

Interview with
LLOYD JOHNSON
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project: Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted at Mr. Johnson's Home
Harlingen, Texas
Monday—February 2, 2009

Interviewed By: Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray
Longview, Texas

Present at Interview: Lloyd Johnson, Nancy Ray and Eddie Ray



Introduction

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LLOYD JOHNSON
TEXAS RANGER, RETIRED

NANCY RAY: My name is Nancy Ray. Today is Monday, February 2, 2009. I am visiting with Lloyd Johnson of Sulphur Springs, Texas, and Harlingen, Texas. The purpose of this interview is to discuss Ranger Johnson's career as a Texas Ranger. Ranger Johnson, do I have your permission to record this interview?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes you do.

NANCY RAY: Ranger Johnson, do you understand that this video will belong to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, Texas?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes.

NANCY RAY: And Ranger Johnson, do I have your permission to present copies of this video to various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools and once transcribed to place on the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum's website?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes.

NANCY RAY: OK. Ranger Johnson, let's start then with learning a little bit about you. What is your full name and where do you currently live?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Lloyd Johnson and I currently live at 430 Country Road 3311, Sulphur Springs, Texas.

NANCY RAY: And then during the winter you live...

LLOYD JOHNSON: I live here in Harlingen. I stay down here probably a couple of months, two to three months.

NANCY RAY: That's good. And where were you born?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I was born out north of Mount Vernon, Texas, in Franklin County.

NANCY RAY: And what was your birth date?

LLOYD JOHNSON: February 14, 1929.

NANCY RAY: You have a birthday coming up then.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Pretty quick.

NANCY RAY: OK. And is... tell us about your parents. What were their names?

LLOYD JOHNSON: My father's name was Weaver H. Johnson. My mother's name was Lillis, LILLIS, Johnson. And they both were born and raised in the vicinity of Franklin County, Mount Vernon.

NANCY RAY: OK so you spent a lot of your life then in the East Texas area.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Fact is my whole career was in East Texas.

NANCY RAY: Oh good for you. You're our first, our very first East Texas Ranger to interview so that's good. And so where did you go to school?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I went to school in Mount Vernon, Texas. And we moved, during World War II we moved to Tyler, Texas, and I graduated from Tyler High School in 1945.

NANCY RAY: Did they just have one high school at that time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: At that time Tyler just had the one high school.

NANCY RAY: What about brothers and sisters?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I've got one brother named Bob. He's a couple of years younger than I am.

NANCY RAY: All right, so when you were in school, did you have any favorite subjects or teachers or anything?

LLOYD JOHNSON: History, I loved history.

NANCY RAY: Did you? All history?

LLOYD JOHNSON: All history.

NANCY RAY: That's good. That fits kind of with the Rangers, doesn't it?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah.

NANCY RAY: OK, what about any teachers. Any teachers stand out?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, no special teachers. That's been a long time ago.

NANCY RAY: That's true... for all of us.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Sure has.

NANCY RAY: OK, when you graduated from high school, what did you do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I went to work I believe for a railroad company, Southwestern Railroad Company, and worked for them probably a year, maybe two years. Anyhow I went in the Navy when I was about 21. And I stayed in the Navy four years during the Korean War.

NANCY RAY: Tell us what happened while you were in the Navy. Were you on a ship or...

LLOYD JOHNSON: I was on board the Wasp, an aircraft carrier.

NANCY RAY: USS Wasp, is that what it was?

LLOYD JOHNSON: USS Wasp.

NANCY RAY: And what was your job?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I was an aviation mechanic.

NANCY RAY: Sounds kind of dangerous.

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, not really, just a mechanic on an aircraft carrier.

NANCY RAY: So you weren't on the deck when...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes.

NANCY RAY: You were?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes.

NANCY RAY: Well I saw some videos that looked like it would be a little dangerous up there. Is there anything happen in the Navy you'd like to tell us about?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well no, not really, it was just routine, routine stuff.

NANCY RAY: OK. And so how long... were you out to sea quite a bit?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Quite a bit. I was in the Navy four years.

NANCY RAY: OK. Where did you go through your basic?

LLOYD JOHNSON: San Diego, California.

NANCY RAY: Were you married at that time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No I wasn't. I didn't get married... I was discharged about a year before I got married.

NANCY RAY: Well what were some of the locations? You went to Korea or anywhere else?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, I left San Diego and went to Norfolk, Virginia, and stayed there probably a year and then went aboard the aircraft carrier Wasp in San Diego. And we went around to Korea from there and spent the rest of the time, my career in Korea and come back to San Diego. And then back to Jacksonville, Florida, where I was discharged.

NANCY RAY: OK, anything stand out in your mind about your military career?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, not really. I know it was just hot and tiresome.

NANCY RAY: Well, when you got out of the Navy what did you do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: You know... I went to work as a welder. I welded some while I was in the Navy and I went to work as a welder for a pipeline company. And didn't work for them long until I went with the DPS in 1958.

NANCY RAY: OK. Do you remember the date when you went in the DPS?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, it was in August but I don't remember the exact date. August the 2nd seemed like. It was the first part of August.

NANCY RAY: Well what can you tell us about the school, the Highway Patrol school?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Back then it was only a six-week school. We went to school for 30 days I believe... I believe it was 30 days. Then we went out for two weeks field training then we came back to Austin for, the Highway Patrol did, for a week, for two weeks.

NANCY RAY: Well tell us a little bit about the field training. What did you do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, uh my field training was in San Antone and we went out and rode, actually rode with the Highway Patrolmen for two weeks. We, of course we wasn't armed, we was in khakis, we wasn't commissioned at that time.

NANCY RAY: OK, who was the partner that you rode with?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I have no idea.

NANCY RAY: Oh you don't remember?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Not way back then, I sure don't (laughter). That's been a long time ago.

NANCY RAY: Well if you only rode with him for two weeks that's not very long.

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's right.

NANCY RAY: What did you learn when you were doing that? What can you remember?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well you learned the basic steps of a Highway Patrolman you know. How to conduct interviews, how to stop vehicles, just basic stuff.

NANCY RAY: Well when you decided to stop a vehicle, was there a certain procedure you learned as far as what to do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, we followed the, you know the older patrolmen. We was there to observe. All we done was to observe for those two weeks.

NANCY RAY: OK. What about in the uh the school itself. Did you have a lot of PT? That's one of the big...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, we sure did. We had a lot of physical education. A lot of running... a lot of you know just regular physical education. Of course school then was a whole lot shorter than it is now I think. I think the basic school now is about six months.

NANCY RAY: I think you're right. Well which school did you go to? Was it the... were you after... you were after Camp Mabry, right?

LLOYD JOHNSON: After Camp Mabry. Fact is it was the second or third school after Camp Mabry.

NANCY RAY: Well do you remember any of the monitors that... did ya'll have monitors in your school?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, we had uh... they're all dead now. One of them was lieutenant... I can see his face but I can't recall his name.

NANCY RAY: I think we all have that problem.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Then we had a Chief Law that I believe was head of the school at that time.

NANCY RAY: What was that name?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Law, LAW.

NANCY RAY: Well, is there anything that stands out in your mind about that school?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Not really except it was short and it was hard. Fact is we started with 116 and wound up with 58.

NANCY RAY: Ooh, that is a big drop.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, cut us right in half.

NANCY RAY: Well what made people drop out so much?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well it was just uh routine... it was something like a basic training in the Armed Services you know. And they'd tell you right quick that they didn't need you, you needed them. And you could be replaced for a 3-cent postcard.

NANCY RAY: Self worth wasn't very high.

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's right. A job was hard to get then.

NANCY RAY: Yeah, right. Well what was the hardest part of the school?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I guess the physical education part of it, the physical part. Of course you studied from 5 o'clock in the morning. Sometimes they got us out at 5 for PE and we started at 5 every morning and wound up about 10 at night.

NANCY RAY: That's a full day.

LLOYD JOHNSON: It was a full day every day.

NANCY RAY: Well did they get you up during the middle of the night?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Sometimes.

NANCY RAY: And what did they do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well sometimes you just make a run out... just drive out through the country and come back. And we was the first school that did not have motorcycles. Thank goodness we didn't have any of that.

NANCY RAY: That's what we've heard from some of the others that they were glad they didn't. Well did you have uh high speed chase or high speed...

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, it was just simulated driving. Just enough to get you out... sometimes they'd get you up at 2 o'clock in the morning to give you a test you know to see how you'd do and how quick you'd become aware and awake and all that.

NANCY RAY: Is that what... is that when a lot of people left because of...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. They'd leave in the middle of the night. You'd go to bed back then... they didn't have dormitories. We had rooms. We had four people to the room. Sometimes you'd go to bed with four of you in there and you'd wake up the next morning and there wouldn't be but two. They'd just leave. But it was a hard school.

NANCY RAY: I'm sure. To lose 50 percent, it's bound to be hard. Do you remember any of the uh men who were in the school with you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Oh, not right off hand.

NANCY RAY: Did any become Rangers that you can think of?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, Dale... me and a boy named Dale Bryce who's deceased at this time was a Ranger. Billy De Loach is a Ranger. He's since... he's been retired several years before I did. That's about the only one I can remember now. It was two or three majors, Major Cawthorn was in my school. And several captains.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well when did you graduate? You went in in August of '58...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Graduated November '58.

NANCY RAY: OK. And where did you go?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Went to Grand... Grand Saline was my first station. I was in Grand Saline eight years.

NANCY RAY: OK. And who was your captain?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Captain Glenn Warner.

NANCY RAY: OK. Tell us a little about Grand Saline. Did you have a partner?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I had a partner named Kenneth Tidwell and he's now deceased. And fact is we worked together there for I believe I was in Grand Saline for eight years and then they transferred another patrolman in named Travis Shafer and it was a three-man station for a while.

And then uh they uh... Shafer and uh Tidwell were working partners when I was off one weekend and they got in a shootout and both of them got wounded pretty bad. And later on I transferred to Canton and I was stationed in Canton seven years... which is just fifteen miles away.

NANCY RAY: Sure. Well let's go back to Grand Saline. Uh was one of these guys... tell us about being a partner. What's the most important part?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, the most important... you just trust each other. I mean you look out after each other.

NANCY RAY: Uh huh. So when you went there as a rookie trooper, you were learning from a...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Tidwell. He'd been stationed there for about... he'd been on for about two years.

NANCY RAY: OK. What did he teach you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Just all the basic you know Highway Patrol routine.

NANCY RAY: What were the biggest problems that ya'll had there in Grand Saline?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we didn't really have no problems. Wrecks was our biggest problem because the roads were bad. Vehicles were worse then and of course that's before there was any interstate highway and there was a lot of heavy traffic.

NANCY RAY: Highway 80 went right through.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Highway 80 went right through the middle of it. Fact it, that's what I worked was thirty miles of Highway 80.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well also, the salt mine was...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, that's in Grand Saline.

NANCY RAY: Was that the biggest industry?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Fact is that was the only industry there.

NANCY RAY: I remember going on tours of the salt mine.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Is that right?

NANCY RAY: Surely did. Uh, OK... well let's go back to Mr. Tidwell. Can you tell me about going out when you first started working with him... some of your stops? Did anything interesting happen or...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, seems like all we did was work traffic accidents.

NANCY RAY: What caused the accidents?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Just traffic and road conditions. See there wasn't no interstates then and 80 was a two-lane road through there. And everybody in Dallas seemed like went to Louisiana on Friday night and everybody in Louisiana went to Dallas on Friday night.

NANCY RAY: Right through Grand Saline.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. Seemed like I worked something like six or eight fatalities the first six months I was there. Fact is it was pretty, pretty routine, pretty boring really.

NANCY RAY: Well, you were talking about a shootout. What caused the shootout?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, now that happened several years after I went to Grand Saline then... They went to arrest a drunk and he'd laid out in the weeds somewhere. And as they come around to look for him well he shot both of them with a shotgun. Tidwell lost an eye and Shafer lost part of the sight in one of his eyes.

NANCY RAY: Well, some of the Rangers that we've interviewed have said that being a Highway Patrolman was probably the most dangerous job.

LLOYD JOHNSON: It is because you never know who you're gonna stop or what you're gonna stop out there. You have no idea when you walk up to a car what's in it you know really.

NANCY RAY: Well how did you go about approaching that car knowing that? How did you protect yourself?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, it's just certain steps that you took. That's what they taught you in uh basic training you know... how to approach a car, to protect yourself, and...

NANCY RAY: What's the biggest safety thing you would do to protect yourself.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Always be observant. See what was going on.

NANCY RAY: I'll bet you're still observant today aren't you (laughter)?

LLOYD JOHNSON: To some extent.

NANCY RAY: I'll bet so. OK so when you left Grand Saline you said you went to Canton.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Canton.

NANCY RAY: And how long did you stay there?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I was probably in Canton about seven years.

NANCY RAY: OK, was interstate in Canton at that time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes, that's the reason I moved to Canton because interstate run close to Canton and they made Grand Saline a two-man station. And they... Canton I believe was a two-man station and they made it a three-man station at that time.

NANCY RAY: OK. Uh what about when you were there, anything special happen?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, just routine stuff. A lot of speeders and a lot of stolen cars on interstates.

NANCY RAY: Stolen? How did you identify the stolen cars?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well it wasn't easy back then because you didn't have a whole lot of radio communications you know. You'd run license plate checks on them and then by you know by interviewing the driver after you'd stop it.

NANCY RAY: Would you stop them... why would you stop them in the first place?

LLOYD JOHNSON: For traffic violation.

NANCY RAY: Aw... all right. Well, who was your partner there in Canton?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Had a partner named uh Williams, E. G. Williams. And he didn't last too long. They run him off for some infraction. Then Canton become about a five-man station shortly thereafter.

NANCY RAY: Five?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah.

NANCY RAY: Because of the traffic through the city?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Traffic and the interstate you know.

NANCY RAY: OK. What about Trades Day? Was that a big thing at your time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Oh yeah that was a big thing. Fact is we cursed Trades Day because you couldn't get in and out of town. You couldn't get around town. And from where I lived on one side of Canton I had to go through that Trades Day to get to the interstate to work you know and that was a big problem. Fires was a big problem. Ambulances was a big problem going through. It was just a nuisance it what it was.

NANCY RAY: So every First Monday you knew you... that weekend was...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. That's just regular.

NANCY RAY: Just regular. Well did you ever have any uh shootings or anything?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, now we didn't have nothing... nothing involved us with the Trades Day. That was strictly a city deal.

NANCY RAY: You just had to get to work.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well what about... what did you do after Canton?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I transferred into the Rangers in '74.

NANCY RAY: All right. Do you remember when you went to the Rangers?

LLOYD JOHNSON: June... seems like it was about June 3, '74.

NANCY RAY: Well let's talk a little bit about how you became a Ranger. Did someone influence you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, not really. It was one of my dreams to always be a Ranger. I worked towards that goal all the time I was in the Highway Patrol. And it was a lot harder to become a Ranger then than it is now.

NANCY RAY: So what did you have to do then? I know things change...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well first you had to take a test and pass the test and get accepted and then you went before an oral interview board. Basically about the same as it is now.

NANCY RAY: OK. How did you get ready for that written test?

LLOYD JOHNSON: You had certain study... materials that you studied.

NANCY RAY: All right. And did you pass the written test the first time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, I passed it several times before I went in. Like I say, for every one opening they had, they had probably a hundred people pass the test.

NANCY RAY: Oh, I see. So you had a lot more people applying...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah then than they are now.

NANCY RAY: And not as many vacancies. Do you know how many Rangers they had at the time when you became one?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Seems to me like it was 86 I believe. Either 86 or 92... I don't remember which. Because they changed pretty quick... might have been 92 but it was not near what they are now.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well what about the interview board, what do you remember about it?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well nothing much really it was just a basic interview board you know. They'd interview you about everything. You know you went before an interview board before you went on the Highway Patrol.

NANCY RAY: OK so it was just the same type?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Same type of interview. Maybe...

NANCY RAY: Do you remember who was on your interview board?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Different captains and lieutenants.

NANCY RAY: Do you remember who was on your interview board for the Rangers?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, I surely don't.

NANCY RAY: OK, slept since then?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes. A few times.

NANCY RAY: Do you remember any of the questions that they...

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, not really.

NANCY RAY: All right... so you got on the list, you made it on the list in 1974?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right, I got my appointment in 1974. Made the list in... yeah, about '74. I went to work in June of '74.

NANCY RAY: So you weren't on the list very long before...

LLOYD JOHNSON: No.

NANCY RAY: And where was your first duty station?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Sulphur Springs. Fact is that was my only duty station, Sulphur Springs.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well tell us about becoming a Ranger then. Do you remember when you put the badge on, how you felt... that was your dream?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I felt really important you know. That's a pretty big step.

NANCY RAY: Did you, did it feel different from your patrol badge, Highway Patrol badge?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well yeah it was different. Uh the Highway Patrolman is basically law enforcement, basically traffic law enforcement where you know the Rangers are criminal law enforcement.

NANCY RAY: Well when you were a Highway Patrolman did you ever work with any of the others on criminal investigations?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I worked quite a bit that Lone Star Steel... Fact is I was over there 105 days.

NANCY RAY: Ooh. Is that with the strike?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes.

NANCY RAY: Ah, tell us about the strike. That's a new one. We haven't heard anything about that.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well it was just, it was just a typical strike is what it was. And it got pretty nasty at times. And of course the union was pretty prevalent over there.

NANCY RAY: What year was that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: 1969.

NANCY RAY: OK. So how did you get involved?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well they sent Highway... the Highway Patrolman was over there routinely patrolling the roads you know at night to keep violence down... you know to keep any strikers... some of them become quite violent. It was a pretty radical strike.

NANCY RAY: Well wasn't someone killed?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, I think they had one or two killings, I'm not sure.

NANCY RAY: And you stayed there how many days?

LLOYD JOHNSON: 105 days. Drove back as far as from Canton to Daingerfield for 105 days.

NANCY RAY: Um mmm, that's quite a drive. Well before I forget, I need to ask about your family? When did you marry your wife?

LLOYD JOHNSON: In 1955.

NANCY RAY: And her name is?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Jo Ann.

NANCY RAY: OK, what about children?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I've got three boys. One of them is 52 now I believe, the oldest one, Russell. And Tracy is the next, he's 48. And then Scott is my youngest one, he's 46, 45 or 46.

NANCY RAY: OK, do they live in the East Texas area?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, one of them lives in Arlington. One of them lives at Sulphur Springs and one of them lives in uh Kilgore. Fact is my oldest son is the adjutant fire chief in Kilgore.

NANCY RAY: Oh, he's been having a bad couple of weeks hasn't he?

LLOYD JOHNSON: He's had a bad week. He's the chaplain of the fire department and he really had a bad situation over there.

NANCY RAY: Yeah, we read about that. What about grandkids?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, I've got five... six grandkids?

NANCY RAY: Any girls in this bunch?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Two. Four boys and two girls. Got one great grandchild that will be here next month, March.

NANCY RAY: Well you'll have to go back to East Texas for sure.

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's for sure.

NANCY RAY: OK, well let's go back then. Does anything about the strike stand out in your mind that you want to tell us?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, not really except it was you know long and hard... put in a lot of hours.

NANCY RAY: Did you work pretty much... how did you work? You didn't have many days off, did you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, not really. We'd get a day off... maybe one day a week off.

NANCY RAY: And so your family was in

LLOYD JOHNSON: Canton.

NANCY RAY: And you were driving back.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right, backwards and forwards. Fact is you'd meet yourself coming back sometimes.

NANCY RAY: Hardly worth the drive.

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's true.

NANCY RAY: OK, well let's go back and let's start talking about your Ranger career. When you became a Ranger, uh and you, you went to Sulphur Springs, who was your captain?

LLOYD JOHNSON: G. W. Burks.

NANCY RAY: I've heard about G. W. Burks.

LLOYD JOHNSON: He was quite a colorful captain.

NANCY RAY: That's what I've heard. What are your memories of Mr. Burks?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we got along real good, we was real good friends. And uh fact is I really liked him.

NANCY RAY: Did he wear jewelry? I heard that he did.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, quite a bit of jewelry. He was kind of a flamboyant dresser.

NANCY RAY: What did you learn from Mr. Burks?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, I learned how to be a Ranger from him. Fact is, my first captain of course everything we patterned after our captain if we liked him. A lot of them didn't like him and a lot of us did you know.

NANCY RAY: That's true in everything.

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's true.

NANCY RAY: Well can you put into words something that you learned from him that went through your whole career?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, no not really. Just uh you know... if you told a man something that's how it was. And you didn't back down on your words and you expected other people to do the same.

NANCY RAY: Well did he give you any instructions? What did he tell you to do when you got there?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Just go out and go to work.

NANCY RAY: OK. So what was your first step?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, the first step was to get acquainted with all the local officers. See our... a Ranger's job was to assist the local officers you know and in major crimes and stuff like that where... Back then we didn't have any DNA or anything like that. And all the lab work was done in Austin and it was up mostly to the Rangers to transport stuff to the lab. And we had a lot more experience and a lot more schooling than the local officers. The local officers didn't... you know back at that time they didn't have much training really. The sheriff would go in and he would stay four to eight years usually and he'd hire his deputies. And when he'd go out well the new sheriff would fire all the deputies and hire new deputies. And uh they depended a lot on the Rangers or mostly on the Rangers you know for experience.

NANCY RAY: So did... if something happened how did you get involved?

LLOYD JOHNSON: We were notified by the local officers or by the local DPS station.

NANCY RAY: Well when you became a Ranger, did the state issue you any equipment of any kind?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, a badge and a gun.

NANCY RAY: That was it?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yep. No basically you know we had a car and uh basic equipment... fingerprint kits and stuff like that. Just basic stuff.

NANCY RAY: What was in your fingerprint kit?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Stuff to take fingerprints with.

NANCY RAY: But I don't know what was in it (laughter). If you were talking to someone like me that doesn't know, what would you say was in that kit?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, ink and a roller to roll out prints you know. And then fingerprint cards and a pad to take the prints off of. Then we had uh you know, we could take latent prints which is prints left at a crime scene. We dusted for them and lifted those and read those you know... interpreted them.

NANCY RAY: Well if you were trying to... say you had taken fingerprints. How... did you visually match... is that how you...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right, right.

NANCY RAY: So if you took mine and they were at a crime scene and then you matched them to a card, it's just visual.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: Well, do you remember... what was the first case you worked on in Sulphur Springs?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, really I don't. Like I say I was a country Ranger out there. We didn't have many outstanding cases.

NANCY RAY: Well for the purpose of this video, tell us the difference between a country Ranger and any other Ranger?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, you know in a rural area there's not a whole lot goes on in a rural area. We don't have a lot of bank robberies and we don't have a lot of murders you know per se. Just uh... and

most of the murders we have are family stuff you know.... Where you solve 95 percent of them right off the bat you know. You know who done it right then. And there's only 5 percent that you, that's hard to solve and a lot of them you don't solve. Because back when I was a Ranger, like I say we didn't have a lot of lab work and we didn't have no DNA and stuff like that. It was all just routine you know foot work, interviews and getting right down to it.

NANCY RAY: Well are there any murders that happened in that area that you can tell us about?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well not really. You know I worked one which was a local dairyman killed his wife and carried her car up to Dallas and left it then made out like she disappeared you know. Where actually he had, him and a black man that worked for him had killed her one night and took her out and buried her. It turned out to be quite an extensive investigation.

NANCY RAY: How did you determine... what did you have to do to figure out who did it?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well things just you know didn't... begin not to add up. And things he'd tell us... tell us one time he'd change his story a little bit the next time. And we just, you know, it all just fell into place sooner or later.

NANCY RAY: Lying doesn't get you very far.

LLOYD JOHNSON: No. No.

NANCY RAY: Well when you... you said he was a dairyman?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yes, dairyman. That's most of what's in Hopkins County, Sulphur Springs, was dairy.

NANCY RAY: So what was the reason for killing her?

LLOYD JOHNSON: They had uh... seems to me like they had four children, had three girls and a boy. She was fixing to divorce him and he didn't want to give her half the dairy and he didn't want to give up the little boy. He wanted the little boy himself... that's basically the reason he killed her. That's the only reason he ever give us. Fact is he's still in the penitentiary.

NANCY RAY: That wasn't very smart.

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, not really. Most murderers are not very smart. Most criminals are not very smart either.

NANCY RAY: Well did you ever have any dumb criminal stories?

LLOYD JOHNSON: (laughter) No, not really that I can recall. I've been retired 16 years.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well we're probably gonna jog your memory a little bit and probably after we finish, you'll think of some things you'll say "I should have said that."

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I might.

NANCY RAY: OK. What were the major kinds of cases that you had then?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Mostly we worked burglaries and thefts.

NANCY RAY: Would this be like house burglaries or what?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, major house burglaries. We didn't work every little old crime that come along but we worked the major crimes you know. Bank robberies... which we had a few bank robberies, not many. And mostly you know murders and we didn't have a whole lot of murders. We didn't have no outstanding killings you know.

NANCY RAY: That's good.

LLOYD JOHNSON: That is good. I remember I worked one... of course most of them that we didn't solve then weren't local murders you know. I worked one for an old boy that worked for Otis Tool Company and fact is he left a drilling site in Alabama and picked up a hitchhiker on the way somewhere going to Homer, Louisiana. And this hitchhiker killed him and come up through uh Louisiana into Texas and had a wreck over at Emory which is one of the counties, Rain County, one of the counties I worked. And the Highway Patrolman worked the wreck and he found all this blood in the car and the old boy wasn't injured and he called me. And I determined that the pickup was stolen you know from Otis Engineering and it was one of the murders that we... we solved the murder. We actually got the old boy that done the killing but we was never able to prove a case on him. And we never recovered the body. Fact is the Louisiana State Police called me about two years ago and they was gonna work it as a cold case deal. And they thought they might be able to go ahead and get a conviction on this man that did it.

He wasn't ever convicted in Texas. It's kind of a long drawn out affair and... not being able to find the body we was never really able to pin the murder on him. We did get him for stealing the truck and...

NANCY RAY: Even today there still... the body has not been found?

LLOYD JOHNSON: As far as I know. They've never... they hadn't found it at that time and that was about two years ago.

NANCY RAY: Well, what is the most frustrating case you ever worked on?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Oh there's been a lot of them that was frustrating.

NANCY RAY: Can you tell us...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Anytime you can't solve one it's frustrating you know.

NANCY RAY: Is there one you can tell us about?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well not one that stands out really.

NANCY RAY: OK, well if you think about it you can tell us in a minute. What about kidnappings? Did you ever have any kidnappings?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No I don't believe I ever worked a kidnapping.

NANCY RAY: That's good. Did you ever help with the uh, with the Kentucky Fried Chicken murders?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, I didn't, I didn't work on that at all.

NANCY RAY: I didn't know if being in that area you did or not. Because my understanding is that Rangers help each other.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: So if anybody asked for help then you would be there.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: Did you ever... can you think of anything you ever had to help someone else on?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, you know not right off... it was just routine to help each other. Fact is me and Ranger Almond worked together quite a bit.

NANCY RAY: And what did ya'll do together?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Oh we were Highway Patrol together. I broke him... kind of broke him in on the Highway Patrol.

NANCY RAY: Did you really? So what did you teach him? I know it's the basics of being a patrolman but...

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's about it. That's about it.

NANCY RAY: Well one of the things I've heard is that being on the Highway Patrol that's a lot of fun.

LLOYD JOHNSON: It is a lot of fun.

NANCY RAY: What made it fun?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I don't know. You've gotta, you've gotta enjoy that kind of work or you couldn't do it. Everything is different out there. You never know from one stop to the next what you're gonna run into.

NANCY RAY: So how long were you... ya'll were partners then for a while?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we never actually worked as partners you know. We worked in the same area. Fact is I was in Canton and he was in Grand Saline. And he come on about ten years after I did.

NANCY RAY: OK. Did ya'll ever play pranks on each other?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Probably but we don't talk about that (laughter).

NANCY RAY: I was afraid you wouldn't. OK. Let's go back then. What about a bank robbery in Sulphur Springs?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I never had a bank robbery in Sulphur Springs. I worked a bank robbery in Emory, a bank robbery in Lone Oak.

NANCY RAY: Now Lone Oak is a little bitty place.

LLOYD JOHNSON: A little bitty place. And then I had a little old bank robbery in Point one time and worked on it. Of course I've assisted bank robberies in Avery and different places around.

NANCY RAY: Well did you find them? Did you solve them?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Usually. Most bank robberies are solved.

NANCY RAY: How do you... what are the biggest clues that you use to find them?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well like I say most all criminals are pretty dumb to begin with. And they, you know you find them with the money and sometimes you just track them down and they don't get away.

NANCY RAY: All right. I was gonna ask... when you were in the Highway Patrol school, did ya'll do weapons training?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. We had firearms training.

NANCY RAY: Firearms. So you had to achieve a certain marksmanship level?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: Would that be one of the things that would... that people would not make and have to leave the school?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, I guess some didn't make it. Some was just not cut out to be firearms people and some of them are.

NANCY RAY: OK. All right... what about other cases there in Sulphur Springs or your general area? Before we ask that let me ask this. Who were some of the other Rangers that made it the year you made it?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I was trying to think. It was uh Jim Dent made it about the same time I did. There was an old boy named Brown, I can't think...

NANCY RAY: Is it Marshall?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Marshall Brown, I couldn't call his first name, made it about the same time. There was about three or four of us that made it at the same time.

NANCY RAY: So uh where were you? When they made the list for that year, were you close to one of the first ones to get a duty station?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Seems like I was. I don't recall right now.

NANCY RAY: OK, did you ever have any arsons that you had to work?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I'm sure I worked several arsons but you know arson is a hard case to prove.

NANCY RAY: How come?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well the way the law is written for one thing. If you file on an old boy for arson and you don't prove your case then he can sue you for three times the amount of the... it's a pretty complicated deal. And actually if you don't really see him strike the match, it's hard to prove anyhow.

NANCY RAY: I didn't know that.

LLOYD JOHNSON: It's not hard to prove it's an arson but it's hard to prove who done it. Proving it's an arson is nothing to that I mean that's real simple. But proving you know that the subject actually did the... you know strike the match, well that's another deal.

NANCY RAY: Did you ever have to work on any serial murders?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really. I worked on... I worked a day or two with this Henry Lee Lucas.

NANCY RAY: Did you? What did you do there?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Fact is... the fact is he committed a couple of murders in my area back before I became a Ranger.

NANCY RAY: Uh... so what was your role? Did you have to interview or what did you have to do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we just carried him around and he pointed out where they were and proved to our satisfaction that he did it.

NANCY RAY: So how did you do that? Did you... you had someplace you knew to drive and see...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we knew where the murder occurred. We knew the location of the scene. Of course he carried us to the scene. Of course there were a lot of them he confessed to that he didn't do too.

NANCY RAY: Why did he do that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I don't know. Why did he kill all those people to begin with?

NANCY RAY: I don't know.

LLOYD JOHNSON: He's crazy.

NANCY RAY: Well what do you remember about him? How did he come across to you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: He was a little old weasely kind of fellow... a chain smoker... was one-eyed... just a typical little rat is what I'd call him.

NANCY RAY: Uh uh... and how many murders were there that he confessed?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I really don't have no idea how many they finally contributed to him. A lot of him that he confessed to that he didn't do.

NANCY RAY: But in your area, how many did he confess to?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I believe there were two in my area that he actually did.

NANCY RAY: Well how did you deal with things like that? Uh... when you... I mean you worked with weasely people like that and then you had to go home to your wife and your boys, how did you do that? How did you separate...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well that's just part of life... just what you do. You do that for a living.

NANCY RAY: Well it's so different from just walking out of an office and going home. Your job was very different.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Everybody's... everybody's different. Not everybody can be a dairy farmer or a rancher or an office worker or, or a sheriff or a police as far as that goes.

NANCY RAY: Well what kind of hours did you work?

LLOYD JOHNSON: We worked long hours back then. We worked from can to can't.

NANCY RAY: There's no clock.

LLOYD JOHNSON: No clock, that's right. We didn't have overtime back then.

NANCY RAY: Well I understand from some of the Rangers that they were gone quite a bit from home.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah we were. We were gone quite a bit.

NANCY RAY: So when you had to be gone, were you interviewing or what were you doing?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Mostly interviewing or you know trying to find a suspect.

NANCY RAY: What was the hardest part of that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Really nothing real hard it was just routine. It's the routine mostly. It's just keeping after it. Back... you know back like I say... back then we didn't have all this lab work and scientific stuff. It was mostly just leg work.

NANCY RAY: And head work?

LLOYD JOHNSON: And head work.

NANCY RAY: What would be the... to be a Ranger then during your time when you didn't have all the new technology that's available now, what was your biggest asset or your biggest trait that you needed to be a good Ranger?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well you just had to be able to stay after anything. Just keep pursuing it until you come to the end.

NANCY RAY: OK so you needed to be persistent.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Persistent, right.

NANCY RAY: What about details... a lot of details?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. You had to you know look out for details and be able to record what you, the evidence that you had you know because you didn't have a whole lot of evidence back then that you could use.

NANCY RAY: If you walked in on a crime scene, you were called to investigate something, what would be your first thing to do when you got there?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Just try to get a picture of everything just like it was whenever you walked in so you could remember it. Get photographs if you could, you know where shell casings would be or a gun would be or a knife or... where blood splatters was... you know just routine stuff.

NANCY RAY: Everything is routine to you but it's not routine to me. What about any kind of training? You had to go to some kind of training.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. We went to in-service school every two years. And we had specialized schools that we went to. I imagine there was very seldom a year passed that I didn't spend at least five days in Austin you know in a training school of some kind... five to ten days.

NANCY RAY: Well tell us a little bit about some of the training that you got.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, we went to specialized fingerprint schools and uh fact is I went to an arson school. We'd go to criminal investigation schools and burglary schools you know. Anything that pertained to criminal work, it pertained to our line of work.

NANCY RAY: Well, what was your most disappointing case?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I don't know. I've had several murders that I failed to solve. It was always disappointing. Like I say that one I was talking about with this Otis Engineering Company where the old boy was... we never found his body. That was kind of a disappointing deal. The way it turned out we was never able to prosecute the man that we knew did the murder. Stuff like that... you know it's disappointing. And then I worked one where I had a local gambler disappear there in uh Emory. I never found his body or solved his murder, if he was murdered, and I guess he probably was. But we never recovered his body. Stuff like... you know it's disappointing when you can't solve it.

NANCY RAY: OK. You said he was a local gambler. So what kind of gambling was he doing?

LLOYD JOHNSON: He was a poker player, a crap shooter. He owned the local tractor company there. He sold tractors but he was a big-time gambler... for that you know for a rural area. He wasn't a big-time gambler for somewhere like New York or Dallas.

NANCY RAY: It was over gambling that he was...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah. That's what I always thought.

NANCY RAY: Well what about uh... any other law enforcement officers? Did you ever have to investigate when a law enforcement officer was killed?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, I don't believe I ever had an officer killed, not to my knowledge.

NANCY RAY: That's good. What about hit and runs?

LLOYD JOHNSON: We didn't work hit and runs. Highway Patrol worked that.

NANCY RAY: OK. What about any prison incidents? Did you ever have anything?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No.

NANCY RAY: You didn't have to work the one in Huntsville.

LLOYD JOHNSON: No.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well you became a sergeant at some point didn't you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: At one point they made all Rangers sergeants.

NANCY RAY: OK. Were you ever drawn on... with a gun?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, I don't recall.

NANCY RAY: You don't recall... you would recall that wouldn't you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: I think so.

NANCY RAY: OK. What about uh... you talked about... you went to some schools, you learned how to investigate, what about tools of your trade? What are some of the things that you used?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well of course we was issued a pistol and a shotgun and a rifle. Fingerprint kits and... there was several you know tools that we had.

NANCY RAY: OK. Did you ever use hypnosis or anything like that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, I went through hypnosis school. I wasn't real sharp at that. Fact is that just didn't interest me too much.

NANCY RAY: Did you have an area of expertise that you considered to be yours?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really. Just like I say I was just a country Ranger.

NANCY RAY: Don't underestimate being a country Ranger. That's important. Well what about any kind of pursuits that you ever had? Did you ever uh do any horseback? Did you have to use a horse at any time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No, I'm not a horseback rider.

NANCY RAY: OK. All of yours was by car?

LLOYD JOHNSON: By car or helicopter.

NANCY RAY: What about helicopter? Tell us about something.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we used a helicopter quite a bit. You know it was at our disposal, one in Dallas.

NANCY RAY: OK. When did you... what were you working on when you used it?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well usually we'd be looking for stolen stuff you know stolen property... uh like bulldozers or you know heavy equipment.

NANCY RAY: Well can you remember about a case when there was some heavy equipment stolen? What was going on?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really, not right off hand. It was always... you know around Hopkins County... Hopkins and Rains and Wood Counties... kind of an oilfield... there was always oilfield theft going on. Those folks just stole from each other for the fun of it.

NANCY RAY: So they were neighbors stealing from each other?

LLOYD JOHNSON: That's right.

NANCY RAY: And how did you deal with that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well the best way that you could. But usually it's... if they needed something they'd go steal it from their neighbor instead of going and buying it.

NANCY RAY: And if they needed it they'd steal it back?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah. Really.

NANCY RAY: Well being a dairy area, what about cows?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, we worked a lot of cattle thefts. A lot of cattle thefts.

NANCY RAY: Were those also people local stealing from local or what were they?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. See most of that country up there where I worked, the five-county area that I worked mainly, it is cattle country. Its dairy and beef cattle. There's very little crops growing as far as that goes.

NANCY RAY: Well was there a big theft one time that stands out in your mind?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really. Just a lot small thefts.

NANCY RAY: Just on and on and on I guess. OK. What about undercover? Did you ever do anything...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Never done any undercover work.

NANCY RAY: All right. Were drugs big in your time?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Not really. We had a... of course Narcotics works all the drugs. We had a 45-day trial that went on in Emory for a drug bust they had... they had a lab where they made these methamphetamines.

NANCY RAY: Did you testify? Were you in court on some of those or what?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Some of those I testified on.

NANCY RAY: What about... what about the court room? That kind of... did you have anything interesting that happened that you can remember... stands out?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really. Uh I've had defendants get up and accuse me of stuff in the court room you know and different things that they've made up and... trying you know to better theirself... better their situation.

NANCY RAY: And how did you get that resolved?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well, just... they'd tell their side and I'd tell mine.

NANCY RAY: And leave it to the jury?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Leave it to the jury.

NANCY RAY: What about negotiating? Did you ever have a hostage situation or...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I only recall one hostage situation we had and it didn't last. It was a man had took his wife hostage. He was kind of mentally deranged. It all worked out for the good. It was kind of a long drawn out thing... it lasted two or three days. But you know you just do the best you can in a situation like that.

NANCY RAY: Well what happened with the lady?

LLOYD JOHNSON: He finally let her go.

NANCY RAY: Well I understand that when you have so many cases that you get to the point that you treat them... like a murder... you don't look at it as a body, you're looking at it as a crime.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: But that when there were kids involved, that was always the hardest.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: Did you ever have to work something with kids?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No I don't believe I ever worked a deal where they were children involved... you know children killed. I worked one where there was a 17-year old...his dad and a 17-year old boy was killed.

NANCY RAY: And what happened there?

LLOYD JOHNSON: It was a narcotics deal as best that I could ever tell. It was one of those things that was never solved. Fact is uh it happened in Rains County and Rains County is a rural, a rural area. The sheriff there wasn't the brightest fellow on the block either and the murder happened. When they found them he invited all the community to come in and see if they could find anything that was missing out of... he was in a trailer house or something like this one here. Of course by the time I got there and got notified well all the evidence had been trampled over and rearranged and we never solved it.

NANCY RAY: Well if there was something you could go back and change during your career, what would that be?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Probably nothing.

NANCY RAY: That's good.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Probably nothing.

NANCY RAY: OK, well let's talk about then uh... are there any Rangers other than Captain Burks that stand out in your mind that really made an impression on you as far as your life and career?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really. I knew a lot of colorful Rangers. I knew Red Arnold real well. We worked... I worked with Red quite a bit before he died.

NANCY RAY: Was that Red Arnold?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: He was at...

LLOYD JOHNSON: Mount Pleasant.

NANCY RAY: What did ya'll do together?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we just worked adjoining counties you know.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well have you encouraged your children to be in law enforcement?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No.

NANCY RAY: One's in the Fire Department... what do your kids do?

LLOYD JOHNSON: One of them is the adjutant fire chief there in uh Kilgore and my middle lives in Sulphur Springs works for TXU. He's been with them about 25 years. And my youngest son is uh is an engineer for company there in Richardson, out of Fort Worth.

NANCY RAY: Well thinking back, what do you think would be the most important characteristics for being a good Ranger?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well you have to want to be a Ranger. You just have to be cut out for that kind of work. I mean not everybody can do it. Not everybody is suitable to do it. Just you know... don't everybody like to be gone the biggest part of their life.

NANCY RAY: So really your family, a lot... your wife did a lot of uh... she did a lot with the kids.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right, she raised them.

NANCY RAY: Well what about uh... can you think of a time when you had a close brush with death on duty?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really.

NANCY RAY: Nothing really stands out in your mind?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Nothing stands out.

NANCY RAY: Can you think of a time when you uh, when you were frightened... didn't know what might be about to happen?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well anytime you approach a man with a gun, you know if you're not frightened there's something wrong with you. You never know. The unknown is what you're afraid of.

NANCY RAY: OK. Was that mainly when you were with the Highway Patrol or was that true with Rangers?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Both Rangers and the Highway Patrol.

NANCY RAY: Well thinking about changes in the Ranger organization, now you retired in...

LLOYD JOHNSON: '93.

NANCY RAY: And I show January 31st of '93. Is that right?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: Between the time you left and now, what do you think are some of the biggest changes in the Ranger organization?

LLOYD JOHNSON: They've made so many I wouldn't even try to guess.

NANCY RAY: One we've heard about is technology.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. Technology has advanced so that there's not even no comparison to the way I worked and the way they work now.

NANCY RAY: Well if you were a Ranger now, what do you think would be the biggest good thing that they have now that would help you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well the modern technology is sure... this DNA is really you know advanced up. I guess it's a lot now like it is on TV but the way they did it on TV now is not the way we did it.

NANCY RAY: Well since you didn't have DNA, what were the steps that you would have to go through to try to prove?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well we just through interviews you know and the evidence that we found at the scene.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well did you ever have a chance to save somebody's life that you can remember?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Not that I remember?

NANCY RAY: Did somebody save yours at some point?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Not that I remember.

NANCY RAY: What about um... I know you're saying all of yours was pretty routine and just pretty ordinary. But can you think about something that really made you proud? What is the proudest day or thing that happened to you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well anytime you solved the crime is a proud time in your life you know. Anytime you could help somebody and you know or a family member you know of a victim.

NANCY RAY: Can you think of one thing in particular that you thought that just really made me feel good?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No nothing stands out.

NANCY RAY: *(pause to change discs)* OK we're back. Let's... let me change it to uh polygraph. When you were solving cases, was... did you use polygraph a lot?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right, we used polygraph extensively.

NANCY RAY: OK. So how did that work?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well a polygraph is just a basic tool that you use. It's not admissible in court but it can give you an idea whether an old boy is telling you the truth or he's lying to you or not. And it's not a hundred percent but it's pretty accurate.

NANCY RAY: So who were some of the operators that you used? Were they local or...

LLOYD JOHNSON: DPS operators out of Dallas usually.

NANCY RAY: All right. Do you... I've heard that you can't... you can beat the polygraph operator. Do you agree with that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: The polygraph can be beat. But uh it's pretty hard to do.

NANCY RAY: So in your estimation then it was pretty successful, you were able to use it.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right. I worked polygraph, used polygraph one time on a murder case and there was an old girl gave me a 25-page statement. Of course she started lying the moment she opened her mouth and didn't quit until she shut it. And she passed the polygraph on every bit of it. People that have no concept between the truth and fiction you know they have no trouble passing the polygraph.

NANCY RAY: Oh my. That's hard to believe that a person can actually be that way.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Yeah, but they are. There are people that way.

NANCY RAY: Are those the ones that usually end up being criminals?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well some of them.

NANCY RAY: Well tell me about some of the responsibilities that you had as a Ranger that are unusual. Like we've learned that uh some of the Rangers have had to drive governors or their families.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Of course we always had to drive the governor when he was in our area.

NANCY RAY: So who did you drive?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Oh I've drove several of them... Dolph Briscoe and Bill Clements and Mark White and uh... that I recall them right off hand.

NANCY RAY: Anything interesting happen... any stories you can tell us?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really. It was mostly just transportation you know, transporting them from one place to another.

NANCY RAY: Are there any other security details that you had that... we saw some at a football game. Some Rangers now guarding the coaches.

LLOYD JOHNSON: No we didn't work football games.

NANCY RAY: They were... this was a Texas Tech game is where they were.

LLOYD JOHNSON: They probably just badged their way in.

NANCY RAY: Oh. Well the game was sold out I can tell you that. So what else... anything else unusual that you did as a Ranger that we might not know about?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really.

NANCY RAY: Of all the things that you accomplished as a Ranger, what do you feel the best about? Is there something that you feel good?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I feel good about any crime that I solved you know or I helped solve. That always makes you feel good and makes you feel bad when you don't solve one.

NANCY RAY: Well anything else that you would like to tell us while you were there at Sulphur Springs?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really.

NANCY RAY: Nothing stands out.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Nothing stands out.

NANCY RAY: OK so we've talked about you did retire January 31st, 1993. So what did you do after that?

LLOYD JOHNSON: When I retired I got a private investigator's license and worked at that for about two or three years and then I had esophagus cancer and that kind of wound my career up. But I owned a farm there and me and my wife run a little stock farm. Did that up until the last couple of years.

NANCY RAY: OK. So what are you doing now?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Nothing, absolutely nothing (laughter).

NANCY RAY: You're supposed to say "what I want to."

LLOYD JOHNSON: When you get 80 years old you don't do much.

NANCY RAY: Well, you probably earned the right to sit in your chair if you want to.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Right.

NANCY RAY: Well if you had some advice for a person just becoming a Ranger, what would you tell that person?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well he'd have to want to be a Ranger and he'd have to want to be a Ranger worse than he wanted anything else really to do it. And uh that'd really be the only advice. It's changed so much since I was a Ranger and what it is now... a whole lot.

NANCY RAY: Well say somebody looks at this video in a hundred years and they...

LLOYD JOHNSON: I doubt they'd watch it all the way through.

NANCY RAY: Well they might, you never know. And they say Ranger Lloyd Johnson, he was... what would you want people to remember about you?

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well that he just done a good job and done the best he could you know. And that's about it.

NANCY RAY: Well that's something good to be remembered for. Well is there anything else that you'd like to tell us about your life as a patrolman or life as a Ranger?

LLOYD JOHNSON: No not really.

NANCY RAY: OK. Well I guess then... Eddie do you have any questions? Well then I guess what we'd say, is we thank you for your time today.

LLOYD JOHNSON: I appreciate ya'll coming.

NANCY RAY: Oh we've enjoyed it. And thank you for your service to the state of Texas.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Well I enjoyed every minute of it that I worked for the state. I never dreaded getting up and going to work. A lot of people have jobs they don't like to get up and go to work. But I never... never dreaded getting up and going to work. I always enjoyed every day.

NANCY RAY: Well I thought of something else I wanted to ask you. What was the most enjoyable thing to you about being a Ranger?

LLOYD JOHNSON: (laughter) I don't know. It would be hard you know to pinpoint any one thing but like I say, I enjoyed every day that I worked for the state of Texas.

NANCY RAY: Well again we want to thank you for your time and for your service.

LLOYD JOHNSON: Thank you.