Living Legacies

Living Legacies Oral History Project, Randolph-Macon College

Project Name:  Living Legacies Oral History Project

Interviewee:  Curtis Saunders, R-MC Class of 1948  [Ritchie Curtis Saunders Jr.]

Interviewer(s):  Sarah Hendricks, Laura Doherty; also present: Rob Saunders, R-MC Class of 1979

Interview Date:  May 20th, 2009               Length:  (part 1) Approx. 55:00

Location:  

Interview Summary:
Curtis Saunders talks about the WWII draft and how it affected his family; although he was not drafted, he served after his freshman year of college. Saunders states that circa 1946, 30% of Randolph-Macon College students were returning veterans and many of them lived in the Veterans’ Village. He attended the college before there was a dining hall and describes the boarding house (which was run by a niece of President Blackwell). He shares memories of school dances and some of the organizations (including Phi Delta) that existed while he was a student.

Biographical Summary:
Curtis Saunders, Class of 1948, first heard about the college through his church. His father attended the college during 1920. He left the college after his freshman year in 1942 to join the Marines and returned in 1946. He served during the end of WWII. Like his brother Bob, Saunders was active in Phi Delta. He mentions several of his post-graduation jobs: construction, farm machinery, and flooding land for “wetland farms.”

Personal Names:
Jimmy McLemore (0:39)  Dr. Mabry (16:50)  Dr. Moreland (45:28)
Tom Birdsong (0:44, 43:46)  Dr. Bullington (19:45)
Dr. Bullington (2:40, 19:45)  Dr. Bowen (22:12, 32:46)
Dr. McConnell (2:50)  Dr. Webb (22:40)
Luther White (5:00, 53:15)  Fischer (24:20)
Jack Russell (5:04)  Clarence Sutton (24:40)
Mary Blackwell (7:45)  Jerome Felton (24:50)
Dr. Blackwell (8:22)  Jimmy Godwin (24:52)
Billy Edwards (8:55)  Frank Cross (24:54)
Jim Camp (9:06)  Roy and Alvin Jarrett (25:40)
Jim Pruitt (9:11)  Charlie Bonnet (28:45)
Dr. Greellet Simpson (15:30)  Dr. Tarry (28:54)

Place Names:
Suffolk (1:04, 16:59, 18:13, 24:44)  Nagasaki (13:00)   [R-MC] Freshman Village (37:34)
Thomas Branch Dormitory (1:54)  Kyushu (13:13)  Richmond (39:54)
Parris Island (11:30)  Great Dismal Swamp (16:46, 50:10)  Portsmouth (49:49)
Camp Missouri (11:33)  Chesapeake (18:13, 49:50)  Virginia Beach (49:52)
Fort Bragg, NC (11:40)  North Carolina (18:13)  Deep Creek (50:58)
Quantico (11:45)  Northern Neck (24:20)  Elizabeth City (51:13)
California (12:12)  Westhampton College (30:07)  Columbia, NC (51:16)
Guam (12:20)  Mary Washington College (30:09)  Manteo, NC (51:21)
Saipan (12:21)  Mary Baldwin College (30:12)
Okinawa (12:23)  RPI/VCU (30:25)
Japan (12:24)  [R-MC] Veteran’s Village (31:44, 37:07)
Living Legacies

Living Legacies Oral History Project, Randolph-Macon College

Business/Organization Names:
- Phi Delta (4:57)
- Clericus (10:12)
- Commons Club (10:38)
- Women’s Christian Temperance Union (27:00)
- Reynolds Aluminum (29:07)
- Panhellenic Board (34:06, 37:55)
- Student Body (34:08)
- The B.L.A.K.I. (44:34)
- The Eleven Club (44:21)
- University of North Carolina (46:05)
- Bentall Machinery (47:44)
- Massey-Harris (48:49)
- Virginia Asphalt Association (54:26)
- Commonwealth Club (10:38)
- Massey-Harris (48:49)
- Virginia Asphalt Association (54:26)
- Reynolds Aluminum (29:07)
- Panhellenic Board (34:06, 37:55)
- Student Body (34:08)
- The B.L.A.K.I. (44:34)
- The Eleven Club (44:21)

Content Index:
- (00:20) First hearing about Randolph-Macon through church
- (00:48) Father attended Randolph-Macon / First impressions of the College
- (02:25) Affording a R-MC education / Working on campus
- (02:45) Serving in the Marine Corps / Declaring a major as a freshman
- (03:45) Returning to campus after serving in the Marine Corps
- (06:35) Membership in Phi Delta
- (07:45) Dining at a boarding house
- (08:45) Relationships during his freshman year / Clubs and activities
- (11:15) Activities during the Marine Corps / Fighting in the war
- (15:03) Transitioning back into Randolph-Macon
- (16:35) Senior Projects / The Great Dismal Swamp
- (19:50) Catching lamprey eels with Dr. Bullington
- (21:45) Other professors
- (22:50) Resuming membership in Phi Delta / Living in the fraternity house
- (27:00) Driving to Suffolk with his father
- (27:55) Having fun on campus
- (31:00) Living on campus / [R-MC] Veteran’s Village
- (31:50) Making home brew
- (33:20) Membership in campus organizations / Honors system
- (36:45) Number of students after the war / [R-MC] Veteran’s Village
- (37:45) The Panhellenic Board / Intramurals / Fraternities
- (40:20) More about home brew
- (41:30) Affording Randolph-Macon / Tough times on campus
- (43:00) The B.L.A.K.I. organization
- (46:45) Working after graduation / Construction and wetlands banking
- (53:10) Staying connected with Randolph-Macon
- (54:15) Reactions to Luther White as the College’s president