INTERVIEW WITH LYNWOOD MOORE

JANUARY 23, 2009

KEK: Hello, this is Karen Kalnins, I’m a reference librarian at the Oklahoma City University Law Library and today is Friday, January 23, 2009, it’s about 9:30 in the morning. And, I am in Tulsa, Oklahoma this morning at the law firm of Conner and Winters and I am speaking with Mr. Lynwood Moore. And he is an attorney here at the law firm and today I will be taking his oral history interview. This interview is part of the larger oral history project that is being sponsored by the Oklahoma City University Law Library. In this project we are going throughout the state of Oklahoma and we are interviewing attorneys and judges to get some insight about their experiences. So, welcome Mr. Moore.

LM: Thank you very much Karen.

KEK: Well, I was very pleased when you agreed to this interview.

LM: I’m glad to do it. As I told you before, I’m not sure that I’ve got all that interesting of a background to present to you or history but I’m willing to answer whatever questions you have, give you whatever information I’ve got.

KEK: Well, very good. Well, what drew you to the law Mr. Moore?

LM: That’s a good question. I took a course when I was in college. I had started off as an engineer and spent three semesters in engineering before I learned that I couldn’t learn calculus. I struggled with that so I switched to liberal arts and took a course on, kind of a survey on the legal systems of the different cultures all over the world and was really fascinated by it. I really enjoyed it, got the best grade I got in college and it really peaked an interest that I had in the law. And by the time I was ready to graduate from college I knew I wanted to go to law school and so all I did was apply to law school. And, have never had a second thought about that direction. As a kid I always wanted to be a pilot, be in the Air Force, which is what my father did but I had bad eyes so I did not go to the Air Force Academy. And so I’ve taken this direction and have enjoyed every minute of it.

KEK: And, what year did you graduate from undergraduate?


KEK: And, what, what other steps did you take besides taking that class about the different legal systems did you take to prepare yourself for law school?

LM: There really weren’t any other courses or actions that I took specifically for that purpose. I found that as opposed to medical school, you don’t have a preset curriculum that’s really necessary for you to really do law school, if you will. I may have taken a constitutional law
course as well but it was mainly that survey that got me interested. And I majored in politics, they don’t call it political science at Princeton, they call it politics. So, I had a study of government and took a lot of history as well. That all kind of helped me in just the way I approach the law and study the law.

KEK: Very good. And where did you end up going to law school?

LM: I went to the University of Oklahoma.

KEK: And, what was, describe your time there, what was that like?

LM: Well, it was a very interesting time. I had gone to undergraduate back east at, what a lot of people would call a somewhat liberal school, but I found that once I got to the University of Oklahoma it was really when concerns over the Vietnam War were really starting to bubble up. I think there were more protests and so forth at OU than there were at Princeton. The war also had an impact on our student body. When I entered law school we had maybe 225 students and we graduated with 97. There were a few in there that didn’t graduate because of the difficulty of the curriculum but a lot were dropping out to go into the National Guard or being drafted or, because at that point there was not a student deferment for graduate students. So, we saw a lot of change in the make-up of the student body from the time I started till graduation.

KEK: That sounds very interesting. So, were you ever drafted, did your number ever come up?

LM: No, I was married going into law school and we had a child on the way. As a result, I had a 2A deferment which I prized very much. So, no, in spite of the fact of growing up in a military family I never did serve in the military.

KEK: What is a 2A deferment?

LM: It was a deferment for people who were married with children.

KEK: So, you could be deferred if you were married and had kids?

LM: That’s right.

KEK: But, you couldn’t get a deferment if you were in graduate school?

LM: No, no. There was a student deferment for undergraduates but once you got out, that was gone.

KEK: Interesting. What was the composition of your class at OU and what year did you enter?

LM: I entered in 1967, same year I graduated from college. We, it was an interesting composition, we had a lot, a large number right out of college. We had a few who had been in the service and were getting out and going to law school, a few that had been in business for a
while and decided to go back. Had very few women, that’s one of the things I think that’s very different from today’s class. I think we graduated maybe 6 women out of the 97. And the overall student body when I first got there was pretty much the same percentage or maybe lower because women weren’t being pulled away because the war, just the male students.

**KEK:** Do you remember any of your professors that you remember, is there anyone that struck you or mentored you or stayed with you through the years?

**LM:** Oh, I think, that was a time when OU had a number of professors who really left an impact on you. Tiger Frasier was one who taught Civil Procedure and Remedies and he was the type that, there was a television show, John Housman, *Paper Chase*, the two professors reminded me of one another. You went in there, you felt like you learned a whole lot but it was one of those sessions in which you came out and your armpits were really wet. He would call on students kind of out of the blue and he never let you get away with the slightest inaccuracy and so it was always a challenge.

**KEK:** That’s great, that’s great. What year did you end up graduating then?

**LM:** 1970.

**KEK:** And, what were your plans after law school?

**LM:** Well, I had always planned to go into private practice. I really didn’t give much thought to any other direction although I did apply for a job and received an offer from the Department of Justice, perhaps going to the Antitrust Division. I had gone to high school in the Washington, D.C. area, Arlington, Virginia, and I thought that would be a great way to get back to that area, which I really enjoyed. I thought about that one for a while, I had a friend who was then in the military and had an apartment overlooking the 14th Street Bridge and I was visiting him one time and at 8 o’clock in the morning I looked out over the bridge and it was total gridlock. This is before the metro, the subway was put in and I thought, “Boy, I don’t want to fight that every day.” I worked in my junior and senior years of law school with a firm in Oklahoma City on a part-time basis as a legal intern and then during the summer times, at least between my first and second year, I worked for a law firm in Tulsa. And between my second and third, I stayed with that same Oklahoma City law firm which was then Andrews, Mosburg; Mosstellar, Andrews, and Mosburg, it’s now the Andrews Davis firm.

**KEK:** So, that was your first job out of law school?

**LM:** Well, it was my first, it was my job while I was in law school. I did not stay with that firm after I graduated. I came to Tulsa and worked for Huffman, Arrington, Shulrick, and Kincaid which was the firm I had clerked for, well, it was half the firm I clerked for. I had worked for them two different summers, once when I was in college. But it was the firm that represented
Oklahoma Natural Gas, that was their primary client. So, I stayed there for about a year and a half before moving to Conner and Winters.

KEK: Very interesting. Well, tell me about those summer jobs while you were in law school, what kinds of things did you do and what kinds of things do you think you learned from those early experiences?

LM: I did primarily research. I think it’s probably pretty similar to what the summer associates today get. But what I did learn was the practicalities of the practice. I learned about keeping your hours and describing the jobs that you were doing. And it also gave me just a practical feel for the application of the law. In law school you learned the terms but to see what a demurrer looked like and how it was filed and how it was argued and that sort of thing. I also, while I was clerking, did a lot of work for the securities group with that firm. So, I spent time going down to Dallas to the financial printer and proofreading and actually flying to Washington to file documents with the Securities and Exchange Commission. This was before Federal Express and any of those. So, the easiest way they made sure of getting it on file on time was just to put me on a plane with a file package and I’d do it. Now of course they do it electronically, you don’t even have to worry about Federal Express. And it was fun, I really enjoyed that because as I said, I had gone to high school there so it was a good chance to see some friends and so forth particularly if I had a Friday assignment. I could stay the weekend and get some good socializing in.

KEK: That’s right. Wow, that sounds like a great job.

LM: I really enjoyed it, I really did.

KEK: Do you recommend to law students today to try to get some sort of experience during their summers?

LM: Well, I think the whole recruiting process has evolved to the point that most of the, at least the serious students, are going to be doing that. When I was in law school, a lot of my friends spent the summers in Las Vegas being the dealers at the casinos or getting jobs in that area and they had a great time, partied a lot, and so forth. And there weren’t that many of us who actually worked for a law firm. As I mentioned, I was married, had a child at that time, and so I was not quite as footloose and fancy-free as my other classmates which I think helped. I feel as though I learned a lot during those summers and part-time during the school year about what to expect and what to look for and basically how to begin a practice. I felt like I was really off on a good foot and I would recommend that to law students who are not sure that that’s what they want to do. But today, I think our firm is very similar to most of the other sizeable firms in that most of our new lawyers that we hire out of law school are ones that have been in our summer associate program for at least one summer, sometimes two summers.
KEK: Tell me about this firm’s summer associate program, you mentioned that just now in passing, what is that like?

LM: Well, we go on campus recruiting in the fall of each year. More to hire students for their summer, for the summer associate program than for permanent positions because again, we find that most of the lawyers we hire are ones that we have had some experience with in the summer. The one difference I think that you see today is that the summer is broken up into two sessions. A lot of the law students will spend half a summer with one firm and half a summer with another firm which I think is probably good for them. They get to see two firms, they don’t have to commit to one if you will, or cast their lot with a particular firm. And it’s still enough time for the firm itself to get ideas as to the skills, compatibility of that particular student with the firm in general.

KEK: So, the summer associate program at this firm and at other law firms is sort of a try-out period where the law student and the firm sort of evaluate each other?

LM: Yeah, exactly. When I was in law school, it was more of a way to get some temporary help, if you will, to do some of the research. But today it’s much more focused; you’re really evaluating potential hires as permanent workers.

KEK: Very interesting way to do it. And I guess it’s been effective?

LM: It has been. The bigger the firm, the more elaborate the summer associate program. Ours is fairly elaborate; there are parties that you plan and different social events in addition to the in-office work that they do to help the summer associates really get to know the members of the firm and other lawyers on a social basis as well as a business basis.

KEK: Has the current economic downturn do you think affected your firm’s summer associate program or do you think it will?

LM: That’s a good question. It may, we haven’t seen those results yet. We’ve been through interview sessions from last fall and have selected students who we made offers to for this coming summer so it will be really next fall before we really do any sort of adjustment in our goals or objectives or what have you. One of the things about a law firm is you really never know how the economy is going to affect you. At least a firm such as ours where some of the extremely large firms will have whole departments with very specific niches and they can tell if that particular practice area, if they’re involved in doing collateral mortgage obligations and securitizations and so forth, then it’s not going to be quite as busy. And we have quite a few specialties in here but it’s not to that extent. I do a lot of securities regulation but also mergers and acquisitions and general corporate work. We can’t identify for sure what may decline in activity. We do know that our bankruptcy lawyers are a little busier than they normally are.
KEK: Oh, I’m sure, I’m sure. Okay, well, let’s get back to your own experiences. So, you practiced with another firm before you came here, and where was that firm?

LM: That was in Tulsa. It was, at that time, about 10 or 12 lawyers. As I said, the main client was Oklahoma Natural Gas. It was kind of a legal department for them but it had a number of other practices too. I got involved in primarily litigation work which I found fascinating. There was the Mullendore murder case. But we had represented a young rancher named E.C. Mullendore and his wife and he got in horrible financial trouble, was, at age 32, was murdered. He had 15 million dollars worth of life insurance on his life and it was in the grace period. He ran out of, he didn’t have any funds to pay the premium for the next year. Anyway, it was a lot of litigation over those life insurance policies and I got involved heavily in that as a young associate doing a lot of the research and so forth. And it was pretty fascinating. But, I also knew that’s, I didn’t want to make a career in litigation. And the reason I moved over here was one of the partners of the other firm left and came here. And Barry Galt, who is a securities lawyer with Conner and Winters said he was needing some help so I got a call asking if I would like to come and do securities work. And I jumped on that because I had done enough in law school where I really had an interest in that. So, I switched firms and this after about a year and a half at the other firm.

KEK: Well, how did you, how did you realize that you did not want to do litigation?

LM: Well, to be real honest, there were several factors in litigation practice. I’ve never felt like I’ve always been that quick on my feet. I always think of the things I should have said after the hearing is over, and I also felt as though it was less an effort to get to the real truth and more of an effort to present the truth as your client likes it, wants it. So it was, there are lots of great trial attorneys who do wonderful work and I admire that but I’ve never been a fan of the litigation process just because of what goes on and also, you always have clients that are really upset with the other side and so there’s a lot of emotion involved. I felt like I could do without.

KEK: Absolutely, absolutely. So, you said you were involved in that big murder case, was it a criminal defense?

LM: No, it was, they never found or never charged anybody with the murder. It was a, we filed a lawsuit against the life insurance companies who had issued the 15 million dollar policies and it was basically a case of life insurance law. They raised every possible defense I think to the life insurance including hired suicide, they had that as a theory, he had misrepresented his financial condition on the application, just numerous issues that arose. And there was a Wall Street Journal writer who followed that case and who wrote a book, The Cross Bell Murder Mystery. Cross Bell was the name of the ranch that Mullendore owned and operated. And it was also interesting in that the, he had been pulled out of OU at age 20 or 21 to come back and manage the ranch because his father had gone blind, was unable to do it. And he had a sister who
married John Meacham of Houston fame and New Orleans Saints, very wealthy. We always speculated that E.C. tried to keep up with his sister and his brother-in-law in terms of high lifestyle. And that was mainly one of the things that got him in trouble financially. He had some racehorses and things like that. So, he was a fascinating character and the book kind of took all of that in.

**KEK:** Well, it sounds great. What was the, what was the outcome of the lawsuit against the insurance company?

**LM:** Well, one of the things that happened was that the parents intervened claiming that they were entitled to a share and Gene Stipe was one of the lawyers for the parents. And it was removed from state court to federal court. The parents actually filed bankruptcy for the ranch and so there are all these different elements working and we ended up settling it for about half the amount. Some went to the parents and some went to the widow.

**KEK:** Great, great. And you said another one of the clients in that first position was Oklahoma Natural Gas. Did you work on any kind of projects for them?

**LM:** I did a little bit of work for them but not a whole lot. They had a bond offering that they would do every two years and I helped them with that. I helped draft some tariffs for Thermal Systems which was the subsidiary they had formed to provide steam and chilled water throughout the downtown area for heating and air conditioning to power buildings.

**KEK:** And what year was it that you moved over here then?

**LM:** 1971.

**KEK:** And you’ve been here ever since?

**LM:** Ever since.

**KEK:** Well, what has kept you here so long? I’m just surprised because there is a lot of job movement these days and it’s rare that you find someone at least in one law firm I guess it would be thirty years, well, it would be almost forty years.

**LM:** That’s right. Well, what I’ve found when I got here was, there were five, six veteran lawyers all of whom really enjoyed the practice, were all very accomplished in the practice, were all very different personality-wise, but they had a, kind of a common bond in that they liked to work hard, they liked to perform well, and it really created a culture and environment that led to real respect for the law, respect for the clients, and I found a real satisfaction in that. You know, it’s not to say that there weren’t bumps along the way and you have this issue and that issue. We went through kind of a reorganization in ’92 when we changed from a partnership to a corporation and that was kind of a downtime for law firms in general. We recruited some from
another big firm here in town, changed I think the profile of the firm somewhat but all in all I think it was I think the respect and admiration that I had for each of the leaders of the firm. They were role models to me and helped me appreciate the better parts of legal practice. And we continue doing that.

KEK: Great. Well, you said what drew you here was the fact that somebody from your old firm had come here and offered you a position doing securities work and how long did you do the securities work or did that continue throughout your years here?

LM: It pretty much continued throughout. There were several public companies that this firm represented then. Cotton Petroleum Corporation which was acquired back in the late ‘70s and finally sold and kind of disappeared because of various acquisitions. And then Educational Development Corporation which is still around today, it’s a very different company today. And there were LVO corporations. One of the things that I witnessed is that particularly public companies that I represented, there was always a transition. One is acquiring other companies and growing or it’s building up and then selling to another. And there have been lots of companies that I’ve represented that have been merged with or acquired by other companies. This firm took Wal-Mart public in 1970 which was the year before I got here. Rob Walton was a brand-new, young associate then, he’s now the Chairman of the Board, he and I are about the same age. So, we worked together a fair amount when he was at the firm and then when he left he was doing all the Wal-Mart securities work. When he left to become General Counsel and ultimately the Chairman of the Board, I started doing a lot of the Wal-Mart securities work and did that for a number of years.

KEK: What interests you so much about companies and that business cycle, what about that motivates you?

LM: Well, I’ve always found it really fascinating when people start a business, and then build it, expand it, develop it. I think that a business is primarily people who are coming together with a common goal and try to develop that business, increase the business, grow the business, and a lot of times then market the business. I’ve seen many who make a career out of starting a small company, building it, selling it to another company, and then beginning again. My grandfather on my mother’s side was a, worked with J.A. Chapman for his whole career who was very accomplished in all of that.

KEK: Why do you think some people tend to do that, just tend to start businesses and then sell them and go on? What do you think drives entrepreneurs?

LM: Well, I think it’s that entrepreneurial spirit, the concept of starting something that’s brand new and building it and then their final exam, if you will, is when they sell it. There are others who like just being in the business itself and will get involved whether it’s a family business or whatever and just build it and build it or just keep it flat forever. But they enjoy the day to day
business activities more so than the pure entrepreneurs who really have a broader goal of taking something that’s small and making something big of it and selling it and then starting over and doing it again and again.

KEK: And why do you think certain businesses fail, at least from your experience in this field?

LM: Well, I think that, there’s a myriad of reasons. Sometimes it’s just misfortune, other times it’s not the right vision. I think every new business has a certain element of risk to it that everybody has to face. And, most people don’t know when they start off for sure that whatever idea or concept they have is going to be one that’s going to be completely accepted. I’ve seen some clients who had what I thought and everybody else thought it was a brilliant idea and for one reason or another it just couldn’t quite reach that level of acceptance necessary to keep it going. Other times you see people that start off on a business that you think would be pretty routine or whatever but they’re able to build it, introduce a new concepts, or develop some better concepts. You know, Sam Walton himself of Wal-Mart, he didn’t start the first Wal-Mart until he was 45 years old or so and he had been a merchant if you will for some 20 plus years at five and dimes. And he didn’t develop the discount store, mega-store concept but he saw others and he was always one to see what others were doing and think of ways to improve on it. That was basically what drove his success. He was always so focused on ways to do things better.

KEK: And look where Wal-Mart is today!

LM: That’s right.

KEK: Well, Mr. Moore, we are about halfway through so I’ll go ahead and stop the recording now and then we’ll continue on for our second half.

LM: Okay.

KEK: Okay.

KEK: Hello, this is Karen Kalnins again, I’m a reference librarian at the Oklahoma City University Law Library and this is the second half of the interview with Mr. Lynwood Moore. We are still here in Tulsa, Oklahoma, it’s about 10 o’clock in the morning and it is still Friday, January 23rd, 2009. And we were talking in the first half of the interview about Mr. Moore’s experiences in his law school career and also his early experiences here at his firm. And I wanted to ask him when he joined the firm as an associate; I guess how many years did it take for you, Mr. Moore to become a partner?

LM: I joined in October of ’71 and was made a partner January 1, 1976. So, it was only about 4 and a half years. Of course I had a year and a half with another firm but I really made it at least a year earlier than what I anticipated.
KEK: Is that typical, that timeframe?

LM: At that time, I believe five years was probably the rule of thumb, five to six, five and a half to six. Today it is probably more like six to six and a half years. And that’s at this firm in this city. In the larger firms, in big cities, it’s eight to ten years. One of the big differences between our firm and the mega firms, the Wall Street firms, the Washington D.C. firms, is that when we hire a new associate, we do so with the expectation that if all goes as we expect, they will ultimately be admitted to partnership. The larger firms will hire ten with the expectation that one or two will ultimately become partner. And they restrict their partnership admissions to meet those goals. So, they always maintain what we call the pyramid, many associates working for a much smaller number of partners. Our firm, and this is probably true with respect to most firms our size, we are kind of a reverse pyramid. We have many more partners than we do associates and that still works well for us. We don’t have the leverage and make the huge bucks that the Wall Street partners do. But, we make a comfortable living and we have a very satisfying practice.

KEK: And how many attorneys are there total in this firm?

LM: We have right at 100 lawyers. A little over 50 are in Tulsa, an Oklahoma City office, a smaller office in Fayetteville, Arkansas. We have just recently, within the last couple of months, added some lawyers in Dallas and Houston and in fact one in Austin, more or less acquired all the lawyers in one firm, a small firm in Texas, and then a couple of other lawyers who had been with larger firms. Each one had a particular reason for wanting to join us and we believe that there is a synergism there that’s going to work out great. And we’re also somewhat unique in that we’ve had some one and two person offices. We have one lawyer in Santa Fe, New Mexico, one in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Our Washington, D.C. office has three people. One of the most senior lives in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Technology has, as it has developed in the last 10 or 15 years has really enabled anybody to do that. Of course, when I first started that was impossible, you had to be in the office, surrounded by the people you work with.

KEK: Right, but that’s all changed.

LM: Totally changed.

KEK: Now, why do you think it’s important for this law firm to have offices sort of scattered around in various states?

LM: Our approach has been and our perception of the legal market is that a regional firm has a certain marketability beyond just a local firm. And we feel like we’ve developed internal practice and procedures and so forth that enables us to work with other lawyers in other offices, to coordinate with one another and so forth. And it allows us to have exposure to few other areas within our region.
**KEK:** Do you, are you licensed in other states besides Oklahoma?

**LM:** I’m not personally. We do have a number of lawyers who are licensed in several different states.

**KEK:** Now, tell me more about this, the reverse pyramid model that this law firm practices. Is that typical for other law firms here in the Tulsa area?

**LM:** Pretty much, yeah. I think you’ll, if you look at the other firms our size, you’ll see a much larger number of partners than associates.

**KEK:** And what do you think about that as opposed to having more associates?

**LM:** Well, I think it really enhances the quality of our work life. With the large firms, it’s like an audition or a try-out where you know that only one out of ten is going to make it. The competitiveness among the associates is incredible, the hours that they end up working, I think, give little chance to having a meaningful social life or family life outside of the practice. And I think that a lot of the really good law students will accept that sort of sacrifice for the prospect of becoming a partner or for the prospect of using that experience with kind of firm, as a resume builder for where they might go after that. And I think a lot of people have gotten a lot of benefit out of that. But it’s also a tough life. I’ve done a lot of deals with Wall Street firms where the associates worked till midnight as a matter of course; usually back in at 9 or 9:30 in the morning. The big firms have their own dining halls and cafeterias and so forth and they’ll cater to the lawyers, they don’t even have to get out of the building to eat.

**KEK:** Well, it just keeps them closer to the desk, right?

**LM:** That’s absolutely right. And I think that that, a lot of the surveys you’ll see done by the American Bar Association and some of the others show a certain level of dissatisfaction in younger lawyers and I think a lot of it has to do with that competitiveness.

**KEK:** What is expected of new associates when they come into this firm and what kind of training do they get from you all?

**LM:** Well, the expectations, we have certain in terms of the amount of hours that they work and bill, the areas in which they will work. Our formal training is not nearly as developed as some of the huge firms but we do have separate practice areas, litigation is one, corporate securities is another, some real estate, trusts and estates, and that sort of thing. And each individual practice group pretty much is charged with training the lawyers that are in their group, the young lawyers. We do have firm wide sessions in which we give them firm policies and practices. We’re still; I might call it in our adolescent stage, in that we’re not fully mature in that we don’t have every practice and procedure that a large firm has. We don’t have the bureaucracy although we find we’re needing more and more of that the larger we get and the more dispersed we get. So, it’s a
growing process. We’ll never stop growing, not just size wise but also in the way we approach the practice.

**KEK:** Absolutely. Do you also offer your attorneys here CLE, continuing legal education?

**LM:** Yes, yes we do. We have certain policies, if you can get what you need in-state versus going out-of-state, we encourage that. If you can get, if you have to go out of the country to get it then you have to think long and hard at that, but yeah, we do encourage continuing legal education.

**KEK:** And, have you, have you, sort of in the past few years have you had an opportunity to work with some of the new associates here?

**LM:** Yes, yes.

**KEK:** And what do you think of the new associates or the recent graduates coming out of law school, how do you think, have they been more prepared, less prepared, do you think than you were, or how do you think that they are doing?

**LM:** Well, I think they’ve probably been more prepared. We’ve been real pleased with our recent hires, in particular the ones that I’ve worked with, the ones that have been out one year, two years, three years. And I think that a lot of the acceptance we’ve had in them has come as a result of the fact that I think virtually every one of them was a summer associate and we got to know them. So, we knew what to expect with them, we knew what they could do. Still, 10 weeks, 12 weeks of practice doesn’t give you an exposure to the many different sides of those young associates but we’ve had no negative surprises, only positive ones just in terms of their abilities and just their working within the firm with the other lawyers and so forth.

**KEK:** That’s great, that’s great. Now, you’ve been here for almost 40 years or about 40 years, what kinds of changes have you seen in your time here?

**LM:** Well, lots of changes. I mentioned earlier about women in the practice. When I first started there were no women either in the firm I started with or in this firm when I first came. Now the law schools are probably, I don’t know the exact percentage, but much closer to 50-50. We’ve hired lots of women, we have women partners and associates including women who have been on our executive committee, management and so forth. So, that’s been a big change. Clearly technology has been a huge change. I remember doing all the research, and having to spend hours and hours not only in our firm library but going to Tulsa University Law School Library to find resources. I think one of the biggest changes is whenever you did research, particularly for a brief or something, you always had to shepardize each case and that was probably the most boring act. Now the computer research and so forth that job is much simpler.
The whole process of researching is different, whether it’s easier or not I can’t say because I don’t do a whole lot of computer research these days but seems like it would be easier.

KEK: Absolutely. Well, hear, hear on the shepardizing. I also remember shepardizing by hand and the law students today have no idea what it’s like. What, is there any particular case or issue that you’ve dealt with here at the firm during your time here that’s been particularly challenging or that strikes you as memorable?

LM: Well, going back to the Mullendore case from a litigation standpoint that was something that I’ll always remember, fascinating in terms of the characters involved as well as the legal issues that we had to deal with. There have been, from time to time major developments in the city. Home State Production Company fraud that came to light and we got involved in some of that representing the pension trust and so forth. Even today, SemGroup, we’ve become involved in that company’s operation. We’re now kind of in-house counsel for them or doing a lot of their business law practice, not the bankruptcy though, helping the various operating subsidiaries with legal issues that they have. But still we’re getting caught up in the whole thing with Kitsmanege’s group and their pursuit to take over and reorganize the company. Certainly Wal-Mart has been a significant influence. I worked on the first few acquisitions they did. When I first started doing work for them they were maybe 300 or 400 stores, and acquired a company that was headquartered out of Nashville which doubled their size. And another acquisition of a company which doubled the size of their Sam’s Clubs so seeing that company go from basically a small, regional, discount store chain to the greatest retailer in the world, largest employer in the world has been very fascinating. And we still do a lot of their real estate work. The real estate group has kept pretty busy with that.

KEK: Well, very interesting, very interesting. Well, what continues to motivate you Mr. Moore because you could certainly at this point, you could retire?

LM: And I’ve thought a lot about that but I just really enjoy doing the work. I spend about 60 to 70 percent of my time in the last several years working on mergers and acquisitions either our clients acquiring other companies or more often, our companies being acquired, our clients being acquired by larger companies. But that’s always an interesting process, the early negotiations over the terms, bringing everything together, due diligence and coming up with a final product and having a melding if you will of cultures and personalities. It’s really a fascinating process.

KEK: How difficult is it to do a merger and acquisition?

LM: Well, it’s a lot of work in that there are so many different aspects of a single company’s business and then when you have one company acquiring that particularly with the way that the laws have developed. You always have environmental law concerns, does the acquired company have any issues with environmental problems and so forth. Employment law, employment benefits, ERISA, and all of the complications in that area and the Warren Act and the employee
rights and so forth, Family Leave Act issues, pension funding issues. You really have to develop a team within the firm to approach, particularly in acquisitions; because you need expertise beyond what any one lawyer can develop on her or his own. So, it’s kind of coordinating the effort and making sure that various issues are being dealt with in a way that’s acceptable to both sides. It’s fun in that there’s a lot to it, there’s a lot of things to bring together, but it all comes together at a closing whereas some litigation will go on for years and years and you never know when it’s going to come to a head. And, a lot of times it’s settled at a point when both sides are very dissatisfied. But, another fascinating difference is that in the old days when we would have a closing, all the lawyers would gather on the day before the closing, get all the documents worked out, have a briefcase full of documents to sign. Then the clients would come in, sign everything the day before, we’d have a closing dinner, then the next day we would go through the ceremony. And, it was pretty much an event. With today’s technology, I’ve worked on numbers of deals where I’ve never met the other counsel in person. Had many phone conversations with them, e-mails, and that sort of thing but we’ll close a deal and I won’t get out of my office. Maybe go down to the office of the associate that was working with me on it but the counsel on the other side and the parties on the other side are often times just voices on the telephone and e-mails. I usually get their picture out of their firm Web site and see their background and so forth but that’s how we get to know one another. It makes things so much easier from an effort standpoint, traveling and so forth is not an issue, but it also takes away some of the getting to know other people at a different level or a more in-depth level than you do now.

KEK: Yeah, I was just going to ask you, do you think it makes the whole deal-making process, that whole mergers and acquisitions process more impersonal?

LM: I think it does, yes. There are still lots of times when you have to come together but yes, lots of deals I’ve done where to say that the lawyer on the other side is a voice in an e-mail, not a face.

KEK: Well, very interesting. Well, Mr. Moore is there anything that I have not asked you that you would like to say or that you would like to talk about?

LM: Well, no I don’t think there is. I think you’ve covered a lot of things, a lot of things that I wouldn’t have thought to say or key aspects about the development of the law in these years. As I’ve said several times, I’ve really enjoyed the practice. It’s been a challenging career but yet I feel like it’s very satisfying as well. I guess my one regret that I’ve got is that there aren’t more who feel that way. I do think that most of my contemporaries have a very similar sense but I do think that as has most other types of activities, it’s grown much more competitive and colder.

KEK: Have you gotten any advice along the way that you can remember or that has stuck with you?
**LM:** I had one law school professor that told me sometimes, “You’re never going to get rich working by the hour.” And I found that that was probably the greatest truism but I’ve still been able to live comfortably and enjoy life and I certainly don’t consider myself rich financially but I do consider myself rich in terms of the friendships and associations that I’ve developed over the years, just the satisfaction I’ve gotten out of the career.

**KEK:** That’s wonderful. And do you have any advice for new law school graduates?

**LM:** I think the only advice I would give them is only practice law if you enjoy practicing law, if it gives you a sense of satisfaction and a mental challenge. If it’s something that you’re doing simply to draw a paycheck, there are lots of other things that are going to be less stressful and easier to do for the same amount of money.

**KEK:** Very good. Is there anything else Mr. Moore?

**LM:** No, thank you for coming over here. It’s been enjoyable meeting you and talking with you. I wish you the best in your project.

**KEK:** Thank you so much. And thank you very much for your time, I realize your time is valuable, so thanks for your time today.

**LM:** You’re quite welcome.

**KEK:** Great.