

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE

Interviewees: **Billy Vic Krehmeier**

Interview Date: 10/16/2007

Interviewer: Jane Goodsill, Bruce Kelly

Transcriber: Marsha Smith

Location: The Teacherage, Sugar Land, Texas

35 Pages



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Transcript

GOODSILL: Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed.

KREHMEIER: Sure.

GOODSILL: To just begin, would you tell us your full name, middle name and everything, and date of birth.

KREHMEIER: Okay. Billy Vic Krehmeier, V-I-C. Born December 9th, 1925.

GOODSILL: Great. And we know you brought with you a letter that you wrote to a friend when you were in the service.

KREHMEIER: Yes.

GOODSILL: Tell us that story.

KREHMEIER: All right, I sure will do that. I was in the Marine Corps and I was stationed in Hawaii at the Marine Corps Air Station on Oahu. And I had learned from my mother that Tom McDade was stationed in Hawaii. Tom was three years older than I. He graduated in 1940, and I graduated in 1943. He went on to Baylor and he went in to the Navy as an ensign. In Hawaii he was on a U.S. Landing Craft Infantry—LCI. So I wrote him a letter and this is the letter that I wrote him (sound of paper unfolding). And it was dated February 12, 1945, Monday night.

Dear Tom B (that's what he was known as, Tom B),

I was sure glad to get a letter from you today. Mother had told me you had left the States but I didn't know you had landed here at Pearl Harbor. I hope we can arrange to see each other. I was off today and was up at Pearl Harbor to see Charles Kelly. He is working at the Fleet Post Office there. I will give you his address. Try and see him.

Also, Raymond Maxwell and Pete Wright are here. We were all together today. I get off every six days. That means I'll be off next Sunday. That will be February the 18th. I'll tell you what—you see, Raymond is a Pharmacist's Mate, Second Class, and he has a truck to go around in. We are all planning on liberty together next Sunday. You get in touch with Charles before next Sunday and make arrangements to be together next Sunday morning, and we will be up there sometime Sunday morning.

Charles works at the new Fleet Landing Fleet Post Office. He works on the first deck. You get in touch with him and write me your plans on where we will meet. Preferably, make it the place where Charles works. I know where that is. Here's hoping we see each other next Sunday morning.

Write me as soon as you see Charles and let me know for sure if you will be with him next Sunday. Here is his address: Charles E. Kelly, Jr., Yeoman Third Class, Navy 128, Fleet Post Office Duty, c/o of FPO San Francisco, California.

So long pal, and here's hoping everything works out as planned.

Billy

Oh yes, my address is Service Squadron now, not Headquarters. See, notice on the envelop"

And that's the end of the letter.

GOODSILL: (giggling)

KELLY: What a GREAT letter.

GOODSILL: Great letter!

KELLY: My dad was mentioned several times in there. That's wonderful. You gave some details on him that we don't know about.

KREHMEIER: I know it. That's why I brought this.

KELLY: Well, if you don't mind me making a copy of that, I'll send it to Chuck and Mom too. We'd love to have that.

KREHMEIER: Make a copy of the envelope and the whole thing.

KELLY: Bill, don't you have some pictures—or maybe Dad has a picture—Mother may have it—of all of you all together, walking down the street. In Chinatown, or somewhere?

KREHMEIER: In Hawaii.

GOODSILL: Did you make your rendezvous? You all got together?

KREHMEIER: Yeah. We got together.

GOODSILL: At Pearl Harbor?

KREHMEIER: Yeah. See, his ship was right there at the place where Charles was working, right there at the Fleet Post Office.

KREHMEIER: So, I mean, they were pretty close together and didn't know it.

KELLY: Was the Fleet Post Office a ship that was harbored in Pearl Harbor, do you know?

KREHMEIER: I don't know. I really don't.

GOODSILL: The Marine Corps base was out in Kaneohe. They go up over the Pali to get to Pearl Harbor.

KREHMEIER: I was at the Marine Corps Air Station at Ewa.

GOODSILL: Oh, you were in Ewa, you weren't in Kaneohe?

KREHMEIER: No, I was at Ewa. [Pronounced Eva, spelled Ewa.]

GOODSILL: On the north shore.

KREHMEIER: Yeah. I remember that my captain let me borrow [sic] his Jeep. And I drove his Jeep to meet with Charles and Tom B and Raymond Maxwell and Pete Wright. There was about five of us. Pete Wright was in the Merchant Marine.

KELLY: Was from Sugar Land?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, he married one of the Loper girls. Up on 4th Street. The Lopers, Mr. & Mrs. Loper.

KELLY: Yeah.

KREHMEIER: He married—I forget her name—but anyway, he was in the Merchant Marines at that time.

KELLY: There was another Loper daughter who lived in Sealy.

KREHMEIER: It could have been.

KELLY: I know you've shown me some pictures of you in Hawaii, on the beach and I don't think Dad was in all of them, but—

KREHMEIER: No. I know I've got a picture of Skeet Guenther and I, together, walking down the street, there in Hawaii.

KELLY: How long were you stationed there?

KREHMEIER: Sixteen months.

KELLY: You were there a LONG time.

KREHMEIER: Yeah. That was as far as I got. I was a control tower operator there and we were training these fighter squadrons, as they were coming from the States over to Hawaii. And they would train there for about two or three weeks, and then they were gone off to fight the war. But I was, I guess I was one of the lucky ones. I was there and stayed there until they dropped the big bomb. Of course, that was later, but the war was over with Germany and we were still there [Hawaii] when they dropped the big bomb in Japan.

GOODSILL: This was close to the end of the war, February 1945.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, right.

GOODSILL: You didn't know it, but it was close to the end.

KREHMEIER: No, I didn't know it!

KELLY: Six months later they dropped the bomb.

KREHMEIER: Yeah. I got discharged in May of '46, so I got back to San Diego. We came back in to San Diego, sometime in early '46. 'Cause I got my thirty-day leave in—like in January or February of '46. And based upon how many points you had. You had to have so many points to get discharged, back then. Overseas duty counted as points, and so forth, so I was actually able to get discharged in May of '46. And I think Charles had already been discharged. Charles was already back here and Wayburn (Hall) was back. Wayburn, you know, got wounded in—I think it was in Saipan. But anyway, they were discharged before I was.

KELLY: Do you recall the day you heard about the bomb being dropped? Do you recall your reaction at all?

KREHMEIER: Oh, I can remember it, yeah! I can remember it—everybody was jumpin' and hollerin' and screamin' and going crazy over there!

KELLY: Where were you?

KREHMEIER: Right there [Hawaii]. I was at the barracks.

KELLY: Was it in the daytime?

KREHMEIER: What was the problem, we were in the Marine Air Corps. My group was. And rumors were that they were going to invade Japan. That was the next thing, you see. And then there were rumors that they was gonna take us and transfer us to the infantry, to build up as many as they could for the invasion of Japan. And boy, when we heard about that bomb (chuckling), that was a happy day! (laughing)

KELLY: How did you hear about it? Was it in the paper or did they announce it over the loud speaker or can you recall?

KREHMEIER: I can't remember, Bruce, I really can't. We had that three-two beer (laughing). At the PX you know, you could go in there and get a beer for a nickel or a dime, I can't remember what it was. But, MAN, everybody was drinking beer and having rum and Coca-Cola. That was the favorite drink over there, rum and Coca-Cola. (chuckles). That was when you were off, you know, like on the weekends.

KELLY: Well, after you found out that the war was over, and that the bomb had been dropped, and the war was over, you stayed how long?

KREHMEIER: I came back in the early '46. See, I went over there in '44.

KELLY: Okay. So from the time the war ended and the time you got home, what did you do in Hawaii? I mean, routine things?

KREHMEIER: Routine things like control tower operators. We were training but after the war we just didn't do very much. We really didn't. I can remember a swimming pool. MAN, that was something else! We got to go swimming in that swimming pool. Great big one. And it was covered. It was covered swimming pool.

GOODSILL: Were you down on the beach, Ewa beach, or were you up in the mountains?

KREHMEIER: No, I was down on the beach.

KELLY: Did you do much swimming in the beach?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, as much as we could on weekends. We'd go to Transportation and get a great U-Haul truck—get the G.I. cans, fill them up with beer and ice, on Saturday morning, and take off on the islands and just travel everywhere and everywhere. And that's what we did on Saturdays.

KELLY: Have you been back since?

KREHMEIER: Haven't been back. I'd LOVE to go back to see it, but I probably won't. But I've heard it's a LOT different now than it was back then.

GOODSILL: You wouldn't even recognize it (chuckling- since she is from Hawaii).

KREHMEIER: I'm sure I wouldn't.

KELLY: You evidently enlisted—because you were in the Marines.

KREHMEIER: I was seventeen when I enlisted.

KELLY: So your parents had to sign for you?

KREHMEIER: Wayburn and I graduated in May of '43. In January of '43, the Marines and the Navy were trying to get high school graduates into this Navy V-12 program. It's a program where you graduate from high school. Wayburn and I joined. He was already eighteen but my mother and dad had to go with me to Houston to join the Marines. And they weren't going to take us until we graduated from high school.

We went to Southwestern Louisiana Institute in Lafayette [University of Southwestern Louisiana.] It's now Southwest Louisiana University [University of Louisiana at

Lafayette] We went there in June of '43, after we graduated high school. Went there and we stayed two semesters. We were just turning eighteen and we decided, 'Hell, we don't want to go to college and go on to Quantico to be second lieutenants'. Because there was all kind of Rice students, LSU students, from SMU—they had them—ALL of them. And they were two and three years older than we were. We were like seventeen, eighteen, nineteen. They were twenty-one, twenty-two. And they're the ones that went on and went to Quantico and were made lieutenants and went on over and fought the war. I know some of them that didn't come back.

KELLY: There was a famous Rice football player?

KREHMEIER: Oh, Alvin Dark?

KELLY: Alvin Dark.

KREHMEIER: He was my roommate! Billy Blackburn was an All-Southwest Conference center at Rice, and Weldon Humble—I know you've heard of Weldon Humble—the great big Rice alum, All-American. Anyway, they were my roommates there at Lafayette.

But anyway, Wayburn and I decided, and it was tough on us, we were ready to go and we just said, 'To heck with this. Let's go fight the war'. So we went into the Captain and told the Captain, said 'We don't want to go to school anymore; just send us to boot camp'. So he issued the orders and they sent us to San Diego to go to boot camp. Eight weeks of boot camp.

You have three choices when you come out of boot camp: aviation/ air corps, infantry or sea duty. Well, my first choice was sea duty. My second choice was aviation. And my last choice, naturally, was infantry. Well, I was lucky. I got in to the Air Corps. Wayburn didn't. He got in the infantry. He went straight to Camp Pendleton and I went to Camp Miramar, Marine Corps Air Station at Camp Miramar. And that's where we split. And he served several tours of bad fighting. [pause] Yeah, he had a scar on his lip.

KELLY: I remember that scar on his lip.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, he still gets a check from the government on that.

KELLY: Is that right?!

KREHMEIER: Uh huh. But that was some days! [Pensive sigh]

GOODSILL: Do you remember the day that Pearl Harbor was bombed?

KREHMEIER: Oh YES, I remember that! Just like it was yesterday.

GOODSILL: Tell us about that day.

KREHMEIER: We were living on Fifth Street in Sugar Land and I was, let's see—'41, I was born in '25, I was about fifteen or sixteen years old, somewhere in there. My mother and dad had gone to Richmond or Rosenberg to a show. You know, when you wanted to go to a movie, you had to go to Richmond—to the Cole Theater in Richmond, or the Cole Theater in Rosenberg. This was on a Sunday. And I was out on our back porch, listening to the radio. And that's when I heard about Pearl Harbor. I was there by myself.

GOODSILL: Do you remember what you thought or what emotions you had?

KREHMEIER: Well, I thought, you know, we're gonna be in a war.

KELLY: You had just turned sixteen.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, I knew I had to go on and graduate from high school. And I did. And Wayburn and I, we joined the Marines because they were drafting people already. Once you turned eighteen, you were called to Richmond, to the draft board. And we didn't want to wait to get drafted into the Army. So that's why we joined this Navy V-12 thing, to go to Officer's Training School and become an officer.

KELLY: And that's probably why your parents were willing to sign for you at seventeen because that kept you a little more protected.

KREHMEIER: Right. Right. And it kept us there until we finished high school and then we went to school.

KELLY: I know that my grandparents had to sign for my dad to go into the Navy. He was 17 and I know my grandmother (chuckles) DIDN'T like the idea, but I guess my grandfather talked her into it.

KREHMEIER: See, Charles (Kelly) was about a year older than I. He graduated in '42. And he went into the Navy, I guess about a year before I joined the Marines.

KELLY: I want to show you something. I did a little research on your family. But I looked in the 1920 census records.

KREHMEIER: 1920 census records (wondering tone in his voice).

KELLY: And here is the listing of Vic Krehmeier and his wife.

KREHMEIER: Thelma.

KELLY: Yeah. It gives their age, and it shows him as a timekeeper for the Imperial Sugar Company.

KREHMEIER: We was living on 5th Street.

KELLY: From Imperial's housing records, they only go back to 1922, it shows them living on 5th Street in 1922. Now they lived there in 1920 as well. This is his name; he paid \$12.00 a month rent.

KREHMEIER: My goodness gracious. (amazement in his voice)

KELLY: And they increased his rent in 1927, to \$25.00—from \$12.00 to \$25.00. They must've done something—put in a heater or something-- that would increase the rent. Or they added on or something like that. The address doesn't show up on this copy, but it was 601 5th Street.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, right. 105 now. Then we moved to another house. The old Ratchford house.

KELLY: In June 1933, in June, you moved there.

KREHMEIER: Mr. Ratchford was an engineer for Imperial Sugar Company. This was the best house and the biggest house on The Hill.

KELLY: Is that right?!

KREHMEIER: When they moved out my dad went to Mr. Thompson and got approval to move into the Ratchford house. We moved into the Ratchford house in 1933. I was eight years old at that time.

KELLY: You can see who your neighbors were on this side.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, the Kirkpatricks and then the Dunkerlys and Mr. LeNormand he lived right next door to us.

KELLY: They're probably the first people you remember.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, oh yeah. And the McDades, well they lived two houses down. We were in the middle. LeNormand lived next door to us and the McDades lived on the other side of the LeNormands.

KELLY: Now there is something interesting on the 1920 census. The neighbors were different when you lived on 5th Street. One of the neighbor's last name is Ruiz. I can't make out—it looks like Pedro or something Ruiz and they were from Louisiana. And his wife's name was May. And they had children: Wallace and Norwood. His job was, he was a clerk in the shipping department.

KREHMEIER: Hmmm, I didn't know them.

GOODSILL: Bill, tell me the names of your parents and how they came to Sugar Land.

KREHMEIER: My dad (Vic) was born in Victoria, in 1897. And he came here in 1913 he was about 15 or 16 years old. He went through seventh grade, that's as far as he went in school.

KELLY: Did he attend school here in Sugar Land?

KREHMEIER: No, in Victoria. His older sister, Lottie, my aunt Lottie, was living here in Sugar Land. She and her husband, my uncle Louie Leuder, were living here. He was in charge of the meat market. My aunt Lottie wrote a letter to my grandmother, asking if Vic couldn't come to Sugar Land and live here in Sugar Land and go to work for them in the meat market. And he did. He went to work there and eventually went to work for the Imperial Sugar Company.

They lived up on The Hill in what they called "tent city". They had no homes up on The Hill at that time. People lived in tents. I can remember my aunt Lottie telling us about living in "tent city" up there.

GOODSILL: Do you remember what she told you about it? What it was like?

KREHMEIER: No, except that it was VERY primitive. (laughs) My mother's father came from Sealy— John Conch O'Connor. He worked for the County. He took care of all the roads in Fort Bend County. And they lived on 5th Street too. We lived on one end of 5th Street and the O'Connors lived at the other end of 5th Street. Do you know that big house on the corner, right across from the football field? Opposite the Baptist church?

KELLY: Yes.

KREHMEIER: That's where the O'Connors lived.

KELLY: That would be the southeast corner of 5th and Wood Streets.

KREHMEIER: Yeah. I can remember walking from one end of 5th Street to the other end of 5th Street. My aunt Medville, my mother's younger sister, was living with them. Mother and Dad met in Sugar Land, and they got married.

KELLY: Where did they meet?

KREHMEIER: They met in Oyster Creek. There was no bridge there. It was just Oyster Creek and there was no water in it at that time.

KELLY: Near or under the Main Street Bridge?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, the old bridge. It used to be a wooden bridge. That's where they met, there in the Oyster Creek.

KELLY: Oyster Creek Bottom is what they called it.

KREHMEIER: Oyster Creek Bottom. They got married and like the record shows they lived in that house in 1922. I was born in '25.

KELLY: Well, your mother obviously was living in Sugar Land.

KREHMEIER: Oh yeah. They came here from Sealy when the O'Connors moved. Somewhere around 1920, I guess.

GOODSILL: Were you the first-born, first child?

KREHMEIER: My mother told me several times they had one child before me. His name was Warren and he died in infancy. She told me that I would never have been here if Warren had lived. So apparently they (chuckles) intended to have one child.

KREHMEIER: Anyway, Warren died in infancy and then they had me (chuckles).

GOODSILL: And you're the only child they had?

KREHMEIER: I'm the only child, right.

KELLY: What's your earliest memory? Can you recall?

KREHMEIER: Oh, my earliest memories are going to kindergarten, where the high school is now. I remember the high school auditorium. We went to kindergarten there and of course we graduated in the auditorium.

I was ALWAYS interested in sports. I was the fastest man on the track team, best tennis player, football, basketball, I played everything. And I can remember on Fridays, at noon when I was thirteen—fourteen years old, we'd go in the auditorium for the Friday night football game pep rally. Or Friday evening—that was before we had lights! [Animated] We played at Kempner Field on Friday afternoons.

KELLY: So you'd go into the auditorium for a pep rally? What was that like? Did the football players sit on the stage or how did that work. Do you remember?

KREHMEIER: I can remember the football players being up on the stage and the cheerleaders would have these rah-rah-rah. (chuckles)

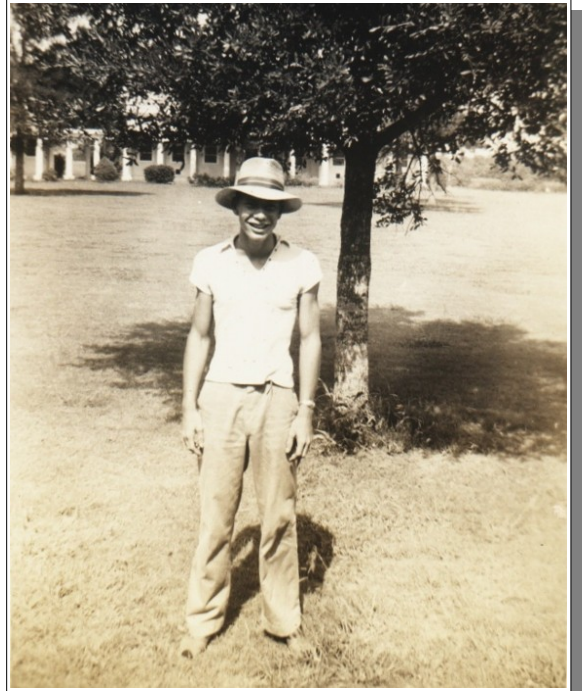
KELLY: I bet it was loud in that small auditorium.

KREHMEIER: Oh yeah, it was. Yeah. They had the tennis courts right there between the back of the auditorium and this road coming down there.

All the individual schoolrooms were there too. I can remember Miss Manning. She was the principal and math teacher. And she was strict. I had her for the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh grades math, algebra, geometry. She was TOUGH! (laughs).

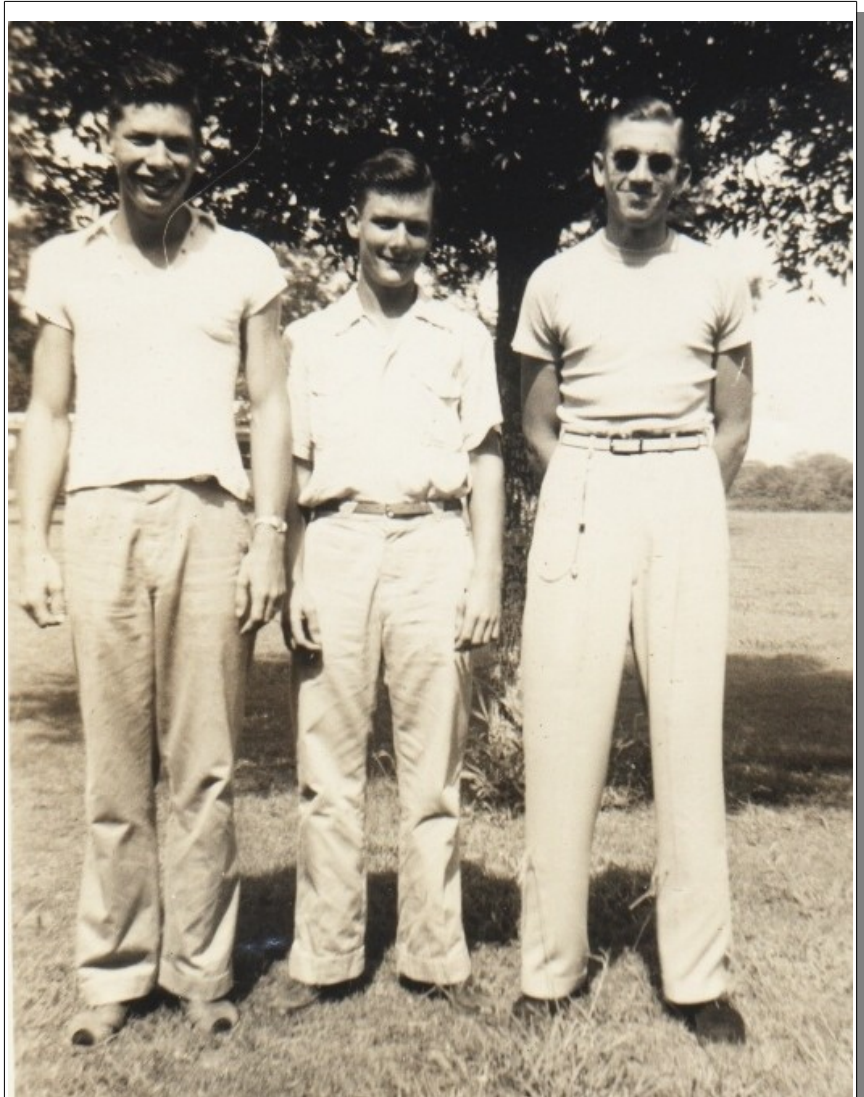
I'll never forget one time. I was a prankster. Fuzzy Ferguson, one of the football players was sitting in front of me in math class. And I had my compass and I (laughs) and I punched him in the butt.

KELLY: (laughing)



KREHMEIER: And he jumped and yelled. And everybody knew what happened. Miss Manning was up at the blackboard and didn't see me. But she got on me for that. (laughs)

And I had ONE spanking in my eleven years in school. Mr. E. J. Nelson taught all the sciences. He taught general science, biology, chemistry and Coach Frank Arnold taught physics. In the seventh grade, Mr. Nelson caught me throwing a spitball. I had wadded up a piece of paper and made a spitball, and I threw it across the room and hit somebody in the head. Mr. Nelson caught me so at noon, he took me down to Mr. Barden's office. Mr. Barden's office was on the right side in the auditorium. That's where I got my first spanking with a paddle. For throwing that spitball. (chuckles)



L-R Billy Krehmeier, Arthur 'Skeet' Gunther, Charles Kelly

KELLY: First and only??!

KREHMEIER: Yeah, right!

KELLY: Well, that's not too bad.

KREHMEIER: Nope. That's the only one I ever got. I was in the LAST school bunch that went eleven years. That was 1943. After that they went up to the twelfth grade.

KELLY: Well, going back to your kindergarten class, do you remember who your teacher was?

KREHMEIER: No, I don't remember that. I sure can't. I can remember Miss Johnson was the first grade teacher; Miss O'Neal was the second grade teacher. I remember my third grade teacher but I can't remember the fourth, fifth and sixth. But Mr. Nelson was the seventh grade teacher. Charles [Kelly] and Skeet Guenther were one year older than me. I went into the first grade WITH them. How and why I can't tell you. But when I got to the seventh grade, I didn't do too well in school. So Mr. Nelson suggested to my mother and dad that I stay over in the seventh grade and take it again. And that's when Skeet and Charles were one grade ahead of me, so they graduated in '42 and then I graduated in '43. I was a year younger. I don't know how I got in that class, but I did. (chuckles)

KELLY: Going back to your early neighborhood on 5th street, the block between 4th and 5th Street that had the churches on it.

KREHMEIER: Oh yes.

KELLY: That was an empty block for a long time. There weren't any houses on it, except for churches. Do you recall that?

KREHMEIER: The houses were there on 5th Street when I was born in '25, because we was living there on 5th Street.

KELLY: But the 4th Street block, where the churches were was empty on the maps. Except for the churches. And that's why there's brick on them.

KREHMEIER: Yes, at the end of the street there were all brick homes and then on 5th Street some were brick but most were wooden homes! And some brick. The McDade house was brick.

KELLY: That's right. So evidently they developed that block last, on The Hill, for some reason they were reserving for churches?

KREHMEIER: Could be.

KELLY: But eventually they put houses on it.

KREHMEIER: Right. I remember the four churches: Baptist Church, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Catholic Church. One, two, three four—just like that. (chuckles)

KELLY: What was it like, growing up on The Hill?
Were there a lot of

children to play with?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, yeah. I walked to school every day.

GOODSILL: Even as a little boy?

KREHMEIER: Walked back—little old—yeah.

KELLY: Did you go home for lunch or did you eat at school?

KREHMEIER: I would go home for lunch. Sometimes I would take my lunch. In the schoolrooms, in the back, in the entry, there was a place to put your lunches and the schoolroom was up at the front. When we'd take our lunch, we'd put it in that lunchroom.

KELLY: Boys' closet, girls' closet?

KREHMEIER: One for the boys and one for the girls, on each side. And we'd go outside at lunch and eat our lunch, out in that semi-circle.

KELLY: Did you walk to town much?

KREHMEIER: I was a bicycle rider (chuckles). I learned how to ride the bicycle.

GOODSILL: I think you were just a little troublemaker is what you might have been!
(both laugh)

KREHMEIER: Yeah!

KELLY: You'd ride your bicycle anywhere in Sugar Land?

KREHMEIER: All over—anywhere and everywhere. I can remember many times, when we'd pre-arrange for me to go over and see Charles, visit with them on Imperial Boulevard

—



KELLY: Or Rat Row.

KREHMEIER: How it ever got that name, I don't know, but I can remember I'd ride my bicycle over and I'd spend the day over there.

KELLY: What would you do when you visited him?

KREHMEIER: Well, in the back of their house, there was these great big tanks. I can't remember what they were used for but they were great big tanks. Must've been eight feet tall and GREAT big circular things. And we'd go back there and jump. They was just stacked up, one after the other, and we'd play on those tanks. And then there was a swimmin' hole back a little further down the road. And we'd go swimmin'!

KELLY: Was that over by Cook's Dam?

KREHMEIER: Yeah!

KELLY: Was it the settling pond?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, I think that's it, exactly. Behind Visco Products, well, it WAS Visco, now its Nalco. Mr. Kirkpatrick was in charge of the Visco Products. Dr. Kirkpatrick. I can remember Miz Kelly have lunch. We would eat lunch. And I can still remember her boiling corn. And I'd have that corn cob. Boy that was SOME good eating! I can remember that just like it was yesterday.

KELLY: (laughing about his grandmother)

KREHMEIER: Eatin' those corn cobs.



L-R Billy Krehmeier, Arthur 'Skeet' Gunther

KELLY: Do you recall the old cars that were just left behind those houses? Somebody had mentioned to us there were some old abandoned cars and the hoboes during the Depression would camp out in those.

KREHMEIER: Oh really? No, I didn't know that.

KELLY: John Pirtle told us. He lived over there—he's younger than you.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, the Pirtles lived there, next to the Scarboroughs, then the Trouts. Then on the other side of the street was the Kellys.

KELLY: And you were kind of related to the Scarboroughs, right?

KREHMEIER: Right. Mr. Carroll Scarborough was in charge of the gym at Sugar Land High School. He was Mr. and Mrs. Scarborough's son, Carroll. He married my aunt Maybelle, my mother's younger sister. Carroll and Maybelle were married. And he was in charge of the school gym and the swimming pool in the '30s and '40s. That's when Frank Arnold was too. And Betty Norton (sister of Mary Norton Shelton who married Herb Shelton) was the girls' coach, for volleyball and basketball.

KELLY: She lived in this room we are sitting in! [referring to the wood paneled room in the Teacherage] Her mother and Mary and Betty lived in the Teacherage. They had this room right here.

KELLY: I think you told me once that your mother would get buttermilk or some sort of dairy products from the old dairy.

KREHMEIER: Oh, from the old dairy?

KELLY: Yeah!

KREHMEIER: Mother she was always heavy. She was big and heavy. She was either on a diet or she wasn't on a diet. (chuckles) She'd go get heavy, then she'd go on a diet. Then she'd get off the diet. She died at sixty-nine, 'cause that was her problem. She just loved to eat. (chuckles) I can remember going over there in that 1936 Chevrolet we had. We'd go over to Mr. Scarborough's. He was in charge of the dairy. They had ALL the cattle in the back, and they'd come in and milk all these cows. Mother'd get a gallon of skim milk. 'Cause she wants—when she'd be on a diet—

GOODSILL: Reduce! (giggles)

KREHMEIER: She'd get the skim milk. And I can remember also, when we'd get regular milk, in that quart jar —all the cream—all the heavy stuff was at the top. That was before homogenized milk. Anyway, we'd get that milk and we'd have to SHAKE that jar to get it all where you could drink it. And my mother had me drink milk like crazy. When I'd get home from school at 3:30 or 4 o'clock—she had a great big glass of milk there for me to drink. EVERY day.

GOODSILL: Did you like that?

KREHMEIER: Oh—I didn't like it, but I HAD to drink it! (chuckles)

KELLY: Tell us a little more about the dairy. Where was the dairy?

KREHMEIER: You know where Ulrich Street is. Okay. Then you went across the railroad track. There was about three railroad tracks there. And then you'd take a left and that was the entrance to the dairy. That's where Mr. Scarborough ran the dairy.

KELLY: I've seen pictures—there was a big barn, right?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, the big barn there, and next was Imperial Boulevard. Then Imperial Boulevard was next to the left.

KELLY: Okay. There was a creamery building a little two-story building. Do you recall that? And they would pasture them on the other side of the creek because there was a bridge—to get across the creek.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, uh huh. Right.

GOODSILL: Did you ever play on that bridge?

KREHMEIER: No.

GOODSILL: That was off-bounds?

KREHMEIER: Yeah! Right! Yeah.

KELLY: Well, besides taking your bicycle over to Imperial Boulevard, where else would you ride your bike?

KREHMEIER: Well, the Guenther's lived on Guenther Street and that was The Flats. That's the area they called The Flats. The Hill was up high, and then The Flats was down, across the Highway 90.

GOODSILL: Was there a perceptible difference in elevation?

KREHMEIER: Yeah! Well, you can see the difference now, when you're comin' across the bridge there on Main Street, where the water tower is. You can see the north bank is higher. Anyway, I'd ride my bicycle over there to visit with Skeet Guenther and Jack Albert Ulrich.

KELLY: In this neighborhood, right here at Brooks and 90?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, exactly.

KELLY: There was an alley in the back. Did y'all play back there?

KREHMEIER: Yeah. I can show you right—well, it's right back here where Skeet's house was.

KELLY: So you would come over here and play, y'all'd do your thing over here?

KREHMEIER: Yeah. And in all this area in here was grass. And that was the playground. It was a big playground. It was ALL grass.

KELLY: Do you remember a tennis court there at all?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, I remember there being a tennis court here too. But eventually it was taken down.

KELLY: Did you ever explore on your bicycle, with Skeet, down to the creek or anywhere down in that area where Venice Road went?

KREHMEIER: Well, we used to ride our bicycles down Oyster Creek Drive. You know where Fluor is now? That used to be where the company had all of their equipment for farming. And all of the ranch hands lived out there. And they had horses and they had the horse barn.

KELLY: So even in those days you could ride your bicycle a mile and a half—two miles down the road?

KREHMEIER: Oh yeah, yeah, uh huh. And there was nothing but old gravel road. (chuckles)

KELLY: Would you ride to downtown Sugar Land, to the stores?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, sure. Yeah. Ride down to the drug store, get a chocolate bars. Just chocolate bars. And I guess one in about a hundred, they'd have a FREE on the stick, you know the chocolate bars? And we'd always get these chocolate bars to see if we'd get one that had FREE on it. If you got one that had FREE on it, you'd get a free one! (chuckles)

KELLY: Well, did you ever visit your father, where he worked? In the refinery? Was he timekeeper when you were little?

KREHMEIER: He was a timekeeper. Did you know where the timekeepers' office was?

KREHMEIER: I never did go there. You know where the Wirtz bridge was? The old wooden bridge at the entrance to the refinery, right where Charlie Tice had the machine shop? The machine shop is still there. Well, the time office was right in front of the road.

KELLY: It was a little cement building. And was that where people would enter the refinery to punch their clock?

KREHMEIER: Go to work, punch their clock, and all that.

GOODSILL: So he calculated how many hours people worked? Is that what the timekeeper does?

KREHMEIER: Yeah.

GOODSILL: Did you ever work at the refinery?

KREHMEIER: I sure did. One summer.

GOODSILL: What'd you do?

KREHMEIER: One summer, I was probably about fourteen or fifteen years old. Mr. Adam Varnau was in charge of the refinery. My dad got him to get me a job in the refinery. I had eight hours—I was on the day shift. Anyway, I had to sit there and watch this sugar as it comes down, and when it's filled up, I had to—I can't remember exactly the details—but anyway, I made seventy-five cents an hour.

KELLY: Was this in the packing plant?

KREHMEIER: No, it was in the main char house.

GOODSILL: And describe it again? The sugar would come on a conveyor belt in a package, or raw, or what?

KREHMEIER: it was RAW sugar. It wasn't refined sugar, it was raw sugar. It was coming down and, gosh, that's been a long time ago.

GOODSILL: And you got paid seventy-five cents an hour? Did you feel pretty rich?

KREHMEIER: I SURE did! But I worked there one summer. But the other three summers while I was in high school, I worked at Fort Bend Utilities. I worked for Mr. Charlton, he was the painter. And we'd paint houses, all the rent houses. If any of them had any construction work done, well, after the construction was done, then Mr. Charlton and I would paint. I was just a helper, you know. But I worked with him for three summers, painting houses here in Sugar Land.

GOODSILL: So you know MANY of these houses, intimately.

KREHMEIER: Oh yes. (both laugh) Yep. I can remember painting that house on 1st Street. You know, you're coming across the bridge, and 1st Street, that first house on the corner there—

KELLY: That faces catty-corner?

KREHMEIER: Right. It's catty-cornered. It's—that one—that was the old—what was their name?

KELLY: Well, I know the Risters lived there for a while, but that was later.

KREHMEIER: That was later, the Risters lived there later. Uhhhh, I can't remember the name of the people that lived there. But I know we—we painted that house.

KELLY: That was a big house to paint!

KREHMEIER: Yes it was!

KELLY: Painted the inside as well as the outside?

KREHMEIER: Uh huh, yeah.

GOODSILL: So you did that three summers. That was pretty hard work in the summertime. It was HOT.

KREHMEIER: Yes it was! (chuckles) Sure was!

KELLY: (laughing). What was Mr. Charleton like?

KREHMEIER: He was a real nice guy. Real nice guy, yeah. I can remember him putting those goggles on and spraying the stuff. I'd do whatever he told me to do. (chuckles)

KELLY: That was in the day of lead paint, too. We didn't know about that.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, that's right. Yeah.

KELLY: Well, did you ever have a car? Growing up? Of your own?

KREHMEIER: Oh, no. No, no.

KELLY: Did you get to use the family car?

KREHMEIER: I DID get my driver's license at age fourteen.

KELLY: Oh really!

KREHMEIER: Sure did! I remember going over to Richmond, taking my test. My mother took me over there and got my driver's license at age fourteen.

KELLY: Was that unusual, to get it that early?

KREHMEIER: You could get them at fourteen, with your parents' approval, and so forth.

KELLY: So, did you drive much?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, once I got up to fifteen and started having dates, I was able to drive. Yeah, sure was.

KELLY: Where would you go on a date?



L-R: Bill Harman; Charles Kelly, Jr.; Billy Vic Krehmeier; Victor Frank Krehmeier (Billie Vic's dad)

KREHMEIER: Well, we'd go to Houston, either to the Lowes, the Metropolitan or the Majestic Theater. OR, Richmond and Rosenberg. And go to where Sivils and the drive-ins—South Main drive-ins on South Main and OST [Old Spanish Trail]. They had Prince's hamburgers! Prince's and Sivils, right across OST from each other. And after football games, on Friday nights, if we had a date, we'd drive in there and get hamburger and a mug of root beer. That was about all you could do! There wasn't anything IN Sugar Land, hardly. They had the old root beer stand.

KELLY: Now where was the root beer stand? Nobody talks too much about that.

KREHMEIER: Well, you know where the old Humble Exxon was? It was back over to the right, behind it. Back up in there.

KELLY: So somewhere, where the parking lot is—

KREHMEIER: Had a big parking area.

KELLY: Do you remember taking the train into Houston? Did you ever do that? The Dinky?

KREHMEIER: You know, I DO remember it. I remember taking a train. Yeah, that reminds me of something else I was going to tell you. I remember going into Houston one time, to ride a train back. Of course, you could get on and off in Sugar Land. They let you on and off. I can remember the 1936 Texas Centennial, in Dallas. My dad and I and Mr. E. J. Nelson, the science teacher—and there was others that went but I can't remember who all went. But we took a train and went up to the State Fair in 1936.

GOODSILL: Boy, that must've been FUN!

KREHMEIER: It was—it was lots of fun. Yep. But that was a LONG time ago. 1936. I can remember that now.

GOODSILL: You were eleven?

KREHMEIER: Eleven years old.

KELLY: When you returned to Sugar Land from the war—what transportation did you take?

KREHMEIER: Train, from San Diego. I got \$112 in cash. When you separated [they gave you money] it's depending on how many miles you're going from San Diego. I can remember getting \$112 in cash.

GOODSILL: How much was your fare?

KREHMEIER: I don't remember. But I remember coming back, and getting off. I had my bag, you know. I was still in uniform, of course. And I remember getting off at the train station and going into the mercantile office and my dad was way back in the back. And I saw him there (chuckles). He knew I was coming. They knew I was coming. I got off there and—that was a happy day!

KELLY: It wasn't too far to walk, from the train station.

KREHMEIER: Oh no. Heck no. The train station was right there in front of the old clinic. You remember the old clinic? That train station was right there, and then I just walked down and got to the mercantile office.

KELLY: Do you recall your father's reaction?

KREHMEIER: Oh, he was happy to see me (laughs). Yeah----yeah.

KELLY: Did you ever call home during your war years?

KREHMEIER: How would you do that? You know, that reminds of a phone call. Skeet Guenther and I got together. We were both in the Marines. Anyway, we arranged by writing letters or my mother and dad came down to the Guenther's, on a Sunday, and Skeet and I were at a pay telephone, and we called the Guenther's number. The telephone operators knew who we were when we asked for the Guenther's. The operators talked to Billy and Skeet and then they rang the phone at the Guenther's house and we had a conversation with our parents.

KELLY: So you would have to give the lowdown to the operator before you could talk to your parents! (chuckles)

KREHMEIER: Well, you come through the operator. That was before it was direct dialing (laughs).

KELLY: (chuckling) Oh, how funny!

KREHMEIER: (speaking as though he were the operator:) 'SAY, HELLO! Are you Billy Vic?' I said, "I'm doing fine! Skeet's out here too." So she spoke to Skeet and then, then we'd change the phone back and forth to each other as we was talking to our parents.

KELLY: Wow. It took a while to make the connections I suppose, once you made a phone call. You had to have a pocketful of coins, I guess, at the pay phone! (chuckling)

KREHMEIER: Yeah, right. I guess we did!

KELLY: Or you paid collect.

KREHMEIER: Well, I think we called collect. Yeah. (both laughing)

GOODSILL: How did you meet your wife?

KREHMEIER: Well, when I graduated in 1943, I was 17 years old. I was a senior. She must've been in the seventh grade. (chuckles) When I got out of the Marine Corps, in '46, I had several dates with girls.

Oh! Let's go back. When Wayburn [Hall] and I were in Lafayette, Tug [Tuggie Laperouse] and Wynelle's [Tuggie's sister] grandparents were in New Iberia. Mr. Laperouse's parents were in New Iberia. Wayburn and I was in our Marine uniforms at Lafayette. We hitchhiked and how we ever knew Wynelle and Tug were visiting their grandparents I don't know. We hitchhiked to New Iberia and we got to see them. That was when— well, if I was seventeen, Tug was like thirteen and Wynelle was fifteen. And we went to visit them on a Sunday and hitchhiked back to Lafayette.



L-R: Mayme Rachuig Haus, Tuggie Laperouse Krehmeier

When I got out of the Marine Corps in '46, well, Tug and I started datin'. Walter Wappler married Wynelle. They were livin' in Houston in an upstairs apartment at 2407 Van Buren. Tug and I were still dating, and the apartment downstairs became available, and Wynelle and Walter moved downstairs. A great big apartment house in the Montrose area. Not too far from the Tower Theater, Westheimer and Montrose.

Wynelle says, 'Why don't y'all get married, and move up to this apartment that we're moving out of?' I can remember saying, 'I need to ask your parents' (laughs). So one evenin', before we went on a date, we asked 'em and they said 'Yes'. (chuckling) They were livin' in Sugar Land in the second house on Venice from Guenther, next to Tom James. We got married in that house! We got married in the front room just off the porch.

KELLY: Aren't you lucky!

KREHMEIER: (laughing) Yeah. And you know what? She wasn't but—well, she graduated in May of '48. We got married in October of '48. And she had JUST turned eighteen.

KELLY: That was the same kind of situation with my parents. My mother hadn't even FINISHED high school yet.

KREHMEIER: Right! I remember that!

KELLY: So you immediately moved into that apartment?

KREHMEIER: We lived in that apartment and I went to work. I got a job with Humble as a hall boy. I was twenty-two. I hadn't graduated from college. Your dad [Charles Kelly] and Wayburn and Charlie Cheaney—we all went to U of H, that first year. And then Charles went up to A&M. But we went to U of H full time. We was taking full time '46 and '47, and then we got married in '48 and I got a job as a hall boy for Humble. Hall boy. In other words, you know, the old Humble building, it was—it had eleven stories.

KELLY: Right across from Foley's. Next to Foley's.

KREHMEIER: Right across from Foley's. Right. And anyway, I was on the TENTH floor—as a hall boy. There was a lady called a hall lady. The hall lady was sittin' there with a table, and I was a hall boy. ALL the mail come in and out. All the mail came right out there. EVERY floor had a hall lady and a hall boy. I delivered mail to all of the different offices in that whole floor. That was what my first job was.

KELLY: Going back to your University of Houston days, did I remember correctly that you all lived together in a trailer or something like that?

KREHMEIER: I didn't. But Raymond Maxwell and Charles Kelly lived in trailers. I didn't because I stayed at home in Sugar Land and I went back and forth with Charlie Cheaney, in his car. The Cheaney's were "rich people" as far as we were concerned because they gave Charlie a car. He had a Chevrolet, every couple of years anyway. Anyway, I can remember, also in '47—you remember the blow-up in Texas City?

KELLY: Yeah. The explosion at Monsanto.

KREHMEIER: The explosion—Monsanto—we were there in the parking lot at the U of H. It was about noon. And all of a sudden, the explosion in Texas City happened then. We were going to school when that happened. And, MAN, they had all kind of emergencies. It was some explosion. I can remember that!

KELLY: After the war, the Veterans Administration gave the veterans education benefits so a lot of men went to school. It was kind of an odd time, wasn't it? What was it like, going to school right then?

KREHMEIER: In '46, the U of H really got THOUSANDS of veterans going under the G.I. Bill. I got my whole education. I went full time for those two years. And then, after we got married in '48, I was going to school at night. I got this job for Humble, and so I was going to night school. Took me from '46 to—I graduated in '51. But it took me three years of going to night school to get my degree. I was the hall boy for about two months. And then I got transferred into the sales department as a file clerk. Just a file clerk. So I did that for three years while I was going to school at night. And then once I got my degree, I got into the division order where I stayed for thirty-five years.

GOODSILL: What was your career?

KREHMEIER: I got a General Business Administration degree, but I was working in oil royalties. We handled correspondence between all of the royalty owners, under Humble leases. You know, they got paid so much a month for the oil that was sold off their lease. And we handled the correspondence between them and their lawyers. When somebody died they had to correspond with us to get the title changed over to the new heirs. I did that work for about thirty-five years.

KELLY: That can get very complicated sometimes!

KREHMEIER: It really was. And we had our own lawyers that we went to them with all of the documents that came in to us, 'okay, change it from so-and-so' or tell us what to do. To tell the people what we required. If we needed anything else, we'd write 'em back and tell 'em what all we needed. You could buy and sell royalties just like you could a car, you know. So we handled all that too.

KELLY: Well, take us from your Van Buren address to how you got back to Sugar Land.

KREHMEIER: We stayed in that Van Buren apartment for a year or two. And then we moved over to 1911 Stanford. It was a two-car garage, upstairs apartment. We lived up there. It was one kitchen area and then they had a little bathroom over here and then one big room was the livin' room and dinin' room. We had our bedroom over here and our dinin' room over here. It was one great big room. But I can remember, when we were livin' there, that's when Mr. Rachuig [Bruce's Maternal grandfather] got...

KELLY: Killed... [burned in a workplace explosion]

KREHMEIER: Sally and Charles [Kelly] came through— we kept visitin' them back and forth.

KELLY: That was in April 1951. He was in Hermann Hospital.

KREHMEIER: '51. Okay, I can remember when that happened.

KELLY: And I guess they would come stay with you.

KREHMEIER: I can remember. They told us all about how it happened, and—very bad.
[Quiet for a moment]

KELLY: And Stanford—that was in the Montrose area too?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, it wasn't too far from Van Buren. From there, we bought our first house. We bought a G.I.'s equity out on South Park Boulevard.

KELLY: Which is now Martin Luther King.

KREHMEIER: Right. Martin Luther King. We bought our first house over there. It was the second street from Palm Center. Second street. South Park Boulevard and then Browncroft. We bought a house on Browncroft. And we lived there until 1958. '51 to '58. And that's when we bought our lot on Oyster Creek Drive. 718 Oyster Creek Drive. Virgil Mott built that house.

KELLY: Going back to your Palm Center house, I want to ask you a question. Was that one of the houses that Oscar Holcombe built?

KREHMEIER: It is.

KELLY: Okay, do you know the story about that?

KREHMEIER: Well, all I know is about Oscar Holcombe was the mayor. And had this road--South Park Boulevard – that he built. And they called that the road to nowhere. (chuckles) It went all the way out to King's Center—homes were being built out there.

KELLY: Near Holmes Road.

KREHMEIER: Yeah. And Holmes Road, right. We had underground sprinklers in the front yard, in that house.

KELLY: KELLY: You DID! Was this while Oscar Holcombe was mayor or after?

KREHMEIER: It was while he was mayor, yeah.

KELLY: So he had the road built and then he developed the area.

KREHMEIER: Right. (chuckle) That was something else.

And then we bought the lot there on Oyster Creek. Virgil Mott built that house for us.

KELLY: And you came back to Sugar Land.

KREHMEIER: And we stayed there until 1970. That's when we bought the house we're in now [in Venetian Estates] in 1970. And we sold the one on Oyster Creek Drive.

GOODSILL: And somewhere along in here, you had children, and now your children live in Sugar Land so it comes full circle. Why don't you tell us the names of your children?

KREHMEIER: Yeah, we've got eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. And Becky's daughter, Rachel, is in the Army. She's stationed in San Antone.

GOODSILL: Do most of these children and grandchildren live in Sugar Land?

KREHMEIER: All of 'em. Everybody.

KELLY: So you had three children; Becky, the oldest—

KREHMEIER: There's Becky, Jeff and John. Becky lives on Kyle and John is now livin' in the old Parker house [in The Flats]. You remember he bought that house from Frankie and Max. And Jeff now lives on Sorrento. He bought a house and had it practically torn down and rebuilt. He lives there on Sorrento.

KELLY: And Becky has how many children?

KREHMEIER: She has four children.

KELLY: And one of those has a child. Right? One of her children has a child, which is your great-grandchild.

KREHMEIER: Oh, yeah. Right. Rachel. She's the one that's in the Army. Jeff has two boys.

GOODSILL: And Jeff, we might add, is working for the Sugar Land fire department.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, Jeff is now Assistant Fire Chief. As a matter of fact, on the 24th, they're having a ceremony, at the administration building. They're having a ceremony for him and he has asked me if I would put his pin on him. That's gonna be on the 24th at 6:00 in the afternoon. So I said, 'Yes, I'd be glad to, Jeff'.

GOODSILL: OH, that's VERY nice. That's a very LONG time your family has lived here. From 1913 to 2007.

KREHMEIER: So the Krehmeiers will continue on. Jeff has two boys and John has a boy and a girl. John and Valerie are now in the process of 'where are we going to go to college?' Oh man, he's going through all that, right now. John's daughter and son, they both go to Houston Baptist high school—Houston Baptist school.

KELLY: I may have this wrong, but I think I heard my dad tell me one time that you, and maybe your father together owned some property off of Eldridge Road? What about that?

KREHMEIER: Oh, yeah! Fifty acres. What happened was, Sugarland Industries owned all this land out on Eldridge Road. All this land.

KELLY: What is now Covington Woods?

KREHMEIER: Yeah. Anyway they sold seven or eight thousand acres. They sold through the Texas Veterans Land Board. You had to be a veteran to be able to qualify. My dad found out about it from Mr. Pirtle. Mr. Pirtle was engineering, and they're the ones that plotted and platted this acreage into fifty acre lots. We made application and Mr. Pirtle showed us the plat and which ones hadn't been sold, and we picked out a particular one and made application and got approved. And we bought that fifty acres through the Veterans Land Board for \$7,200.00 in 1950.

Of course that was before the Southwest Freeway was comin' out here. There were rumors that it might be closer to that fifty acres. But the freeway came on this-away, further this-away.

KELLY: Where would that fifty acres be now? Do you know?

KREHMEIER: Do you know where that church is? Virgil Mott built a church there on Eldridge Road. Further down than the Church of God. Right behind there is a whole bunch of homes.

KELLY: That's right. Greenbriar and Greenwood or something.

GOODSILL: So, did you sell it?

KREHMEIER: Yes. We sold it. We kept it about ten years. I can't remember exactly when, but we sold it for \$58,000.

GOODSILL: Nice profit!

KREHMEIER: It cost \$7,200 and we sold it for \$58,000.

KELLY: Seven thousand was a LOT of money in 1950. It was a good investment.

KREHMEIER: Yeah. And, you know, we paid it off—the payments were like seventy or eighty dollars a month. With VERY low interest. Because the Veterans Land wanted to get all this land to veterans. So anyway, we were lucky enough—and we were the only Sugar Land veterans to buy one of those lots.

GOODSILL: Is that right! Smart!

KREHMEIER: It was handled through a real estate company in Houston, and we found out about it on the tail end, you know! Only because Mr. Pirtle had mentioned it to Dad.

KELLY: You let somebody lease it or run cattle on it.

KREHMEIER: Yeah, yeah. My dad had cotton. Fifteen acres on Eldridge Road was cleared. But the other thirty-five was nothin' but woods. Nothin' but woods. So my dad had cotton farmers, growin' cotton on that front fifteen acres. So we made a little bit of money on that, just to help pay on the payments on the land.

KELLY: Well, you were pretty good at land speculation, because you had a lot in Venetian Estates, on Savoy that you were able to hold on to.

KREHMEIER: Well, let me tell you about that lot! It's STILL empty! That sucker is still empty! We bought that for \$8,500.

KELLY: In about what—1970?

KREHMEIER: Yeah—Bill Little tried to get us to buy two of 'em. Two of 'em were available. The one we bought and the one to the left of it, where Mr. Washburn lived. Anyway, we bought that one for \$8,500. And we kept that—and we were livin' on Oyster Creek Drive. So we was gonna build a house. We had some plans drawn up by Henry Krolczyk who was a builder. As it turned out, Henry had this house for sale, the one that we're in now. It had been for sale for TWO years. He couldn't sell it! You know, the interest rates to get a loan were tremendous. Finally, after my dad died, we inherited that house on 5th Street. The one we were talkin' about earlier. Instead of building a house—we decided to buy the house we live in now for \$50,000. We gave him [Krolczyk] that house on 5th street and we bought the one in Venetian Estates for \$50,000. He took \$14,000 off of that for the house on 5th Street. So, actually we got a real good deal on that house.

KELLY: Absolutely. And you still had the lot left over, on Savoy.

KREHMEIER: So we still have the lot on Savoy. And we have kept it for like twenty-five years. We sold it in '96. We sold it in '96 for \$185,000. Hey, we paid \$8,500 for it and sold it for \$185,000. Of course, you know, we paid the taxes and all. But, anyway, our deals were pretty good on land.

GOODSILL: (Chuckling) Pretty good.

KELLY: Well, and you're a good example of how the values of the Sugar Land area just skyrocketed because of its location.

KREHMEIER: Oh, goodness, yes.

KELLY: And, you know, Sugar Land was developed because the Industries sold it off as a master-planned community. People wanted to come live here, and that helped raise the values.

KREHMEIER: Right. One thing we didn't do, back in the '40s, was buy when they subdivided Alkire Lake. All those three acres and four acres and five acre lots. We could've bought. Mr. James TRIED to get Mr. and Mrs. Laperouse, and us, to BUY one of those lots out there. I believe it was fifteen hundred dollars for those lots, like three acres. Most of them are around three to four acres. But we didn't do it. Now they are selling for over a million.

KELLY: I understand in those days there was no city sewer out there. You had to drill your own well.

KREHMEIER: Nothin' out there.

KELLY: I know my parents thought about it, but they wouldn't do it because of the expense of having to drill a well. I don't know if that was the reason the Laperouses' didn't buy. They ended up building in the town proper, a couple of times.

KREHMEIER: Right, right. Twice. Yeah, they built that house on Terry and Brooks there on the right, the one that Mr. Schwalbe lives in.

KELLY: But do I understand that they lived in that house next door to it?

KREHMEIER: Next door to it. They built THAT—they bought that house—they built that house first. It's a little house. Mr. Bossley bought it from them. When they built the house on the corner, they sold the little house to the Bossleys. And then, eventually, they bought a lot up on Lakeview and built that house up on Lakeview. Sold that house to Mr. Schwalbe.

GOODSILL: Well, it's a pretty good story you tell, Bill! Pretty good story and it covers a LOT of time.

KREHMEIER: (chuckles)

KELLY: Is there anything else you recall that you'd like to say?

KREHMEIER: Right now I can't think of anything.

KELLY: It's been a great interview.

KREHMEIER: Well, I really have enjoyed it, really.

GOODSILL: Fun to hear the stories.

Interview ends.