

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Lester Cleve Arnwine**

Cleve was born in Oklahoma in 1931. His father worked for Conoco for 40 years, which required moves from Oklahoma to Texas and back during his elementary school years. After graduating as the 1948 high school class valedictorian at age 16, he enrolled at the University of Oklahoma (OU) to pursue a degree in Petroleum Engineering. In 1952, he and his ROTC classmates accepted commissions as army officers and served during the Korean War. His service in the Korean War resulted in a 3-year gap in his college education. He remained in the army reserves for 8 years following the war and continued Petroleum Engineering studies. He received a BS degree in 1956 and earned 26 hours of graduate credits while his fiancé completed her college degree.

Cleve joined Conoco in 1957 and enjoyed a stellar career in a number of key engineering and management positions spanning 35 years. He describes the highlights of his career as assignments in the Gulf of Mexico, Dubai and North America, which included two leadership positions in the control of 2 blowouts in Dubai.

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∥ *Scroll down for Key Words from the Interview.* ∥

Mr. Lester Cleve Arnwine died on September 30, 2019. His obituary may be found at: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/lester-arnwine-obituary?pid=194050741>

Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Wanda Sue Mack – spouse
 Angela Sue Arnwine Kozelsky – daughter
 Andrew Lester Arnwine – son
 Don Lee Arnwine – brother
 Evalee Loper Arnwine – mother
 Lester Fred Arnwine – father
 Hannah Kendall – ancestor

Places / Businesses

Army ROTC (OU)
 Oklahoma National Guard
 Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD
 Conoco
 Billings, Ponca City & Tonkawa, OK
 New Orleans, Lake Charles, LA.
 San Antonio, TX
 Houston, TX.
 Dubai, UAE
 South Korea
 University of Oklahoma
 Volunteer Hospitals of America

Events

Lived in various locations in Oklahoma and Texas with parents due to father's Conoco career transfers.

Don Lee, his brother, was a successful hospital administrator and CEO of VHA.

Served on active duty during the Korean War causing a 3 year gap in his college education at OU.

Married for 59 years to Wand Sue Mack, they have two children. His Conoco career required several family moves in the Gulf Coast area and Dubai, UAE.

He began his Conoco career as an engineer trainee and retired in a top engineering management position in the company.

Retired at the end of 1992 after 35 years with Conoco.

Retired for 23 years, he enjoys a number of athletic activities and service in several organizations.

His fantasy goal is to be appointed to the President's Cabinet as "Secretary of Common Sense."