different in Arkansas then they were in Georgia or ..

Slayton: We wasn’t in Georgia for a holiday.

Lichtblau: For just six months, you were in the first part of the year, not the later part.

(laughing).

Slayton: That’s terrible. I really wish my grandkids had the experience that we had growing up now I mean we didn’t have a lot ya know, my father had passed away and my grandparents were farmers. My grandpa raised corn, I mean sugarcane and down in the bottoms and he worked em every day. Took his wagon and horses and went to the bottoms. Ya know, they milked cows he
sold milk we had a garden, we had chickens, we had ya know we had all that farm stuff you hear about. We used to play in the pasture on rocks and different things like that. It it was a simple time, but it was a good time. I rode the bus to school, and I rode the bus for about thirty minutes. From where we lived....

**Lichtblau:** That's a long bus trip.

**Slayton:** Yea, but it was good, it was good, it was a good life. We played in the barn, we had a barn. The cats stayed at the barn, so you went and played with the cats at the barn. We had dogs, but they stayed outside, ya know they chased whatever it was. I have set and watched, we had a a screened in porch, and we would sit on the front porch when we, now be careful about what you write. When we had family come, we would make what they called a Baptist palet. Now why, we’d have all the kids sleep on the front porch.

**Lichtblau:** Aww, that sounds fun.

**Slayton:** But I can remember looking out and watching coyotes go up across the pasture, the upper pasture. I mean they didn’t come down close to the house, we did have chickens there, but they didn’t come close to the house. Ya know, we used to plant the garden and I can remember grandpa taking the horses, and he would turn the soil it was so much fun to get out there and walk in that bare foot. Ya know, didn’t like pulling potatoes very much but. We had a cellar and we’d go when we had storms and we’d go, I guess I was in 2nd grade, cuz my brother wasn’t in school yet we went to the cellar cuz there was a storm. And there was a branch that ran down on the far side of the house and the tornado we we got to watch the tornado go down, ya know know it was far enough away probably as far as it is from here to oh Stafford apartments from us. We’d watch I can remember that, I can still see that tornado going down that branch ya know.
Lichtblau: That would scare me.

Slayton: they had a grape vine that set outside the house, I can remember grapes on it. And just just things like that, and I wish my kids had that. we would cut tree at Christmas and I have a lot of homemade on it. We had the old phones that you had to crank ya know and party lines. And I had a aunt and her husband would come, aunt and uncle, and they would come and mother. would do her hair every Saturday night and she would bring us one tootsie roll.

Lichtblau: One tootsie roll?

Slayton: One tootsie roll, that was a big deal. Ya know just little things like that. I wish my kids. My kids got to have a little of it, but not near...

Lichtblau: I know and today, is so different, like I didn’t have any of that.

Slayton: We had bathrooms, had to go down the path to the bathrooms, we took . during summertieme we’d go behind the well-house and take our bath, to the old tub. You gonna think I’m a old geezer. Its just those were the fun memories. And my kids don’t have that ya know. They have lived in cites all their life and ya know they love to go to camp. My son loved camp Takota. And so I know he woulda loved grandpa’s farm ya know? I can’t say that we took a lot of vacations. We did take some. We did several places but I think what I think I guess I want them to miss the most is the family time that we had on the farm, because it was the summer everybody would come. My mother was one of six so all the brother and sisters would bring all their kids and it was wonderful! Ya know there was kids everywhere. And I wish my kids had that. I think they love their uncle ya know and the family that we have but its just not the same.

Lichtblau: Yea, it’s just such a different world today.
Slayton: Yes, it is.

Lichtblau: It's so busy with technology and...

Slayton: I have a thirteen year old grandson and I'll tell ya what, things he's doing, we didn't even think about doin until...it just blows my mind. One of the girls out here was gonna help him do something and she said Ms. Slayton, I'm just now doing that, and they're already ...

Lichtblau: They are already doing it.

Slayton: And I'm going...I'm supposed to know how to help him? I just think todays world we, and I'm not saying this in a bad way, but I think we forget to let the kids be kids. I really do. And and I mean I don't think yall have to be kids like we did. I really don't, and today's kids, I think they even have it less and I'm not sure it's good.

Lichtblau: I don't think so either. I mean like from when I was growing up, having a cell phone at like sixteen or seventeen was a big deal. And now like ya see ten eleven twelve year olds like that's just their expectation.

Slayton: Well this thirteen year-old has one but it stays here at home, he doesn't take it to school. And the little one, he's getting ready to turn nine, he said am I getting one for my birthday. And I said I don't think so not till your thirteen. And then james turns fourteen in august and hes saying, I get my learning permit. And im just sitting there goin oh my word.

Lichtblau: It goes by fast.

Slayton: I'd rather it go back to sixteen. I don't know.

Lichtblau: Alright, well ..
Slayton: Did I answer your questions?

Lichtblau: Yea no you answered all of them great! I'm just gonna pause that.