

Margaret (née Lewis) Shirk (1917-)
Wife of David Shirk (1915-2009), Stanley Dunham's classmate
Oral history recorded April 24, 2013 (Run time 36.09)

Margaret Shirk was interviewed at Butler Community College on April 24, 2013, by Teresa Baumgartner, with Steve Cless as videographer. Margaret's daughter, Nancy, was also present for the interview. Margaret was recognized at the college by the El Dorado Rotary Club for a scholarship she established in her husband's name.

Margaret (née Lewis) Shirk (August 18, 1917-) tells the story of her husband, David Lee Shirk (1915-2009) who lived with his family in a boxcar during the Depression. The El Dorado Rotary Club loaned him \$60 to attend the University of Kansas. He saved the receipt for repayment of the interest-free loan all his life, and his wife established a scholarship fund in his memory. The couple spent a day with David's high school classmate, Stanley Dunham, in Hawaii. Margaret remembers Stanley bragging on his grandson, who he predicted would go far in life.

Note: More information about David Shirk can be found in the Clarence Kerns interview.

00.00-00.	Camera, sound adjustments
00.00-3.52	Names, families, and how she met her late husband: Margaret Shirk was born August 18, 1917. She was interviewed to share memories and information about her husband, David Lee Shirk, born November 14, 1915, class of 1935 from El Dorado High School. Margaret was born in Lawrence. Her grandfather moved there from Missouri during the Civil War, after a near miss from a bullet. He settled the land on which Margaret still lives. David was born in Salina, Kansas, but his family moved a great deal while he was growing up. She thinks his family moved to El Dorado when he was in the second grade. They met while they were both students at the University of Kansas. He worked at the filling station (one of three jobs he held concurrently while attending college) and her family were customers.
3.53-16.30	College and a Rotary Club loan, coaching in Augusta, Kansas: Margaret tells the story about how the Rotary Club came to loan him \$60, interest free, to be repaid in 5 years, so that he could go to the University of Kansas and play football. Instead of scholarships at the time, the football program agreed to help him secure a job. His major was first entomology, and then education. Margaret shares memories of Dr. Naismith and Fog Allen, both of whom were mentors and friends to David. Interestingly, David taught P.E. and coached three years in Augusta High School during the time Madelyn was in high school. He did not have her as a student, but he knew the family. The couple was married in 1940, he taught in Augusta from 1940-1943, and then was drafted in 1943. He served in the Army for four and ½ years, and was discharged as a Captain. Margaret said David never talked about his past much, and she didn't ask him. She recollects that he grew distant from

	<p>his family after he left home for college, and thinks that other members of the family drifted apart. He was the only one among his siblings who went to college.</p>
16.31-23.40	<p>David Shirk's connection to Stanley Dunham: Margaret talks about how Stanley Dunham should have graduated from high school in 1935 with the rest of his class. Some of Stanley's classmates have shared memories of an altercation between Stanley and the principal of the high school. Margaret's recollection was that the incident was reported in the newspaper, that Stanley had slapped the principal and that (perhaps as a result) Stanley did not graduate with his class, but did graduate later.</p> <p>Margaret remembers that she and David spent a day with Stanley when they went to Hawaii. Although she doesn't remember what Stanley and David talked about that day, she does remember him talking about the grandson who lived with them, who was in high school at the time. He also told them he was a "very smart kid," and predicted that he would go far in life. The two did not stay in touch after that visit. David died in November 2, 2009 at 93. David's career was an administrator, coach, and teacher during his career, and loved K.U. basketball later in life.</p>
23.41-36.09	<p>About growing up during the Depression: His family was very poor, lived in a boxcar, and went without food, except for free buttermilk, one day a week. She remembers a story about how the kids would make faces at the engineers on the trains, to goad them into throwing coal, which they would then take home and use for heat. It was this poverty that led Margaret to set up the scholarship in her husband's name, and she talks a little about that, and about the importance of paying back. David kept the receipt, which Margaret gave back to the Rotary Club when she established the scholarship. In her closing thoughts, Margaret shares a story about how she did not pick up her college diploma, and only received it recently.</p>