

**Oral History Interview of
Phillip Haynes**

**Interviewed by: Fred Carpenter
May 5, 1972
Roscoe, Texas**

**Part of the:
*Legacy Oral History Interviews***

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Interview Series Background:

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Transcript Overview:

This oral history interview features Phillip Haynes. Haynes talks about his experience in the Roscoe Boys' Club and his interactions with George Parks. Haynes discusses the benefits of the club and its impact on the community.

Length of Interview: 00:19:46

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Fred Carpenter (FC):

This is Fred Carpenter. We are continuing the taping at Roscoe about the community and about, in particular, the Roscoe Boys Club. This morning, I'm now in the office of Mr. Phil, is that Phillip Phil? P-h-i-l-l-i-p Haynes, H-a-y-n-e-s who has been in the Roscoe boys club and can tell us something of that and the work, and how it's affected him and what he thinks about it. And also, before we start on that, Phil, I'd like for you to give me a little bit of your family background, when they came into the Roscoe area, and prior to your—were you born here?

Phillip Haynes (PH):

No, my father is a railroad man, who worked for a little RS&P railroad that runs from Roscoe to Snyder.

FC:

All right now that's Roscoe, Snyder, and Pacific Railroad.

PH:

And Pacific Railroad. It used to go to Fluvanna, Texas, the other side of Snyder. And on Pearl Harbor day in 1941, they cut the line back to Snyder. And then we moved to Roscoe in March of 1942, and my dad went into the general offices here, and he retired about two years ago as vice-president of the little old railroad. But we've been here since '42. And I was nine years old when we came here. I had a brother that was three years older than I was. He was eligible for Boy Scouts, and at that time George Parks had this same type boy's club situation going, but it was Boy Scouts, and my brother was twelve, and he was eligible for it. And I liked the things that they were doing so well that I nearly drove George crazy until he finally formed Rinky Dinks.

FC:

Oh I hadn't heard about this before.

PH:

I got into the Rinky Dinks while they were still a boy's club and I think he organized it because of me hanging around under his feet and he realized then the need to—

[buzz, break in tape]

FC:

All right, if you'll carry on about the Rinky Dinks and yourself.

PH:

Well, George realized the need for—in younger boys, if they had some organized activity, prior to the age of twelve, it would be a good thing. And a few years later, I don't remember exactly

when—he just changed over to the Boys Club because of the freedom of operating it just like he wanted to. And he's been able to take boys just about as quick as they can stay away from their mother a few days and teach them some things that they don't learn at home. I know you can take most any boy that's raised in this town—by the time he's eight years old, he can swim a mile, he's safe to be around with a hunting rifle, and some things like this that they don't always get at home and life saving courses. By the time I was eleven years old, I was a lifeguard, and plenty capable—could pull a 200 pound man out of a lake, you know, and knew how to get him up on the bank and get him artificial respiration and some things like this that I would have never gotten anywhere else. And some of these things, you know, I can look back to times that this has probably saved my life. Capsizing boats in the middle of a big lake, and was able to save a couple of people in my lifetime from drowning because of training I had as a younger person. Not really any way to put a value on what this man has done for this community and what this boys club has done. But you know, our kids that are raised up here, this is a little country town, but most of these kids, by the time they are twelve years old, they have already been to Disneyland in California, they've already been to Cape Kennedy, they've been to Washington, D.C. and been through the capital, they've been through our state capital, they've been to Canada. They're world travelers by the time they're twelve years old because of this boy's club, and it helps them in their studies—when you're trying to relate something to another state or politics—and how politics work. And nearly every one of these kids has shaken hands with the governor of Texas by the time they're twelve years old. And most of them—you know, we haven't had any delinquency problem at all in Roscoe. I don't think anyone can tell you a boy that's ever been in that boy's club that's ever had any kind of problems with the law in any way, and if they can, I don't know about it. I think the thing that a lot of people don't realize about George Parks, he was raised by a Baptist minister that was one of the greatest people that ever lived here. But George's life has been as dedicated to boys as his father was to his church, and he dedicated his life to it as a young man, and it's a ministry within itself. And there's a true ministry in it. And all of these kids, when they go somewhere, they go to church. And they wear white shirts and black ties, and they look sharp wherever they go. And he encourages each one of them, you know. And they have a basic understanding if they don't get it at home, they will know things of God from being around George Parks. And this is great. A lot of kids that didn't come from Christian homes are good successful Christian men today because of this association. This is really important to me, when I can see this going on—that's a real ministry within itself. I think, you know, if a guy had about two days, he could relate a lot of things, but my association with him has been over a period of twenty-seven years now. And some of the things that he caused us to do as young people, at the time—I thought he was pretty mean in doing it, but I can remember—

FC:

That's what I was going to, to get at now—start back there when you were about nine and some of these instances and some of these things that made impression.

PH:

Well, I remember the first time that I was ever in Ruidoso, New Mexico, I probably wouldn't have ever got there until I was twenty-five or thirty years old, had it not been for the Roscoe Boy's Club. But the first time I was in Ruidoso, there was one little motel situation there of log cabins, winkin, blinkem, and nod, and there was a bowling alley, and a few little old filling stations, and that was it. And he took a group of boys up there for a few days to be in the cool pines and have fun in a lot of different ways. And he always cautioned each one of us, before we left, that you know we were not used to handling money at all, and back then you could go on a one week trip for ten dollars. And he always saw to it that the boy's club was funded in some way to take care of expenses of the trip, and all we had to worry about was our eats. And he cautioned each one of us, you know, take care of your money. If you have ten dollars and we're going to stay five days, well, budget yourself to two dollars a day because if you run out of money, it's going to be tough. Well it never did get tough, but he made it tough on some of us sometime, and it taught us some things. When we went to Ruidoso for five days, I ran out of money the second day. And I went to him and told him, I said, "Man I've run out of money." And he asked me how I spent my money. Well, pretty foolishly really on trinkets and gadgets and whatnot, and I didn't have the foresight to see that I can't eat for three days now. And he said, "Well I'd suggest that you go down to the bowling alley and see if you can set pens then, in the bowling alley to make some money to eat on." Well, he really wasn't about to let me go hungry, but and of course, behind our backs he went to the bowling alley and told them—

[buzz, tape break]

FC:

I got so interested listening to you there, let's back up a little bit and start on this—I asked what type of punishment George administered to the children. So let's do that again, if we may.

PH:

Well his punishment was never anything severe, but just to impress on a boy when he has broken a rule of some kind—well he might—tell him, you know, if you do this you're going to get five spats or something. I guarantee you, he'll carry it out and in front of the whole club, well he'll give a certain boy so many spats for breaking any kind of a rule on a trip or as long as he's in company with the boy's club going somewhere, well they kind of got a set of rules that they go by, and if they get out of line on one of these rules they can very well expect that they're going to get so many spats, according to how bad it is. And they'll take those, and it makes a good kid out of them, but there's boys that have been punished at boy's club with a board on their rear end that have never had it happen to them at home. And some of the kids I've known of instances where kids go home, and at first they'd kind of whine to Mother and Daddy that George whipped me with a board, but if that parent says anything about, "I'm going to talk him about that," that kid will be the first one to say, no you're not either. You leave it alone. He just has an authority

with kids that's great, and it's long lasting. I can name you men in this town that are approaching fifty years old, and I'm approaching forty faster than I'd like to be, [tape break?] but George, with men that have been raised up in this boy's club—he'll call them, and he doesn't say please or anything like that—but just like this last fall, he called me and he said, "I need a pickup on Thursday, with a driver on it, and I need a frontend loader to load cotton burs with, and I want you to furnish me a pickup and a man and a front end loader that will load these burs. And I need them down there about four." He didn't say, if you please, either. And he still has that kind of authority, even with me, because I know what his program is, I know what he's done with these boys, he knows I know, so I'm going to do it. Whatever he says he needs for that boys club—

FC:

And I'm sure that's pretty true about of the whole community.

PH:

It's true of the whole community. He gets all the cooperation he needs that way, but it's still fantastic that he has this kind of authority with people that are forty and fifty years old. Recently he likes to joke in his paper about his weather predictions and this type thing, and we had a funny instance happen. There's an old Injun Joe up at Muleshoe, Texas, that every year on the morning of March 22, he'll build a big bonfire, and then from the direction that the smoke blows, he will predict what the weather is going to be for the coming year. So just as a—something to kind of be funny in the paper, and to keep something going on the weather, well George decided that he would do this on March 22—have a big bonfire, and when the smoke went up, well then he'd predict the weather from that smoke. And so he came, he called me and he said, "Now I want to do this, but don't want anybody to know where it is, or anything." And I said, "Okay. I know just the place. And I'll have the bon fire all ready, and plenty of oil to put on it, where it'll have plenty of black smoke. And I'll meet you out there at six fifteen in the morning on March 22." And he said, "Good. Now this is just between you and I, isn't it?" and I said, "Certainly. Sure is." Well on the morning of March 22, I had more cars out there than you'd see downtown Roscoe. I had informed everybody that I knew about it, of course, and then I had him a ceremonial robe to put on, looked like an Indian, and one of the boys, of course I invited a lot of the boy's club members to come too. And one of the boys had rigged him up an Indian headdress. And he had to put that on and war paint on his face, and then we lit the bonfire there early in the morning, just as the sun was coming up, and of course it wouldn't have been complete had I not had a photographer there to capture this too. And we got pictures of him dressed in that rig, and told him that you know a good legitimate Indian prediction would have to have a dance around the bonfire and everything. He's still just a good enough sport that he went along with the whole deal and did an Indian dance out there and that type thing. And then when it was all over, he said, "You get three spats." And there in front of my own son that's sixteen years old, he made me bend over and gave me three spats. And there's not another human being in the world that can make me bend over and take a whipping in front of my boy. (laughs)

FC:

Well, that's a wonderful story. How did his weather prediction turn out, by the way? (laughs)

PH:

Oh, really not good. We didn't have the right kind of wind that morning, according to him. And then he tried to say that the reason why it was off was because this was leap year. And you know we lost a day, and if it had been any other year except leap year we would have had the bonfire the morning before and the wind would have been out of the right direction, and we'd have had a big rain and a bumper crop year. But it's all in fun.

FC:

Well, this is real wonderful. I know he's done a wonderful job here and devoted his whole life to—one questions I sort of wanted to ask, I have a friend in—I live in Brownwood—Gordon Wood, who was a coach here. And Gordon was a great admirer of George's, and in fact he's working on getting a boy's club in Brownwood right now. And did you happen to play under Gordon at all?

PH:

Yes sir. I played football under Gordon Wood. Gordon and George Parks have a lot in common in that being—a love for boys and complete dedication to their best interest. And Gordon and George Parks got along great, because when you have a mutual love, you've got grounds for a beautiful friendship.

FC:

Gordon told me this, but I rather gathered from some of the things he didn't say that maybe some of the coaches you'd had had problems with the boy's club and the athletic programs. Was this true to your knowledge, at all?

PH:

Yes sir. And I think it's just a normal thing that you'll have, over a period of years. A kid, going to school up here has a—his schedule constantly increases in more things that he has to do, like we have band up here now, and we didn't used to have a band and some other activities, and their schedules are pretty tight. And some of the teachers get the idea that since we're in the school system here, that we have first option on these kids' spare time, all the time. Well, George tries to plan programs with the boys in mind, but he has to have it organized, he has to have a meeting on Monday nights, and he's been having meetings on Monday night for more years than I know about. So there's a lot of other nights of the week, and everybody knows it. So if somebody up at school wants to buck him on that, well I guarantee there will be trouble [buzz] just because of that too.

[tape break]

FC:

Well, I want to say, I deeply appreciate your cooperation, your time in making this tape here. I would like to come back sometime and talk to you sometime a little further—not only particularly on these lines, but I see a Haynes cattle company file down here. We have to realize that today is history too. We are particularly interested at the Southwest Collection, in the cattle industry. We have many, many of the records of the early cattle companies in this. I'd like for you to give some thought to preserving your records, not throwing anything away. And in the future, in a few years, when you get ready to retire some of them, give some thought to letting us take them to Lubbock to put them in the Southwest Collection where they can be held for any period of time or used for research and study. So, I'd like to come back sometime and make a more complete history of your family in that, if I could do that.

PH:

Yes sir, you'd be welcome anytime.

FC:

And thank you so much for letting me be here this morning.

PH:

You bet. Thank you.

End of Recording

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