

Enoch Kelly Haney

Native son with a heart to serve people; as a politician, Seminole Chief, and an internationally recognized artist.

Chapter 01 - Introduction

Announcer: The only full blood American Indian to serve in the Oklahoma Legislature, Enoch Kelly Haney was elected as a state legislator and a senator. He became the Vice Chair of Appropriations his second term in the House before becoming the Chairman of the Appropriations committee in the Oklahoma State Senate. After over twenty years in the state legislature from 1980 to 2002, Kelly became the Principal Chief of the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma in 2005 and served a four-year term.

Kelly Haney is an internationally recognized artist who has exhibited throughout the United States, England, Austria, and Asia and has received the title of Master Artist of the Five Civilized Tribes. In addition to decades of success as a painter, Kelly became the creator of the 22-foot, bronze sculpture, The Guardian that was chosen to top the Oklahoma State Capitol Dome. He was also commissioned to create the Chickasaw Warrior at the Chickasaw Nation Headquarters in Ada, Oklahoma. This comes from an artist who was never formally trained in sculpting and started at age six by using the red clay from his front yard.

Chapter 02 - 9:04 Native American Family

John Erling: My name is John Erling. Today's date is July 20, 2011. Kelly, would you state your full name please?

Enoch Kelly Haney: My name is Enoch Kelly Haney.

JE: Your names, were you named after family members?

EH: No, Enoch is a biblical name. My parents, grandparents were ministers, and I come from a family of ministers and so, I guess, Enoch was the name they chose. Kelly is actually a

nickname. When all the men came back from World War Two, I used to play soldiers, and one of my uncles started calling me Combat Kelly from a comic book at that time. So, the name stuck and years later when I was getting ready to run for the legislature, nobody knew me by my given name. So, I had to legally change it to Enoch Kelly Haney.

JE: Okay, your date of birth and your present age?

EH: Born on November 12th, 1940. I'm seventy years old.

JE: Where are we recording this interview?

EH: At my home near Norman.

JE: Where were you born?

EH: I was born at home in Seminole County.

JE: At home?

EH: Right, about half a mile west of Seminole, Oklahoma.

JE: That was the norm, I guess, to be born...?

EH: It was. At the time, that was the norm.

JE: Your mother's name and her maiden name?

EH: Hattie Louise Haney.

JE: Where was she born?

EH: She was born in Seminole County as well.

JE: And, so, she grew up there?

EH: Right, both my parents did.

JE: And her heritage?

EH: She's on the Seminole rolls. However, historically, the Seminoles are made up of several different tribes that went to Florida at the time that the country was being settled in that area. They're just really rebels from, just, numerous tribes. And the first Seminole war in about 1814, thereabouts, I think for the convenience of the government they just called every Indian living in Florida, Seminoles. That's how we got the name Seminoles. That's only to say that we're actually from a tribe called the Miccosukees. So, historically, I understand, and my children understand as my mother taught us, that we're actually Miccosukees. That there was no Seminole to begin with, and I consider myself a Seminole now, but we are historically Miccosukee Indians.

JE: Are the Creeks involved with this story?

EH: Well, many of the groups that came down to create the core of the Seminole Tribe were actually from the Creek Confederacy. And the Creek Confederacy was similar to what I'm talking about with the Seminoles, they were made of several different towns and refinances of groups that existed in a cooperative state, much like the State of Oklahoma; having Ardmore, and Tulsa, and Sallisaw, and Guymon, and so forth. We, there are many different groups of people in the area that was designated as Creek Sovereignty.

JE: What was your mother like? Describe her.

EH: She spoke our native language mostly.

JE: Which was?

EH: Seminole. Seminoles and Creeks speak similar language, there's just little difference in them. We call it the Muskogee language. She spoke that mostly. She preferred to speak in her native language because she could express herself better in that language. There'd be times where she'd be speaking along, and then she'd just start speaking our native language which I understood very well, because she was just more comfortable doing that. She would appear like she was really not learned, but she was in her sixties and unbeknownst to us, she studied and got her GED. I thought, wow. (laughter) To me, that's a commitment to education, and that's an example for my children. The son that you met earlier, John, that's my youngest son. He and my other son, William, are both starting Law School at the UCLA. So, we've come a long way from my daddy who went through the third grade, and my mother, who went through the eighth.

JE: About your father, and his name, please?

EH: William Woodrow Haney.

JE: He grew up in Seminole?

EH: He did. In pretty much the same area as my mother did.

JE: Could you describe him for us?

EH: Uh, there's different ways to explain both my parents, because there are the parents I grew up as a child, and then there's my parents as I understood them as adults and working and being who they are. So, it's just like talking about two different people sometimes. But, most of the people who knew my dad, knew him as a storyteller. He was a really fine-looking man. In fact, he made the Navy flutes. He played them. He played at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. He played with the Tulsa Philharmonic. He did some bits in some movies. He taught language at Bacone College, and he had a third-grade education. Which means to me, having a formal education doesn't mean you're smarter than anybody, just means you had the willingness and the commitment to go to school, which you should, to get that education.

JE: Was he a minister?

EH: He was. He was a minister for many years. My Grandfather was a minister, as my father was. In fact, I guess they all assumed, with a name like Enoch, I was going to be, and I studied for the ministry. And I was in the ministry for a couple of years, and then decided that my life and service to people was in a different area. So, ultimately, I became an elected official and I saw my position in the legislature as my ministry, and I was there to serve people. So, I didn't, I guess really think about having any personal motive other than being able to help other people.

JE: Yeah. Your Grandfather, what was his name?

EH: Willy. Willy Haney. And he had an interesting history. Early in his life he was put in the federal penitentiary near, or at, Fort Leavenworth. I suspect it was there. No one ever knew why he went, but there are all these wild stories. There all different. At the time...I had a gentleman, a Non-Indian, in Seminole once tell me when I was telling the story, I said, "We don't know what he went for." He said, "Kelly, at that time, I doesn't matter what he did. He was an Indian. They would find some way to get him in prison." And I think the truth was, what we found out, he was thrown in jail for a fifteen-dollar hot check. But that's the way they treated Indians at that time.

JE: Do you know how long he was in prison?

EH: I don't think he was in very long. I do remember, the story was, he told many people, that he got at the same time that, I think Evert Younger, one of the outlaws of old...

JE: Yeah?

EH: I think he got out the same day as he did and he said, "Evert went to California, and I walked home." (laughter). He was kind of an outlaw himself in a way. But, he became a minister in his last forty years of his life.

JE: Did you get to know him?

EH: I did. I was about twelve or so when he died.

JE: Doesn't he have a Smithsonian Institution Project?

EH: He did. In 1913 to a little past 1930, he wrote some stories for, I forget the man's name. But, anyway, he wrote myths, legends, stories, just little stories. In our way, we call them. "[word in Seminole language]." Which means, "little stories." He would write these stories. He wrote in English. He wrote in the old Seminole language, then he wrote in the Muskogee language, which my dad and I, and he better than I, could translate the Muskogee language. And to my knowledge, he never went to school. But, he wrote for a number of years, and I found those stories and I've got copies of them. I hired an interpreter, and I was going to do the paintings, but we never got around to doing the full stories.

JE: Do you have those so that you could, at some time, have them placed somewhere?

EH: Uh, I don't know. Well, I don't know if I'm going to have time to do that anymore.

Truth is, I've got several other projects I'm working on now.

JE: Right, but wasn't there an oral history project that he was...?

EH: My father was. My father was active in storytelling. He's the storyteller. He passed it on to me, I do the same thing. My son, who graduated from OU, he has a degree in Creative Writing. So, we collaborate on a book that we're writing right now. I tell the story and he puts in this beautiful language that he knows how to create with words. The book is almost finished. The first manuscript, we plan to take a look at that. And I have producers in Hollywood, that I know personally, who...So, they take a look at it and kind of help us along with it.

JE: So, the object of that book?

EH: it's called *The Light Horsemen*. Basically, it's the story of the law enforcement are of the five civilized tribes. In this case, more specifically, the Seminole Tribe. To the native people, the Light Horsemen were what the Texas Rangers were considered the mounted police, but they were an arm of the law for the tribes who were feared by the criminals of the time. Because they knew these guys didn't have pity (laughter).

JE: Was it your father, or your Grandfather, that served as Chief of the Seminole?

EH: My Grandfather did in the forties, early forties.

JE: Willy Haney?

EH: Willy Haney. He was selected, actually. At that time we didn't elect our own chiefs. He was selected by the President at that time to serve as Chief.

JE: President of the United States...

EH: Right.

JE: selected him?

EH: So, he has a...I don't know where the document is, my uncle used to have it, uh, that declaration which was a pretty good-sized document.

JE: Which Grandfather was a minister in the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference?

EH: He was. Willy and my father.

JE: Both?

EH: Both were ministers, right.

JE: It's no wonder, then, they thought, you should be a minister too, right?

EH: Yeah, in fact, he got my local preacher's license when I was still in college and just called me and told me he did it. Funny thing though, it changed my behavior, because I thought I'd better straighten up (laughter) But I always knew they wanted me to do that, but it didn't work out that way.

Chapter 03 - 5:43

Green Corn Dance

John Erling: Let's just talk a little bit about the Seminoles here, and maybe our conversation can lead to...people listening to this, they'll want to do some reading. Seminoles currently are living, is it in three states, Florida, Oklahoma, and Arkansas?

Enoch Kelly Haney: Well, no, basically there's Seminoles in Oklahoma and Florida. The largest contingencies of Seminoles are in Oklahoma. There are about 17,000 Seminoles that belong to the Seminole Nation. They don't all live here. But, probably 65% of the

Seminoles live in the five-county area, in an around Seminole County. The rest were moved to different parts of the country under a relocation program by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I don't know if you're familiar with that.

JE: Yes.

EH: But anyway, it was just an effort to make us white (laughter). But many of the people didn't stay long, many came back, but many of those Seminoles stayed in those different cities in like in Dallas, and Denver, some places in California, Albuquerque. Some stayed and made a life there. Wilma Mankiller, in another area on this website, talks about her relocation, and they went to California. The Seminoles, then, came from that, you've referred to it, from that Creek Confederation of tribes in the early eighteenth century.

EH: Mhm, right. That was most of it, not all of them, because there were other tribes in that area: the Delaware, the Shawnees, and Cherokee. It was just kind of the rebels of that whole area that did not want to conform to the European concepts of life that went to Florida. At one time I counted thirty or thirty-one different groups that were in Florida at the time we, quote, "became Seminoles."

JE: What does Seminole mean?

EH: I don't know. There's different descriptions of what it's supposed to mean, but I really don't know.

JE: In my research, it says Seminole means, runaways.

EH: I've heard that. I've heard some other things.

JE: Okay.

EH: I can't speak to that per say.

JE: In the Seminoles then, the main religious event would be the Green Corn Dance?

EH: That is one of them. We call them stomp dances, is what they normally call 'em for short.

Today we still have those about four times a year. They're not set at a specific time. Whenever the medicine man decides it's time to have a dance, he'll send out seven days ahead. They used to do it with sticks. I don't know how they do it today. Probably iPhones (laughter).

But they used to just send out sticks to count down the number of days before the...

JE: Send sticks to...?

EH: To members. And just says, "well, oh, we've got seven days until the stomp dance." That's kind of how they counted it down.

JE: Okay. What is the event? Can you describe it?

EH: It's a traditional ceremonial dance of the Seminoles and Creeks. Actually, the five tribes. Ours is still pretty closed. We can take still photos, but you can't take movies there for instance, which I would love to. The other thing is that the nucleus of the religious part is a ceremonial circle. In the middle of that is a fire. We have four arborists. And Non-Indian people are not allowed inside that circle. They can sit of the outside and look and observe,

but in order to participate and to dance you have to be native. At least in our tribe it's still pretty strict. I don't go as often as I once did, but I have been on a number of occasions.

JE: Is that event a cleansing event?

EH: It is. One part of it is. Annually, at the Green Corn, they do have a cleansing. They take medicine and take baths and so forth. And part of the ceremony is to do, they call it, "sabbi [uncertain of spelling]," which means, "to scratch." So, they'll scratch four marks here, four here, maybe four in the back. And it's just to show that they participated, they took the medicine. And I think it probably applies here as it did when I was about ten, eleven years old. I got into a fight at the church. My mother took me to, what we call "the old lady." And we said that respectively with the old people. The old lady held me here, and my mother did this and pulled my sleeve up and the old lady took a pin and went down my arm; four scratches like that. Well, I'm trained at that time not to show pain. I was hurting.

JE: And, how old were you?

EH: I was about ten. About the age of my grandson. It was stinging, but it wasn't deep. You could see the blood come out. And the philosophy was that the reason I misbehaved was because I had bad blood. So, when they let that blood release and it was no longer there. I tell people, "It must've worked, because I was pretty good for a long time after that." (laughter) But that's basically the same thing as the Green Corn. That's like a new year for us. It's a ceremony that signifies a new year. There's certain foods that we're not supposed to eat in that period of time. Then they take ceremonies and so forth, so it's still held in a very sacred way. But, it's not public. It's not like pow-wows. Where you go to a pow-wow and you go see people dancing. It's not like that at all. And your behavior at those ceremonial games must be beyond approached, and young men and young women can't be getting together for any kind of intimate relationships and you can't be drinking on the ground. It's like going to church. People probably miss that part about those, like they just go, but it's really pretty much a serious thing, although they have fun and fellowship and so forth.

JE: So, is then the ceremony to God, or...?

EH: Well, it is, it's the same creator. You see Muslims say there's one God (laughter). Well, in my life, in my belief, there is one God. And for native people, a thousand years ago there was this one God. We just worshipped in a different way. In fact, fire is critically important to our native people. I once asked a friend of mine, not too many years ago, who was active at the grounds, "what's the fire mean to you?" He said, "well, the old people tell us, 'that's the way you talk to God,'" So that was partly what that fire was about, was speaking to the creator.

JE: Mhm.

EH: Of course, symbolically, it's the smoke and so forth.

Chapter 04 - 6:55**English Second Language**

John Erling: You had brothers and sisters?

Enoch Kelly Haney: I've had two brothers and two sisters. One brother is deceased, and my younger sister is deceased. I have a sister and a brother and one adopted brother.

JE: A little bit about your childhood. Your first language, was it Seminole?

EH: It was a combination of Seminole and bad grammar (laughter). My parents had gone through that period of educational experiences when they spoke the native language they were reprimanded. I mean physically by teachers, and that was a common occurrence among the early day education of Indian children. And they remembered that. They didn't want us to ever speak the language. But there we spoke, and we understood them perfectly. And all of my relatives spoke and all of my play buddies, they spoke, and I couldn't help but learn. And I would speak, but I never spoke around my parents because they didn't ever want me to speak, so I never did.

JE: So, your parents did not want you to speak...

EH: Right, they didn't want us to speak the language.

JE: The Seminole language?

EH: Right.

JE: Why do you think that was?

EH: Same reason I'm telling you. They just tried to protect us from, quote, "white educational systems," who reprimanded children brutally whenever they spoke our language.

JE: They didn't want it to become nature to you.

EH: They didn't want us to...

JE: So, you'd slip.

EH: The fact is, my mother didn't learn until late in life that I could speak the language (laughter).

JE: You kept it from her?

EH: I kept it from her, yeah, and I just accidentally spoke to her. She only spoke to me in the native language, even in her old age. She'd speak to me, and then one day I just responded to her, and she looked at me and said, "did you talk?" I said, "Yeah." My brother Bill, we called him Junior, and I said, "Yeah, and Junior speaks too." "He does?!" Ya know? (laughter) We actually ended up with bad grammar. They tried to teach us what English they knew. So, I had a difficulty in school really trying to learn English in a proper way, because the other students grew up with English. It was still the second language to us, English was.

JE: When your parents talked to you in Seminole, you had to respond in English.

EH: I did, yeah.

JE: And keep it from them.

EH: Right.

JE: And that really was their way of protecting you.

EH: Right.

JE: They didn't want you to be disciplined in school.

EH: And we were respectful of their wishes. Let me tell you, in the seventies I was on the council for the Seminoles and the man chief and some other things associated. Whenever someone would come down from Washington to explain a grant or a new program, people would stand up and say, "[phrase in Seminole language], Kelly," which means to interpret for us. I kind of struggled a little bit, but I usually got through enough to understand what was going on.

JE: Your first school, where did you go to school?

EH: Prairie Valley. Which was three miles west of Seminole. It was a small rural school. It's been consolidated since about 1965.

JE: Was that what you would call a one-roomed school house?

EH: No, it wasn't. It was a pretty good-sized school.

JE: Or was it a bigger...? Yeah.

EH: Yeah.

JE: The first house you remember?

EH: We had a pretty nice home. Actually, my Grandfather had the benefit of having property that had oil on it. So he got oil leases. My mother tells me that he used to take care of several families at one time who were poor. It was during the depression times, that he would take care of several families. As long as they worked. Deal was as long as y'all work, you get to stay here and I'll give you a place to live and feed you, and that's what he did. But, I don't know if oil just played out, or whatever, but income stopped coming in at one point in time. It's probably shortly before my mother married my dad. He had some funds left and when he died they divided it up among the children. And my mother did probably the wisest thing, she went and bought some property, and bought a pretty nice home. So, I grew up in a really nice home. I mean, I wasn't big, it wasn't brick or anything, but it still had a wood stove and you still had to pour water from a well and all that, ya know? That's what it was in Oklahoma, that wasn't the Indian way, that was the way of early Oklahoma.

JE: For you, this would have been in the early forties.

EH: Right. And again, it was probably one of the nicer homes in the community that I grew up in. I guess later though, after the war, my dad came back and tried farming and we just couldn't make that go and so we moved in town and that's when we got poor (laughter).

JE: Your father served in the military?

EH: Right. In World War Two.

JE: In World War Two.

EH: There were only maybe two or three men that I can recall in our community who did not go, but mostly for conditions which would have restricted them from getting in. In fact, my dad had restrictions from being in, but he kept going and harassing till he got in. Most of the men went to the military. Native people do that. A large percentage of native people always go to the call of the government as it relates to war.

JE: And I suppose that happened then, they went in when Pearl Harbor was bombed, and then there was that major influx.

EH: Right, yeah. Right, right.

JE: Where did he end up? Your father.

EH: In Germany. He said that he ended up in Germany at the later part when they were cleaning out.

JE: I used to sit around after they came back and I must have been about five or six, and I was sitting around camp in front of a hole they would build a little fire, and the men would sit around, just like in the movies, ya know, and just sat around and they spoke in our language and they would just laugh and talk about their experiences in combat. I mean they didn't talk bad about it they just had the biggest laughs. I guess they were scared at the time, obviously. Now they can talk about it and talk about their experiences and so forth. That was interesting to sit and listen to that.

JE: Oh yeah, it would have been great to have had recorded that.

EH: Oh yeah (laughter). We had no such thing probably.

JE: No. They were of course so proud to serve their country.

EH: Oh, they always are.

JE: Yeah.

EH: Yeah.

JE: Some of your artwork reflects that spirit that we're talking about.

EH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We're raised that way. We're raised that way as a child. Let me go back just a little bit here. But, when I first ran for the legislature in 1980, I went to this farmers house and I knocked on his door. He came and he had overalls on, and I said, "Mr. Burgess, I don't know if you remember me, but I'm Kelly Haney, and I'm running for the legislature and I'd like to have your vote." He looked at me and called his wife, and said, "hey, Mama, come here. There's a young man out here wants us to vote for him for the legislature. It's that young man that used to steal our watermelon." (laughter) So, everything comes back, but he was right, because, ya know, we all were down at the church and the church was completely different than they are today. We would go up the backside through the woods and hills, and just for the fun of it, he had the watermelon patch, so broad daylight,

we'd hit the ground, we're just little bitty guys, we'd crawl up there, clip one off, roll it back, just to see if we could get away with it. Well, apparently he was watching us. Another experience is, my cousin, who went to Vietnam, and when he got shot, what he did to stop the bleeding, he got some wet mud and just packed it down and tied it. Well, that's what we're taught. When we have injuries, just put mud on it and let it absorb and tie it down, so he did what he was taught to do.

JE: Yeah, and it worked out alright for him?

EH: It worked out. He said, "It was a little dirty," but it saved his life. (laughter)

Chapter 5 - 6:00

No Choice

John Erling: Because you're an artist now today, when did your art interests begin to develop?

Enoch Kelly Haney: I have been an artist all of my life. The creator made me to be an artist. I had no choice in not being an artist. I was an artist before I knew what an artist was. That's one of the most asked questions of me, about my art career. But, the one person that could answer that was my mother. And I asked her one day, and she said, "Well, when you were two years old, I would give you a Crayola and you would draw what you saw." So, it's a natural gift. Very, very young. I don't even know I was in school and we would take clay and I could make sculptures out of it. So, they say, "Well, how long you been sculpting?" "Well, sixty-five years." All of that wasn't my career for most of my life, but that's when it started. And I was thinking about it the other day, there's a huge rock that we sit on and I started drawing and sketching with a little nail on that rock. It's over there by my sister's house, I thought about getting it and bringing it over here. Thought I could do that, or go down to the river, at the time, the Canadian flowed freely and a lot of water families would go down together and fish. It had large sand areas. So I would go and like they did at the beach, sit down and make large heads and things, whatever I could use to make things with. Whatever my image was, I could create it. Back in those early days, everybody had a knife. Not for protection as much as you need it to whittle on things. So, I learned how to do that. I've been doing art all of my life, just at different stages based on my general knowledge and material that I happened to have at hand.

JE: Your mother obviously encouraged you. She saw that talent.

EH: Well, yeah, she did. Way I look at my parents is that my mother is the one who would keep giving me art supplies. They weren't those expensive ones, they were just very cheapy stuff, but I could use them. She'd bring it, and I would continue to use them. That's how

I developed that skill. And with my dad, my dad was a visionary. He just always thought about projects and doing this and doing that. Probably why he got to do all the things he did. He probably didn't have the background or education to do it, he just did it. That's why I trained myself. That's the way I trained my children. That's why they're up in UCLA. No telling where they'll go.

JE: Mhm.

EH: But you just keep reaching out. So he's the visionary and he was an artist as well.

JE: Okay.

EH: My dad was a flute maker and he made jewelry and so forth. He made a lot of things. My grandfather, from the cornfields and get those corn shucks, he'd make little animals for us. And my grandmother took yarn and other stuff and make kittens and all kinds of things. So, I really come from a family of artists.

JE: Did your brothers or sisters show any of that talent?

EH: Yeah, my brother, Bill, did. In fact, he wasn't trained but he could make a living at it and that's all he did. Well, he could have done much better, but satisfied him in life was to take care of his family. He was a sculpture. He worked on alabaster. So he was a visionary. He always had new projects in mind. He recorded a number of songs, his flute playing. He developed some curriculum for language programs and so forth. He was just always looking out there. That's what I picked up. I'm the only full blood Indian that's ever been in the legislature. Well, a lot of people told me I couldn't do it. I couldn't tell myself that. You just keep going, and that's what I teach all them, ya know? You'll never know till you try it.

JE: Right.

EH: My mother, she was a worker. My daddy was a visionary, but my mom was a worker. From her I got this ability to work hard. And that's what I did, I constantly worked.

JE: It's a great combination to have.

EH: It is!

JE: As a child in the home, did they tell you stories?

EH: My dad did, he was the one who was mostly the storyteller in my family. The movies, in the early days, stories of native people, would have you believe that the old Indian man told the stories, but in most cases it was the old women. He used to start out his stories sayin, "this is what my grandma told me." Whenever we talk about it back home, say, "this is what the old women," and again we used that word respectively, it wasn't used in a bad way. Much of the stories that were kept, were kept by women. They really had a high place in our society in doing that. Men got the credit for it. (laughter)

JE: You say stories you were told. Is there a very simple story that, uh...?

EH: Uh, one that just comes to mind when I think of my great-grandmother. My father told the story that, first of all, my grandmother, her name was Janie Chupkle, and the word

“chupkle” means tall usually. People tell me who knew her, I didn’t know her, said that she was a very tall woman. And they credit her (laughter)... She’s the one who taught y’all to be like you are. I said, “what do you mean?” She said, “your ability to speak and talk in front of people and so forth,” said, “well, that’s where you got it.” I’m sure there’s somebody before her, but they credit it to her. She was also a medicine woman. She’s the person you went to, to get treated for different kind of illnesses and so forth. My father was being trained to be a medicine person. You really don’t obtain that stature until you’re somewhere in your forties or something. It’s not something you get at twenty-four. It’s kind of a life learning experience. Well, anyway, my dad said he was playing, and his grandma asked him to go get this certain kind of herbs that he knew to pick. He was down at the pond, so he picked it, and took it back to her. She was treating someone for a headache and was severe. She took it and made her tea. She would feel the head of this person and found a soft spot and she had four little sharp objects and she’d prick it with each one four times, and then she’d put this solution in her mouth and swish it around and then [blowing sound] all over his head. He got up and felt better. But, one thing that I’m aware of in that kind of medicine is also its philosophy, its playing with the mind as much as anything. But, you know, doctors do that today and psychologists do that today. But, that’s what they’re part psychologists because there are other practices of medicine that I’m familiar with where they use that concept so they can change your mind, they can probably change as much as your illness that you might have.

Chapter 06 - 5:35

Great Grandpa

John Erling: So many of these stories were about grandparents and family members, and what was a perfect day for you as a child? When would that have been, eight, nine, ten years old?

Enoch Kelly Haney: Right. Oh, probably a little earlier than that. I lived in the country so I would go walk in the country. My dad was off to war my mother did what she did. But, someone taught me how to fish. There’s a nice running stream, which is not there today, but used to be. And as long as I had a hook and a little sinker and a cork, and my knife, I could take one of these limbs and I’d go sat down at the creek and just throw my line out there and mostly got catfish, and there were some perch, and bring it in and take it back up to the house. They would clean it and cook it. And but that was kind of what I did. I lived out in the woods. Friends of mine, later years, said, “why don’t you go camping?” I said, “I did all the camping I want to do as a kid.” (laughter) But I pretty much lived out

there. Just loved being in the woods. See, the other story too, there are many, many stories. I was telling my grandmother one day, "I saw a wolf down there at the creek," and she reprimanded me real bad. Speak the other language, she said, "You don't call it a wolf." Okay. "Call it, [word in the Seminole language]," which means, "great-grandpa." Well, in our way of believing, we all belong to a clan. I'm of the sweet potato clan. My great grandfather was of the wolf clan. So, we interact with nature as one. And I still do, so whenever I saw a wolf I always referred to it as [phrase in the Seminole language], my great grandpa. And you could talk to him. Used to tell me, said, "you get lost in the woods, find him and he'll lead you out of the woods." So I was looking for that whenever I would travel in the woods. I was always looking. In case I got lost, I was going to look for my grandpa take me out. The other day, there was a hawk that landed back here; beautiful. (laughter) My daughter, who was here, said, "grandpa is here." (laughter)

JE: You passed the stories on, huh? Right.

EH: You know, cause, we pass them on. It's the way we believe them, and it connects us with all of creation today. That's what's different about our Indianness. We've studied philosophy, theology, so we understand those things. But also we have a way of believing about spirituality in our own way. My daughter, she texted me and said, "Dad, I saw seven hawks today." She knows it's her grandpa. Well then she's going to the lake a few days later, she said, "I saw those seven hawks again today." So, I don't know, I'm thinking about that. I'm trying to figure out if there's something behind that. Cause to me, it would be. But it goes further than that, see, it goes among native people who are taught that the extended family, ours, and Mesa, what, it was in Arizona, at the Hopi Reservation. They live the way they did five hundred years ago on this ledge. And they were having a dance, there's several old men sitting up there. So, I sat down with them, and I don't smoke generally, I used to. And so I went, and I said, "can I have a cigarette?" Cause that connects me with them. Then I asked them, I said, "what clan are you?" He said, "I'm parrot." I said, "oh, you're my father." And another one said, "Well, he's a cayote." And I said, "Oh, you're my grandpa." And so forth, so within fifteen minutes I was sitting in a group of people I was related to; never seen in my life. They understood, I understood how that relation worked. That's too bad that we're losing much of that way of life, but, you know, that's the way life evolves.

JE: Explain this clan. How did that develop and why are you of one clan, and you're not of another?

EH: I, you know, I don't know the origin. Now, it probably goes back hundreds of years so that whenever you're a member of a clan, you follow your mother's side. My mother is sweet potato. She's also beaver, so it's kind of the mixed clan. I could be one of the other. My father, because his mother was bird clan, he's bird clan, you see, and that's how it works.

JE: So, does the clan go beyond Native American boundaries?

EH: I think it goes beyond. And that might be one of those things that connects some of the tribes. Not all of the tribes believe this, because there are over five hundred different tribes, with different orientations and understanding of life and understanding of the creator and the spiritualism and all this. They all look at it differently. The only thing that I have found, that kind of pulls us together, is the concept of the circle. All things are in the circle. One of the important things for me, and the beauty of the circle, is all people are of the circle. Which means all people are of equal value. No one is better than the other or anybody less. You're all of equal value. It's also broken into four pieces for the four seasons. Talks about the birth through life and the cycle continues to go even in death. The cycle then goes through new births and so forth. That circle seems to be one of the concepts that most spiritualist Native people gravitate toward. Whenever we were doing the flag paths at the state capital in the back, I wrote the legislation for that and got the funding and we built that, and the day that we were there, I think Frank Keating, at the time, was governor. We were out there having the ceremony, and as we were concluding, somebody said, "Look. Look straight up over this plaza." I guess it had to be a hawk, it looked like an eagle, but it was just circling straight across. It was just circling. It went into the clouds and we didn't see it again. My only response, which is a natural response, is, "Oh, that's my daddy." I didn't think about it. Now, other people probably didn't know what I was talking about, but I guarantee you most of the Native people who were sitting there understood what I meant.

JE: Your daddy's clan was a bird.

EH: The bird clan.

JE: What you said when you were in Arizona, the Hopis clan concept was there with the Hopis. So you were able to connect with them?

EH: It was there, right. Right, right.

Chapter 07 - 6:50

Methodist Church

John Erling: Speaking of the spiritual world, you were born into the Methodist Church.

Enoch Kelly Haney: Right.

JE: Let's talk about that. As a youngster than in church, was that the Seminole language that was used?

EH: It was. My whole life was surrounded by the language. There was the church, the praying, the singing, conversations. That's why I couldn't help but learn. I mean, you're just around it all the time. That was my life growing up. Talk about growing up Indian, to me, that's what it means, not drawing water from the well, or stuff, everybody did that. I mean, that was the way of life in Oklahoma. But there was this uniqueness about us as Native people with our language and our belief systems that set us apart. And still set us apart because beside the fact that John is getting ready to go to UCLA with his Columbia, he started and got the Indian Club going real strong and got the pow-wow going on, so he still is proud of who he is and for what he understands about it, he's able to put it into new venues now with people who've never seen that before.

JE: So, you're saying he graduated from Columbia in New York and now is gonna go to Law School at UCLA.

EH: Right, right, right.

JE: The church became a big part of your life.

EH: It was. In fact, it probably was the part that anchored my life. In a different way, just the spiritualism and the belief in a life after death, and a belief in a creator. But, having said that, and I've studied, and I've studied a lot, uh, different religious readings and so forth. Both of the Christian and other major religions of the world, because I have an interest in trying to understand the human behavior of major religious groups. I mean, it's astonishing to me what they believe, in terms of love, and they go out and kill people all the time. That upsets me to no end, and I think, well how'd he do that? I mean, you talk about Christians who do that. You talk about Muslims who do that. You talk about almost any group of people who do that. That really does confuse me. But, my father, when I was probably eighteen, I'd finished high school, we were walking out in the woods as we used to do, and he picked up a piece of stick and he said, "Kelly, everything you believe about God and about life is what I believe, except from this day forward, it's not yours." He broke the stick like that. He said, "you must make it your own from here on." So, my concept and my belief in religious and spiritual understanding is far, far different than the one he had.

JE: Because of the studying you did of all religions.

EH: Right, and different experiences. His was right for him, and it was right for me at the time, but Dad gave me the freedom to go and be who I am and be comfortable with my beliefs. The same thing I say to John when he went off to school. He was always with me at different churches and native churches he'd sat in. But, I told him that once you go to college you'll be challenged with all kinds of information and your life will be challenged, your beliefs will be challenged. I said, "that's okay. But, from here on you have to make all of your life your own understanding and experience that."

JE: You're kind of releasing him, as your father did to you that you can form your own thoughts. It doesn't have to be me.

EH: Right, right. Right, right, that's true, yeah. But, it's hard not to do that when he's still around occasionally from time to time, not to be the father. So, I try not to say much to him in that way.

JE: Yeah, I'm sure it's helped you and your education.

EH: They did, they gave me a scholarship, basic scholarship, it wasn't much. But they gave me enough to get started. But, when I was at OCU, somewhere along the line I decided, I don't think I want to be a minister. I didn't have anything against it. So, I gave them back the scholarship. Now I had two kids, and I didn't have money. I'm not a person of wealth, still not. But, I work. I was born on a farm. I'm a hard worker, still am today. I worked at JC Penny Company, worked fifty-five, sixty hours a week. I paid for my own education at OCU of all places. Even at that time it was \$75.00 an hour, fifty years ago. That was a lot of money. It was difficult and hard, but I got through. I did do this one thing though: I wrote to the Bureau of Indian Affairs asking for a scholarship. They sent me a letter saying they approved it, and I looked at it awhile. I wrote them back a nice letter saying, well, thank you for offering a scholarship, but why don't you give it to somebody who really needs it. In retrospect, there wasn't anybody needed it more than I did. But, that was just the way I think.

JE: Why would you do that?

EH: Well, because I was taught not to take anything from anybody that was free like that. We never took welfare or anything. We just didn't believe that way. You just go out there and you work for it, and you work for what you get. Nobody owes you anything. That's the way my parents taught me to be. That's how I am today, and I passed it on to my child. They don't ever ask anything of me. Usually, they take care of themselves. I've got six kids now. I had a seventh one, he died when he was eighteen. But, he had a son that was born a month after his death and he's twenty-eight now, and he's a banker. You know, we keep pushing the bar up and keep on moving forward.

JE: Yeah.

EH: Let me go back for just a minute. One of the things about the Methodist Church that helped me, I thought about that one day while I was sitting in the legislature and I chaired the Appropriations Committee. Which is the most powerful committee in government. So, I'm sitting there thinking how'd I learnt to do this? Well, it just dawned on me, I learned how to do this in church because we had all these youth programs in the Indian Missionary Conference. I just assumed leadership when I was fifteen. A lot of groups, and they would call me to different churches, to organize their youth groups and so forth. So I was at a very early age going around helping organize and one of the things we taught was Robert's Rules of Order among other things. I taught them how to conduct meetings. So, when I came to the legislature, I mean, that was just there. I didn't go to formal school for

that. It was just there, picked it up. So the church helped me get there, and it's helped me connect across the world. I mean, I was on the Board of Directors, the Board for Trustees of OCU for ten years. So I was actively involved in the Methodist Church in that way. I believe in the good things they do. Then I've gone to other countries on their behalf, the students and so forth.

JE: On behalf of the Methodist Church?

EH: OCU particularly.

JE: Oklahoma City University?

EH: Right.

JE: What high school did you graduate?

EH: Prairie Valley High School. Went to school in Shawnee for quite a while. Whenever we left the farm we didn't have anywhere near the luxury we had when I was growing up in Seminole. In fact, at one point in our life, we lived in one room. There's six or seven of us. We just slept on the floor.

JE: What age would you have been then?

EH: Oh, probably seven, eight, something like that. But, you know, I never felt bad about that. I always knew that my folks were doing the best they could and that they loved us. And that was it, that's all I needed. I always looked around, and I thought the other Indian kids, they were living in similar situations, so it wasn't unusual for us to live that way.

JE: So, why did they move?

EH: Well, just didn't have any money.

JE: From Seminole?

EH: Yeah, once we got there, all the financial resources had disappeared, so. They worked, both my parents worked, but they weren't making much. They just did the best they could.

Chapter 08 - 4:00

Virginia Brown

John Erling: Let's bring it to Junior High to High School.

Enoch Kelly Haney: Well, I went to Prairie Valley through the third grade, then I went to Shawnee for the rest of my years through the tenth grade. Shawnee Public School was where I first was introduced to art classes. Didn't know they had such things. In fifth grade. I remember the teacher's name. In fact, I remember the art class. And I remember Gainsborough paintings, you know, *Blue Boy*, *The Whistler's Mother*, *Mona Lisa*, *drawbridge*. Two weeks ago John and I were in the Louvre and we saw the *Mona Lisa*. I've

seen it for the third time. I have seen the originals of every one of those paintings from somewhere in the world. Isn't that something?

JE: Yeah.

EH: Then, in Junior High, I took art class with a friend. He became a friend of mine, he's still living. Then went to High School and took what was called trade art. I took it in the afternoons, I think, like, three hours. Then my parents decided to move back to Seminole, and I didn't want to go because I wanted to play basketball and I wanted to take art. So, I got a one-room apartment when I was fifteen in Shawnee and had everything I needed except the bathroom, which was at the far end of the hall, and one refrigerator in the middle of the hall. I did that for a semester. So, off and on since fifteen, I've been kind of on my own. My parents were always there if I need them. Then I went back to Seminole I think for the last year, year and a half or something like that in high school and finished at this little school.

JE: What year did you graduate?

EH: '59.

JE: From Prairie Valley High School?

EH: Right, right. Actually, I went an extra semester. (laughter) And the reason was that when I was in junior high in Shawnee I got mad at the English teacher. I did real well in school, but I got mad and I just, I'm not going to school any more, at least the English class, so I just quit. While I didn't know until I was getting ready to graduate and superintendent, he called me Enoch, and said, "Enoch, you don't have a grade in English. Can you explain it?" And I kind of laughed, and I said, "Well, yeah, and I guess I'm gonna have to try to explain this to my dad now." I said, "I quit going to school." I said, "She used a derogatory term with me, and I didn't like it, so I just quit." I heard so much when I was growing up about things like that. It still sticks with me, and hopefully, it's getting better, it's a lot better than it used to be. But I had to put up with a lot of that crap.

JE: She called you a name?

EH: She called me a name.

JE: It's referring to your Indianness I suppose?

EH: Right. Uh huh, yeah. I just, I don't need this, so I quit. Now, I was making good grades in there because I picked up pretty good.

JE: And nobody came around to ask you why or what happened or anything?

EH: Nobody asked, no. They didn't know I could, I just stopped going to her class. (laughter)

JE: But, you stayed in school?

EH: I stayed in school. I got the rest of it. I just didn't like her.

JE: But, you didn't like her, right.

EH: But the, my following year, my tenth-grade year, there was a teacher there I give a lot of credit for my success as an artist. Her name was Virginia Brown. And she knew I read all

my books for give book reports and if I was giving oral reports, I'm from an oral family, told stories, I could tell stories...I could make them funny you know. But then if she asked me to write it, I would still have trouble, see? She said, "Enoch, I know you're reading your books. I want you to do me three drawings for every book your reading." One of them was the Ides of March, which meant I had to go to the library and study the clothing, regalias, architecture, even did some work on the typography. I went through three or four books getting all this together for my drawing. Well, that's the same system I use today when I do art.

JE: And, that that teacher would think out of the box.

EH: Yeah, right.

JE: She knew you couldn't write. She knew you were an artist.

EH: Right.

JE: And gave you a way that you're using to this very day.

EH: Right, right. She was a teacher.

JE: Yeah, that's a teacher.

EH: I was on one of those talk shows years later. I had my artwork on, one of those morning programs where news, and they're showing Indian art, and there I was with my paintings and so forth and she saw it. I think she was in the State of Virginia at the time. But she managed to find me and call me and congratulate me.

JE: Wow, that's great.

Chapter 09 - 6:10

Dropped Out of Ministry

John Erling: You went on to college then from Prairie Valley High School?

Enoch Kelly Haney: I did. I didn't want to stay around Seminole because I graduated a semester later. I took up typing while I was doing that anyway. Then, I didn't want to stay around home until fall because so many of my relatives and friends, they would start drinking and just fall into a lifestyle that doesn't get you ahead. And I decided somewhere along the line I wanted to make something of myself. So, I went to the National Guard and they told me, "they can get me back 'fore time to go to school if I join up." Next morning someone showed up at my door and I answered, and I had my duffle bags and he said, "you ready to go?" I said, "yeah." Went and told my mother and father who were still asleep. I just told them I was going to camp and left. They had no idea where I went for weeks.

JE: Where did you go?

EH: Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. I was there and did my six months training with the National Guard, so I got back in time to go to Bacone College.

JE: What year would that have been?

EH: Oh, '60. 1960. In fact, when I went to school I think I had two shirts and two pants, and I borrowed one of those from my brother.

JE: So, then you were in the National Guard for six years?

EH: Six years.

JE: Summer camp I suppose and weekends?

EH: Yeah, right, and all that, yeah. And eventually I became assistant to the chaplain at the administration office on 24th street.

JE: But then during that period of time, you did go to college?

EH: Well, I did. In the fall of '60, I think. I went to Bacone, and then graduated two years later.

JE: Bacone in Muskogee?

EH: Right, it was a two-year college at the time. Then in 1962 I had a special Rockefeller Foundation Scholarship. There were nineteen artists selected across the country to go to Arizona at the University of Arizona in Tucson to take some special art training. It was the best art school I had ever been to in my life, even today. And everything was taken care of. We were just kids. Everything was taken care of they took me over my second airplane flight and paid for everything. So, I had my whole summer just learning and took care of all my expenses. They opened my eyes to so many different mediums of art and other things. I appreciate all kinds of art because of that experience. Then came back and graduated from Oklahoma City University.

JE: Okay, then you came back to Oklahoma City University...

EH: Right.

JE: And then graduated. Your studies were all about art then?

EH: Probably much of art and religion. I studied a lot of religion.

JE: You graduate, then what do you do?

EH: I's planning to go to seminary at Southern Methodist at Perkins School of Theology and I was talked into taking a pastoral charge because they said they were low on ministers in the Indian Conference. And I said, "No, I don't want to go. I want to go to school." I don't have respect for that superintendent at that time because of many things.

JE: Superintendent of?

EH: Of the Indian Missionary Conference. He was not Indian. There was the Indians and there he was, and this was the Bishop. We couldn't speak to the Bishop except through him and I didn't see that was right. First of all, he had a "Dr." in front of his name, but he didn't have the degree I had even. And I'm thinking well we can speak for ourselves. And I really got in big time trouble with him. Didn't last only a couple of years before they decided to send me off to a place said, "I'm not going." My dad wouldn't minister, and he moved, "I'm not going to take my kids through that." So, I just dropped out.

JE: Dropped out of?

EH: The ministry.

JE: Because you actually pastored a church?

EH: I did, yeah. I was involved for two years. In fact, I worked at the conference level and I was responsible for youth programs in a hundred twenty-five churches in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas. I had quite a few experiences in that time.

JE: But, it wasn't because of him you dropped out of the ministry? It wasn't any...

EH: It was. It was.

JE: It really was.

EH: It really was him because they talked me into going in to it because after my first junior ministry they were paying me like \$21,000 a year. I've got a college degree. I've got three kids, and I couldn't make it work. said, "I'm not going to treat my family that way." So, I just dropped out. I've never left the church. I'm still active, go every Sunday, do my tithing, everything, today. Then after a while I became a vocational counselor for a new program in Oklahoma City which was basically a VoTech program which was started by the federal government. This was even before Oklahoma really started booming along with the VoTech programs today which I helped create in Oklahoma. But, that was that experience that helped me do that in the legislature. I had a pretty good job, paying well, bought me a new car, got me a new house. And they come talk to me, said, "we sure need you to come back." And I said, "well, I don't know if I want to do that or not." If y'all would leave me just doing this and my family here and pay me decent salary and pay my expenses, it was still a pretty big cut. But, I was still committed to the church, and so I went back. And after that, you know, annual conference when they give appointments to the ministers to go church. I told them I wasn't going to move from Oklahoma City. I just wasn't going to do that anymore. I found out that that superintendent that had planned for me to be shipped off to some place way up there, and somebody from the Oklahoma Conference called me and said, "Kelly, you know what's going on?" I said, "Nah." He said, "They're getting ready to ship you off." (laughter) I said, "I don't think so." I didn't want to work there no more. Just like I tell my kids, "You got to do what you like in life." I didn't like it anymore. I loved the job. I didn't like the way I was being treated. At that time I started looking around for a job and I found another job. So, three weeks later when they said, "Kelly, we're going to send you somewhere," I said, "You're not sending me anywhere. I'm quittin." And my dad quit same time and there was another minister who quit at the same time because of that. My dad stopped at that point.

JE: Being a minister.

EH: Yeah, yeah, he just pretty much stopped going to church. He just was really upset with them.

JE: With the way they were treating you.

EH: Yeah, because he trained me all this time and they talked me into coming back. I mean I should have went to seminary where I was going to be...But this one person had done that to other Indians who had gone off and got their training in seminary and come back, he would find ways to boot them out as quickly as we kept coming back. We could never come back in a group too to contest him. I mean he destroyed the nucleus of what could have been a pretty decent Indian Missionary Conference today because he just...

JE: Was prejudice...

EH: He was prejudice. He was prejudice.

JE: Against the Indians.

EH: I don't know what kept him in there. Why he even did what he did. As long as he had control over those people, but he couldn't control people like me. (laughter)

Chapter 10 - 6:30

Loved Business

John Erling: We haven't talked about you getting married. Who did you marry, and when did you get married?

Enoch Kelly Haney: Got married, I think, November 1962, to Mary Heel was her maiden name. I got married while I was at school at OCU. She was a brilliant woman. She worked at the library at the capitol. At that time when I came to Oklahoma City I didn't have any money at all. But I'm a worker, and I went to the office, and I don't know how many weeks I went without a job, I mean I was looking for anything. And I'd go three days without food when I was going to school at OCU. I really lost weight. So, every two or three days I'd go visit my aunt who lived near downtown, and I'd go, and she'd cook an old traditional meal: fried potatoes and biscuits and salt pork and all that stuff that's bad for us, ya know? But it was really good, and she kept me filled up and she'd give me something and I'd take it back. I kind of lived through that while I was going to school at OCU, but never giving up. I mean it was hard, but it never occurred to me to give up. I mean no matter how hard it got, it just never occurred to me because I just knew I had to get to the end of that road in order to achieve the other goals that I saw for myself in my life, so I just kept going.

JE: You served the Seminole Nation in various capacities.

EH: There's one step missing here. I think it was in 1969, I was working on the campus of OU.

JE: OU?

EH: Yeah, there was a program, the Oklahoma for Indian's Opportunities, it was located there on the university.

JE: Oklahoma University?

EH: Yeah, and so I was there, and I was doing the same thing, I was working with young people throughout the State of Oklahoma doing career day programs all over the state, find a college who would let us do it there and go talk to different high schools. We was bringing all these resources and bringing kids and had food. I only ran into one place that refused to bring their children, but I also knew that I was afraid to go into that town. I know what prejudice looks like. I've seen it in the face, and I know what it is. It could be just a silent prejudice. I know it. I've seen it. You know, and I just don't like it. But, anyways, that school was disappointing, but the other schools and people throughout the state were just wonderful. The colleges and universities that let us on their campuses to do these programs, I was just really grateful. Anyway, that's what I did, and I was making pretty good. Back to a standard of living, it was decent. Well, I gave my two-week notice and I started looking for a job and it's Friday about 4:30 my last day and I'm thinking, okay, what do I do? I've got kids, I've got a new home, I've got...

JE: Your last day at?

EH: At this job here at the OU.

JE: At OU?

EH: Yeah. About 4:30 this person called me and said, "Mr. Haney, would you like to come work for us?" I said, "Yeah!" I said, "What you got open?" He said, "I've only got two places with decent salary." I asked him, "Well, which one pays the most?" He said, "Counselor." "I'll take that one."

JE: Counselor?

EH: Uh huh. You know, I had training as a minister and all of that.

JE: Who was calling?

EH: It was the Oklahoma Opportunities Industrialization Center. It's still going. It's a small program, but that was where I went to get my training. Then, in later years, when I went somewhere else, the director of that program called me to come see him. I went and seen him, and he said, "We're looking for minority people to train as economic developers." I said, "Well, what the heck is an economic developer?" He said, "Well, just help develop businesses for underprivileged people and underemployed and so forth and so on, and they pay a good stipend, which is not taxable. And we'll take care of all your expenses." I went to Philadelphia, to a management program there, which was taught by instructors from Temple University and Wharton School of Business. The most difficult school I'd ever been in ever, and what I found out is: I love business. People used to say, "How did an artist become head of the Appropriations Committee?" Well, I happened to know finance from there. So, that's where I went. I got that experience and got that know how and we opened an office in Oklahoma City. I was the, I directed that for a while. That's how I got my start in business. I'm working on two major marketing programs right now.

JE: What's happening to your art work, this time period your talking about?

EH: It's always been a subsidy for me.

JE: So, you were selling some work?

EH: Yeah, I've been selling work since I was in the third grade.

JE: Alright.

EH: Literally.

JE: So, while you were drawing salaries, you were able to also bring in extra income while working?

EH: Oh yeah, yeah, but I loved art anyways, see, it was just something I enjoyed doing.

JE: Third grade. What did you sell?

EH: Just drawings. Little kids would like my drawings, so I'd say, "for a quarter, I'll let you have it." You know? (laughter) I started selling early. But, that's no different from when I was growing up on that farm I was telling you about when I was little. My dad, being a farmer, gave me one acre and taught me how to plant different kinds of things. I had a watermelon patch, but I would always go look for his watermelons, find the best one, I'd scratch my "KH" on it. At the time, we used to have baseball games that the community had. Big baseball community. We had two mules and a wagon. That's how we traveled mostly when I was young. I was taught when I was five years old how to hitch it up. And, I remember today how difficult it was for me to jump up there. But, to sit on this huge mule.

JE: The harness over the mules head?

EH: Yeah, so I did all that and I'd hook it up and be ready to go. But then, when we went to the ballgame when I was really young, I'd take those watermelons with me, and I'd stand on the back of the wagon and sell watermelons. So, I've been an entrepreneur for a long time, just like being an artist, this thing is natural. So, when I went to school, to me that was about as natural as who I am. I wish'd I had more time in business, but I don't. I studied for business and came back and ran for office in Oklahoma City and I was about thirty. Helped put together a bank in Oklahoma City. It lasted past the crash and eventually sold to one of the larger banks. So, I've had all this experience too.

JE: And is that where we bring you to the Seminole Nation and you were a Tribal Counselman?

EH: It is. It is. It was at that time, one of my major studies in Philadelphia was planning by a professional planner, and I planned out the rest of my life. When I was twenty-nine years old I planned out the rest of my life. Thirty-five, I was gonna be on tribal government. Forty, I was gonna be on state government. Give myself ten years and I was going to go back to school and get a doctorate and come back and teach at a university. Then, when I was sixty-five or so, I was going to just be an artist full time. Well, I missed some of it. Thirty-five, I became involved with the tribe. I became a Counselman, became a Chief of the Miccosukee Man. I was also planner and manager for the tribe. But, then when I left in mid-seventies, I had a couple years as an artist.

Chapter 11 - 7:45**First Campaign**

Enoch Kelly Haney: And then General Bob Morgan came to see me and asked me if I'd be Co-Chair for George Nigh's campaign for governor. I told him, "Well, I don't know George Nigh, but I don't know anything bad about him." But I knew Bob, and he and I were good friends. We'd done some things together. So, I took it on to be one of the Co-Chairs. And that's when I got involved in states politics and I would go around and make speeches for him when he couldn't make them. Travel with him to different functions and so forth. And, then in 1980, I decided to run for the legislature myself. That's when I was forty, so I'm still on target. Well, then I was going to be in the legislature for ten years. But, when you become Chair of Appropriations, that's a big deal, and you get to do a lot of good things. So, I was there twenty-two years. I missed that part of getting my doctorate. I did teach at OCU as an adjunct faculty in marketing. That's where my strength is. I missed that part, but I thought, well, I've already taught now. I went back to school during this period of time to get my masters. And I got six hours away, and I got to thinking, well, I'm not going to ever use this, and I just don't have time to do it, so I just quit. Probably shouldn't have. It's the only thing I can really think of that I quit. But, I mean, I've done everything with it.

John Erling: You served as a state representative from 1980 to '86?

EH: That's right.

JE: That's when you were then the Vice-Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee?

EH: Right. Second term, which is really usual, because normally ten to fifteen years before you get that, I don't know how good I am today, but back then I was really good at politics. And for me politics was my ministry. But, I looked at it completely different so that mine was just association in liken people and wanting to do something with people. The other lesson my father taught me while we was out in the woods. He got a stick and he broke it like this, and he said, "Kelly, when you brake that one stick it's easy to break cause it's just one stick." Then he got a bundle of them together and tied them and said, "Now, try to break it." I couldn't break it. He said, "Son, if you're by yourself trying to get something done, you'll get broken, but if you have a lot of people and different other people around you as a group, they're much harder to break." So, I took that basic lesson and I went to the legislature. I'm not only able to work with the Democrats, I'm working with the Republicans. I'm a staunch Democrat, but I have great Republican friends and we go out and have dinners and all kinds of things, so I was able to take that little lesson of tying all those bundles together.

JE: A visual like that has stayed with you to this very age.

EH: Right, right.

JE: You can still see him doing that.

EH: Yeah, and I passed it on to my children.

JE: In 1980, tell us about your first campaign. And we bear in mind, you were the first full-blood Native American to serve in either of the Oklahoma Legislature.

EH: Right.

JE: Did you sense a prejudice against you as you were running?

EH: I've had prejudice against me all my life.

JE: You know, we always think about the blacks with their prejudice, but we often forget that the Native Americans suffered prejudice.

EH: For the same reason, for the color of our skin. For the same reason. Let me backtrack just a little bit on that issue. On a weekend pass from Fort Leonard Wood, I go down to Riley, Missouri with some buddies and I was refused a room because of the color of my skin. Went to another place uptown I was in. On my way to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, stopped off in Tennessee. Got out, went to a restaurant, they stopped me at the door and said, "Your kind goes around there." Now, I went back and there were blacks and I didn't have a problem with that at all, but I do remember going under this big oak tree sitting there thinking, what am I doing in this uniform? What am I doing? So, that really causes you to think about that, but I'm glad I went through that experience because it helps me to understand what other people had gone through much, much more severe than I. I just had an inkling of it, just a test of it.

JE: While wearing the United States Military uniform?

EH: Twice.

JE: You still suffered prejudice?

EH: Right.

JE: And then, when you looked at that uniform, why?

EH: Yeah, why am I here? But, you know, like other Indians, we're patriotic to this country.

That's a kind of experience I had. I became who I am because of those experiences, but my understanding and how to make something good come from that was also important.

JE: I guess you had to feel that didn't you, so that you could, later on...?

EH: Yeah.

JE: So, then when we come to this first campaign, was there prejudice then?

EH: Yeah, there's three reasons I recall that they said I couldn't win. One, you have to remember I was gone over twenty years when I came back to Seminole and I was there less than two years when I decided to run. Nobody knew me, so first thing: nobody knows you. And that's what, I love to meet people. I did. I just went out and talked to everybody. I got up at six-thirty every morning, came back about eleven, eleven-thirty every night. My best friend, Joe Kelly, would pick me up at six-thirty and he'd drive me around and he

knew a lot of people which helped. Coming home, we saw two of three people in Pizza Hut, pull over and campaign them, you know? And my mother, bless her heart, she was retired, but my cousin had a restaurant. He asked her to help him cleaning tables and stuff which she did, but she carried around my little campaign cards. She helped people, you know, clean off tables and said, "I want you to vote for my son." And other people, I went to a farmer once, and this man and woman, went out there to see in his garden, and knowing a little bit about gardening, that's all we talked about. Then, I told him what I was doing, I said, "This is what I..." Two years later I found out that those people got in their pick up right after I left and drove up and down the road, campaigning for me. So, that first part of not knowing people, you bet ya, I can get around and know people. Not only that, I had these great pictures (laughter) in the newspaper. One with George Nigh, he'd become governor for two years. He sent me this really nice photo and I put it in the newspaper and said, "I'm proud of you, Kelly." Everybody loved George Nigh at that time. Well, I ran that newspaper and it's true, he wrote this thing, "I'm proud of you, Kelly." Everybody: "George Nigh's proud of Kelly Haney." And I had this photo I had done with Carl Albert in Washington D.C. I had a little art show he had done for me there. Me and him in a picture and he had this little notation by it, said, "Kelly Haney knows everybody." And Carl Albert was just a god back home. So, I have all these wonderful adds. I dealt with that issue: you don't know anybody. Second part of it was they said, "Well, you don't have any money." Well, I didn't know you're supposed to have, I didn't even know you were supposed to get contributions. Really, I was naïve about a lot of things. That's one thing. And I'd get contributions and I would look at it and some I would take, and I didn't, wasn't sure who they were, I'd send it back. But, then, what they didn't gather was that I did have enough money. I had a pretty nice business. I had a mail-order business that was national wide, and I had some clients in Germany and other places in the world. So, I had a pretty nice little income and I basically paid for my own campaign the first time, which wasn't much, at the time anyway. My uncle became Chief of our nation, but he was a professional sign painter, so I had this great big ole beautiful signs all over the place he'd done for me. That part of not having money, that was taken care of. But, the third, they said, "You can't win because you're an Indian." And the people who said that to me weren't just Non-Indians, but they were Indians. Some of my tribal members, some of my relatives. "You can't win. You're an Indian. What are you doing?" I said, "Well, never know until you try." And I barely won that first race. Just barely over fifty percent.

JE: Who did you defeat?

EH: Ron Sheppard, who was an incumbent. There were three of us in the race, and if it wasn't for the third one being there, he would have won the first time probably. She broke it enough to give me more time to campaign. So, I got that first one, but when I last

ran, there was a senator that got seventy-five percent of the vote, at least. They were convinced I could do the job for them. So, that's when I started and how I started. But leads me to say this, and I believe it then and I believe it now, and I pass this on to my children and other children. "It's not the color of the balloon that determines how high it goes, but what's inside."

Chapter 12 - 6:15

Alternative Education

John Erling: That's about six years, we can't get into all of that, but any particular issue while in the House that you were dealing with there?

Enoch Kelly Haney: Yeah, one that's probably my pride and joy through the whole ordeal was I started writing legislation to increase activities to alternative education and I started funding it. The reason is because I fit every characteristic of a high school dropout.

JE: You fit every characteristic?

EH: Every characteristic. Color, you know, everything. Economics, Language, I just, it all just kind of...and I knew what the kids were up to. Except for I believe now, stronger than I did then, is that young people whom have need for alternative education, they're not dumb. They learn differently. That's all. So, we give them an opportunity to learn. Tulsa has one of the finest, finest alternative education programs in the state, maybe in the nation.

JE: That's Street School?

EH: Yeah. Wonderful program, and that's what we helped to do. I did some things for the tribes, which were critically important for government. But, for as far as for Oklahoma, that was one. The other one too though, later, in the Senate, was, as Chairman of Appropriation, I set up most of the commerce offices around the world. Set the one up in Vietnam. The first state in the Union to do that. Went down to Texas and fired one down there because he wasn't doing the work. Came back, found another one, got him on board, he's still there doing a good job. I sat up one in China. I have been involved in that type of work for the legislature and for the State of Oklahoma, which I really enjoy doing.

JE: You were a Senator then from 1986 to 2002.

EH: Right.

JE: Was that an easy campaign then to go from the House to the Senate?

EH: It was easier because I had already established myself particularly with lobbyist who knew what I was capable of doing and capable of moving forward and knew how to run legislation and knew how to run government.

JE: They helped you in money raising?

EH: Well, at that point I knew not to send it back, you know? (laughter) But also they weren't buying my vote. That's the other thing you've got to be careful, but that was fairly easy.

JE: In the Senate then, you've already alluded to, what was that again that you set up, those offices?

EH: The commerce offices, like in China.

JE: How would that benefit us in Oklahoma?

EH: Well, what we do, we set up offices as, I'll give you an example. We have some in Singapore and other places. We set up an office. Unfortunately we never gave them enough money, but they would help us to identify businesses that Oklahomans could invest in there. And where we had opportunities to sell products from Oklahoma, the three things that we really have going for us here among other things, beside technology, which we do, and we can connect people through the Department of Commerce, red winter wheat, cattle, and poultry. Those three things are big in Oklahoma. That's why we able to make contact and those people sitting in those offices in those countries speaking the language and understand the culture can interface with our Department of Commerce here and help to develop these business relationships and that's what I did. Again, that's my business training.

JE: Well, that was major than as you were in the Senate.

EH: Yeah.

JE: Anything else that comes to mind that jumps out?

EH: Oh, I think probably one of the big things with tribes, though, I tried real hard not to be noted as quote, "The Indian Senator." I had to be careful of that. A lot of my colleagues in the Senate, for instance, hard for me today to tell what the deal was, it had to do with the Indians, they were running from me. So, I didn't ever gain that. But, the thing I did do, took me a long time to do, was started in the house, was to establish Oklahoma understanding of tribes as sovereign nations. They didn't - that wasn't in the books. That's the reason why we could never come together over compacts and work problems out. If there was a problem out there in Indian country in the State of Oklahoma, we'd end up in the Supreme Court. That's costly for everybody. Ridiculous. But, finally the Supreme Court said, "We'd solve this if you had compacts." So, I came back and wrote legislation, number one: to recognize tribal sovereignty, so the state said, "Okay, you're a sovereign nation." Never before. Second thing was to set up a system for making compacts. We have over three hundred compacts a day between tribes and the State of Oklahoma, and those were big. Because Oklahoma's tribes contributions to the State of Oklahoma are in the billions today. I think the Chickasaws have a bigger budget than the State.

JE: Much of that comes from gaming?

EH: Much of it comes from gaming, and of course, they have other business activities—

JE: Yes. As other tribes do too.

EH: But they didn't have. What the State of Oklahoma is capable of doing and we're not, is that they base their revenue on taxes. The tribe can't do that. So, their source of revenue is gaming. Much of it comes from out of state as you might know, like some of the bigger ones. Windstar with the Chickasaws down on the Texas border. Eighty-five percent of the money comes from Texas.

JE: Comes from Texas?

EH: Comes from Texas because the gamers are coming from Dallas, as well as the Choctaws in Durant. Theirs is coming, so we're getting beaucoup of monies through gaming from other states. And it's all spent here in Oklahoma. One thing I like to mention to people, I have no problem with Walmarts who are in Arkansas and JC Pennys whose in Texas, but the tribes live here, this stays here, and employment and buying every imaginable product from vendors from Oklahoma. So, that's a big, big contribution to the economics of Oklahoma.

JE: Right, and then when there are special needs projects, maybe the government of the State of Oklahoma can't or won't contribute to, I've noticed some tribes and they say, "Well, we'll step up, we'll build this bridge, we'll build this road."

EH: Right, we've always done that. I've helped to build several roads in my district because the tribes through the bureau has a road program. They were always allocated X number of dollars for roads. And what I would do is put them together with the county and the state. If you put them all together and use the funds cooperatively, you can build something good. I've build all kinds of roads around Seminole right through rural areas. I mean, super-duper highways. And it's like that all over the state, the tribes have contributed a lot, and like I say, in schools. We made a contribution when I was Chief to Seminole College to put in their residential hall. I made other contributions to them to help in educational efforts. Yeah, we're big into that.

Chapter 13 - 3:50

Haney for Governor

John Erling: The last year of your Senate career you then ran for Governor.

Enoch Kelly Haney: I did.

JE: In 2001. That's when Brad Henry ultimately became Governor.

EH: Right.

JE: Any reflections on that race?

EH: One is that I wouldn't have got it if I didn't try. I wouldn't have been representative; I would have been a senator if I didn't try. I wouldn't be an artist if I didn't try. I wouldn't be a college graduate if I didn't try. I couldn't been Governor if I didn't try. But, I have failed more than once, at different things. But, that's what you do. You get yourself up, dust yourself off and go again. That's what you do in life. I don't have too much of that left anymore, I'm seventy, so I don't have too much getting up left. But, that's what you do, and I don't regret that. I met some great, great wonderful people in the State of Oklahoma. I was just short of about a million dollars. I raised quite a bit, but you still had to...

JE: You were short a million dollars?

EH: I was short a million. I raised almost two, but you still have to have the money. There's almost a correlation between the amount of money you spend and who wins the race. Many of us spent wisely, and it was a good campaign, you run it right. And so...

JE: Yeah, an issue you ran on as Governor?

EH: Education I think and management of resources.

JE: Health Care?

EH: Yeah, Health Care. All of those things that I do anyway. But, education was always my big thing.

JE: Would that have been the first time you were ever defeated?

EH: Well, yeah. I don't recall any other time I was defeated in public.

JE: First time.

EH: Yeah, well, that's okay, now let me tell you what my sister said to me after she worked real hard for me. She said, "Kelly, it wasn't meant to be." And I said, "No, I just didn't get the votes." But, you know what happened afterward? I ended up with diabetes, then I ended up with prostate cancer which put me down for a couple years, and some surgeries, I had a stint put in. In those four years, I couldn't have been governor. You see?

JE: Wow.

EH: So, what she said was true. I finally learned to believe that about life sometimes you don't get what you want, but it's not meant to be until the right time comes about.

JE: You came through that four years and today you've defeated all that.

EH: Yeah, I did and that's when I became a Chief. I was still on the last part of my prostate cancer whenever I was Chief. Six months before I was out I had a lot of serious problems. But, if I went to the hospital, I couldn't have served out, and so I served it out with great pain. Physical pain, but then once I got through there, I had everything organized. I had two eye surgeries. I had another stint put in. My diabetes to deal with. I had a new knee put in. I had my knee worked on earlier, didn't work, so I had a new knee, so that's why I walk around with a little limp here. It doesn't hurt anymore, that's the main thing. And I

just kind of defeated all of that. I didn't want my friends call me and say, "Kelly, we though you were dying." I never felt like I was. I think I'd know when that time comes. I have never ever feared death. I have a simple saying that I didn't realize till lately it scared some other people who flew with me. We'd fly places and they'd be scared, and I'd say, "Oh, this is a good day to die." (laughter) And think I'd really mean it, you know? Because it just puts me at ease.

JE: As we sit here in 2011, you look healthy. So, you've overcome all that and you don't have any health issues now?

EH: I don't have any health issues. I do have specialist who work with me in different areas. Whether it's my diabetes or my breathing, or my knees and heart. And, I set up appointments every six months to go see these specialists and they keep watching over me. I played gold once a week. I mean, that's good and healthy for me.

JE: Yep. Diabetes is associated with Native Americans.

EH: Well, not exclusively, but there's a large percentage of native people get diabetes and to some degree I think it has to do with diet.

JE: Right.

EH: I don't know that. But, I do know that somehow the disease that occurs in your gums is the same thing that transfers and goes down to create diabetes and so I work my children all the time about caring for their teeth and so forth and so on.

JE: And diet I suppose?

EH: Yeah, diet and exercise. So I go to the Y a couple times a week.

Chapter 14 - 8:15

Chief of Seminole Nation

John Erling: In 2005 you were elected Chief of the Seminole Nation.

Enoch Kelly Haney: Right.

JE: Was that something that you had always thought about wanting to do? Did they come to you? Or, how did that come about?

EH: The tribe had found themselves in a very dysfunctional period for this time in life. I guess with my experience I thought I was the only that could bring them out of their financial problems and their governmental problems. Beside the financial thing that I had to deal with, one of the things that I had to deal with was earlier they had great disruption because the problem they faced was not knowing who actually won a race. A race for Chief, my uncle was involved with that one. And it's not something you can take it to the

Bureau. But we have what's called CFR Court. They're there for misdemeanors, they had no jurisdiction over that issue. And you couldn't take it to the State because they have no jurisdiction over us at all. And you couldn't take it to the Federal Government because they didn't have jurisdiction over those issues. So, they're without a jurisdictional judicial body to make that decision. So, it went to the counsel. It's like saying, "Go to the legislature for a legal decision." They're going to divide up on sides, and that's what happened then. That's what really created and got a really bad person, I mean, he wasn't an evil person to run the tribe. He was a decent person, but he just didn't know how to run government. It just came apart. That's why I stepped in. I told them I was going to do one term. The one thing that I wanted to do, and if that's all I did I would've been fine, was to establish a tribal court. We passed that. The people approved it. It took the Bureau over two years to accept it. Just really, really upsets me. I still don't have confidence in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I think they're just there to disrupt us and stop our progress in my opinion. I don't know what good they are.

JE: Out of Washington, The Bureau of Indian Affairs?

EH: Out of Washington, yeah.

JE: And they have to sanction everything that you do?

EH: Right, right. I even passed on provision that they stated we could make changes in our constitution without the signature of their secretary. We passed that. I don't know where it's at today. But, then financially there were really, really serious problems. Nobody would give credit to us. But, as Senator I had helped every one of these people and they would say to me, "Kelly, we'll give it to you." So, I got everything moving again. We were able to function. I also start looking at the books. They had enough money to pay for the bills. They just didn't pay em. Boy, I put them on strict orders. Every week make sure everybody pays their bills. Cause if they don't, they've got trouble with me. That's a habit, you know. You've got to push, and push, and push there. The other thing too, when I first got there, there were people who were in jeans and ragged little t-shirts and stuff working there. I hired Leon Lusty who was a full Colonel in the military over personnel. He walked in and got all the employees together and said, "You come in jeans and tee shirts tomorrow, you don't work here anymore." I came to work the next day and he was sitting at the door and looked at me and said, "Chief, you're seven minutes late." (laughter) He really put that ship together. I mean, we got them dressed like they should, and they had a bad habit of the way they treated people. We weren't going to put up with that. They'd get to be gone if they treat people bad. That happened in State government too. I had to step in on many times. We got that pretty cleaned up and they did buy property. We have very small amount of property in the tribe, very small. Like, 360 acres. Little old tribe. So, I started setting money aside to buy property in Seminole. I bought a office complex at a little

shopping strip where we now have some offices and I bought forty acres to build an at-risk home for families. I bought property, but I was still in real estate, so I was making sure that the properties we bought had some appreciation value. We did some of that. So, instead of taking monies and paying lease or rent, well, let's buy it and pay it to ourselves. Those kind of basic things took place to make it work.

JE: Is gaming helping the Seminoles?

EH: Not that much. When I got there, they only had one facility open. They had two that had been closed down because of some problems in Washington. I got that resolved for them. They had eleven million dollar fine against them. That's a lot of money for small casinos like that. But, I got them to reduce that and opened the other two up. They're never big money makers because business wise it's kind of land locked. You've got Riverwind here, and you've got this place out here, and then you've got two or three big ones in Shawnee, so really Seminole County is landlocked. That's only properties we have. We just got the remnants of what was available. But, there was still enough to provide employment. Since being there I created several hundred employees which then became the biggest employer in the county. So, we were able to do some good things.

JE: Yeah. Seminoles, the population has got to be of the smallest tribes?

EH: Not necessarily, some tribes are very small. We have probably ten to twelve.

JE: Ten to twelve thousand. And, there are tribes that are much smaller.

EH: There are thirty-nine federally recognized tribal governments in Oklahoma.

JE: Thirty-nine? So, then there are many tribes that are much smaller than you?

EH: Oh, there's many tribes. Now, we're the smallest of the five civilized tribes.

JE: Right.

EH: But, then the other tribes, there's some equal to us, like Comanches and I think they're about the same amount. But there are some that are just in the hundred.

JE: What do you see for the Seminole Nation in the next forty, fifty years? Do young people seem interested in preserving the culture?

EH: Uh, I don't know. I haven't been able to look into that crystal ball. I don't know. Several of our young people are getting educated. Now, I don't know if my boys will come back from California. John, he's getting married while he's there. It'll take him three years to get out of law school. But, his fiancé is on a doctoral program there. She's from Rhode Island. She's on a doctoral program which can take her four to six years. They're going to be up there that long. They have to make joint decisions about where to move to for job opportunities and they've got to make those decisions which may or may not bring them to Oklahoma again.

JE: So, the Seminoles then could diminish in, in time. The culture being kept alive, are you concerned about that?

EH: The culture is a dying culture. And the reason is that most of the people who keep the culture alive are people who are on the lower scale of social economic levels. Does that make sense?

JE: Mhm.

EH: Because that's what they know. They keep it alive and that's where you go for that information but from a practical standpoint, from day to day living out in the world, how much of that do you need? What's useful? Language. I don't have anybody to talk to. My children don't know, but John's in New York. Who would he talk to? I got a daughter that lives in Norman but most of her friends are not Indians, not Seminole. So, who do you talk to? It's a non-functional language.

JE: The language will disappear in time?

EH: It is going to disappear. It will disappear. I think my generation may have been the last of the reasonably fluent speakers. Same way with the ceremonies. My mother used to go out there. She said, "Nah, they're doing it wrong. That's not the way it's done."

JE: So, that's going to disappear too.

EH: That's going to disappear. We used to have five ceremonial grounds. There's one now.

JE: Is there some way that the education of these young people would want to keep it alive just for heritage sake? But, then the children, they're not necessarily marrying within their nation?

EH: No.

JE: Going outside. In fifty, sixty, seventy years...

EH: It's diminished.

JE: And there's nothing to fight that apparently.

EH: Yeah, yeah. There's not I don't think. Nobodies going to go back. I used to have a bunch of properties in Seminole County. I sold everything. My kid's not coming back. It's not that they don't like Seminole. They like being there. It's just that their interests are elsewhere. I have a daughter over there. She has a master's degree in math. She works at the college, so she has a reason for being there. But, other than that. (laughter)

JE: That's sad, isn't it?

EH: No, it's not sad.

JE: No? You don't think it is.

EH: No, it's just the way life is. It's just evolution of life. That's where life is taking us and make the most of it. I hate to see our culture diminish, don't get me wrong. I hate to see that diminish. It is. But their life is important for what they do day to day with their friends and their life. That's no less important than what I'm going through, you know.

JE: Right.

Chapter 15 - 18:00**The Guardian**

John Erling: Your artistic career, you use oil, acrylic, watercolor?

Enoch Kelly Haney: Everything.

JE: Everything, as well as sculpting with bronze. You're a recognized Native American artist specializing in paintings throughout the United States and beyond. The Five Civilized Tribes Museum declared you a Master Artist in 1976. Let's bring you to what we all probably look at, our State Capitol dome. If Governor Frank Keating did any one major thing, it was certainly that, wasn't it? Because he headed up the campaign to up there.

EH: (laughter) He did, and I mean that had been going on for years and he just decided to do it. Of course, I'll have to say this: As staunch Democrat as I am, he was the best governor I ever worked with. (laughter) He was a visionary, you know. He let his mouth run off sometimes more than he should. But, in spite of that he was a great friend, still is a great friend of mine. But, I would tease him in front of groups, and he would pick it up later. I would say, "I want to thank Governor Keating for building that twenty-five million-dollar pedestal for my sculpture." (laughter)

JE: That sculpture is known as *The Guardian*.

EH: *The Guardian*, right.

JE: Tell us how it came about.

EH: In the original design of the State Capitol, with the dome, there was intended to be a sculpture on top. In about 1914 with World War One coming about. The legislature did not appropriate the funds to complete building the capitol. It was designed, and it had basic structural pillars in place to build it. So, we didn't have to go through that. A number of administrations and individuals had tried to do the funds to get it done, and a lot of people were against it. Governor Frank Keating decided we're going to have a capitol. He went out there and found the funds and resources. He had that ability. Then the next task was to find a sculpture that would go on top. First of all, we are submitted a portfolio of our work. There were six artists selected to come up with a final maquette, and I was one of those six. I got that notice one day before I left for Europe and Japan. I had thirty days to get it done. So, I'm gone two weeks. I'm back. I've got two weeks to get this done and I'm thinking I'll never get this done. First of all, I didn't have that image in my mind yet. But, while in Paris I went to the Louvre and when I was in Japan I went to see, to see, some other works and Rodin of all people, some of his sculptures there. But I began to look at other sculptures and see what the monumental, long-lasting sculptures were like. And they were basically simple, not complicated. At least, the better ones, that were well recognized, like *The Thinker*, kind of like that. So, I had a sense of what it ought to look like.

When I got back, I've got weeks, and thinking oh man. Then one day I was driving toward the capitol and this composition came in mind. It's nothing formed, it's nothing there, it's just a composition, that's all I'm looking for. When it did, I reached over and grabbed a novel, opened that was close, cause I was driving. I got a pen and took me less than five seconds to do the marks so I wouldn't forget it.

JE: What were they, the marks?

EH: It was just a design. It was a sketch.

JE: Of a warrior. And you sketched it while you were driving in your car?

EH: Yeah, it took me about five seconds or less to do. But, all I knew there was line, so I wouldn't forget what was in my mind. That's all it was. Once I did that, I came home, I knew exactly what I wanted. But I had to have a model. You have the medical center right down the road and you're thinking, well, you've got to do something make sure the anatomy is right and arms and perspective and all that. There was a young man who lived across the road from me. He was a high school athlete, Choctaw descent, kind of thin, muscular young man. So, I used him as a model. Took pictures. Then came up with the clay model. Now, I did the model on my dinner table in my kitchen cause I've always worked there. You can see right in there. I'm getting ready to build me a studio back here. Actually, I had a big studio in the back of my house, there. Had a larger one downtown so I could work on big stuff if I needed to there. Here, I don't have it. I'm just now getting my studio. So, I built it on my diner table, *The Guardian*. It was so interesting to work with. And I talk about this particularly any group want to learn about it...I'm highly trained as an artist. I know the principles of art and I've used every medium possible. I have not had one day of training in sculpting. You know what that means? It means that I have no limits. If I can think it, I can do it. Because if I need help with some composition or strength at certain points, there are engineers who can do that. There are other people with different skills can help me to maneuver and do what I need to do. I just need to think it up and to so it, see. That's what I do. I have no limits. I was working on that. When I started, I have no tools. I don't even know what a tool looks like. Basically, I've done some other stuff but just very few. I went and bought some tools. I wasn't sure exactly what to do with them. My favorite tool though on *The Guardian* was a toothpick. If I thought about it while I was at a restaurant, I'd pick up a couple extras, put, keep em in my pocket just to make sure I had one when I was ready. I liked the eyes. You're talking about the maquette being, well, that's the actual size of it right there.

JE: So, the model you're working on is about two feet tall?

EH: Yeah, something like that, a little less than that. About twenty-one inches I think. This part I just kind of figured out by myself. I needed to have an armature. Armature is that metal that goes inside, and you build around it. An armature is like a stick figure. It's just

a little rod. In this case I used a quarter inch rod and moved it around and the arms and stuff. Well I didn't know how to do it, I'm not a welder. So, I went to see this guy, he's about ninety years old. He's stronger than I am, I guarantee you. He still works, farm and so forth, has a little welding shop. He's been there before I was born. He and his dad had a shop there and so he knew my dad and they were in the military about the same place and the same time. So, I went to see Dimpsing. I said, "Dimps, I need an armature." And he said, "What's that?" And I said, told him, well, well, and he said, "Well, what do you want to do?" And I told him. I drew it out. So, we went out to his little welding shop and he started putting it together. And he'd move around with the metal kind of like I wanted to, you know. Bolted down on a piece of wood and came home and just started putting the clay to it.

JE: So, that's the arms and all?

EH: Right. This is the, what I call the stick figure.

JE: Right.

EH: And then you start putting clay on it. Around it. Then once the clay is done, then start working on detail. Getting to that part is easy. As we get the clay on, that's boring. After that, when you start working on the eyes, and making sure its same distance between each other and nose. Can you imagine? I've got to have a toothpick to do the nostrils, or the eyes, or the mouth, or the hair, or the fingers. Then I needed the shield that's on it. I couldn't draw a circle if my life depended on it. So I got clay and I pressed it down real thin. I'm at home, right. I don't have no fancy tools. So, I go look in my cupboard, and I looked through these different cans of food I have, and I found one about this size. It's got a little lip on it, and I just pressed it down and cut it. So, I got me a circle. I got two little markers inside for designs and each are circles. So, I got me two smaller cans and just put the image in it. And all this will be converted to a mold. One of the interesting thing is for the feathers, I need an armature for those little feathers. How am I going to do that? Oh, I'll use a paper clip. Pull that one side out like that and it's just like a little biddy old armature. So, I started putting clay around it and poking down his head in different places. That's basically how I created *The Guardian*. Once I decide what I want, I'm fast. Then, when I took it for the final competition, they say, "You need to erase your name off of it." Which I did with thirty-five other. So, all the names were off, and it was selected by, I think, two different committees. I's the one they wanted and of course, I was pleased with it. I was concerned about whether or not I could even compete, being in the legislature and being the head of appropriation. I did ask the question of the Ethics Commission if I could do that and they wrote me back saying that since the project is privately funded, I could do that. Then I entered the competition and I won.

JE: That had to make you feel good. It was a blind vote. They did not, they did not know who they were voting for.

EH: It was a blind vote, yeah. Not many people had ever seen much of my sculptures, so you can imagine they didn't know what I did.

JE: That had to be a major surprise then.

EH: It was, and of course, I was pleasantly surprised.

JE: The Indian male is holding a lance planted into the ground. Is there meaning to that?

EH: There is. (laughter) I did a different sculpture called Standing His Ground. It's an old Indian story of certain tribes. In this case, the Comanches were, when faced with insurmountable odds, a warrior always had a strap, he'd tie himself to the ground with the enemy coming at him, say, "This is as far as I go, no more. This is it." In their term it's kind of like standing his ground. That's basically what it is, and the sculpture was that. I wanted to put that on the capitol. I thought it would have been fantastic, but early on someone said they thought it was too confrontational, said, "We don't want those kinds of things."

JE: You mean standing his ground there? You couldn't put that up there, but you used the concept.

EH: Yeah, yeah. Well, they didn't know I did, see. So, what I'm doing, the lance goes through the part of the leg and the clothing and stamped to the ground and still standing his ground. That concept is important to me about Oklahomans. Then in spite all of the tragedies that we have faced in Oklahoma, starting from the Dust Bowl days, and the tornados that we have and all this stuff here. Oklahomans have a way of just stranding up and going again, and facing the odds, whether it's war time of whatever. That message was important to me, so unbeknownst to them, I did the same thing. That was important to me. People ask me, "Which direction is it standing?" That's one of the other ones. First two calls I got were from native people. He said, "Kelly, which way is it going to be facing?" And I knew what they meant. It has to face east. In our ceremonies, the principal chief's arbor faces east. When you go to those whole Indian churches that I grew up in, the minister always faces east. The buildings are built that way, and it's to the rising sun, cause you pray to the rising sun. I tell him I'm a politician, so I had to negotiate a position here. And, it's turned this way, like looking at the traffic coming from the south, but the main reason for that is because I didn't want it figured stiff. Didn't give it a little motion. And that's how that motion came about.

JE: His body faces the south, but...

EH: His feet are facing east. The top of his body is facing south.

JE: And then the dress that he wore?

EH: That was interesting. Because we have thirty-nine fairly recognized tribes. We have more than that in terms of tribal people who live in Oklahoma. So, the other thing the committee wanted, they wanted a generic Indian, and I'm thinking, what the hell is a generic Indian? But, I think their concept was right in the sense that they didn't want to

offend anybody. So, what I did was to choose a time period when there were no particular tribes that were identified as such and thought about the tribal dress of your ancestors. Every civilization on this planet came through a tribal...

JE: Yep, mine were the Vikings.

EH: Yeah, and even before the Vikings with all the regalia and clothing, there was something else. I mean there was a time before then. So, I picked out a place and everybody wore leggings to protect themselves from damage and moccasins, usually some simple form of moccasins. I don't know why they wore those beach cloths. So many different forms of people through history wore beach cloths. The other one, they didn't start out with bows, they started out with lances. That's how the lance appeared. Then with his jewelry, it's the same thing I found when I was smaller. I found them by the banks of the river, those beads. There's actually bones of fish. You'd get it, clean it off and string em up. They're same thing. There's little shells everywhere, you know. Get those shells, clean em up and that's what they did, and I made earrings with them. So, it's really taking from a time and period before the evolution of tribes as we know it. Then there's a circle on it that I talked about that's on the shield, but there are four feathers hanging down. For some of the Indian people, I think most of the tribes, the number four is important to us; sacred. So, when we prepare medicine and take medicine, we do it in fours. Everything we do is in fours. I won't go into detail, but when I cleanse an eagle feather, I do it four times. Sing the song and put it over smoke four times, so everything is done in fours. So, that's what the feathers are now, okay. It was pretty symbolic, but I tried to keep it pretty simple too.

JE: So, that became representative of all Native Americans?

EH: Exactly. Now, let me tell you the final story on it. In the mid-seventies I was in Italy and I saw the statue of David. As I was leaving, it said, "Fourteen and a half feet." At that time, I don't know how old I was, thirtyish. I saw this sign that said, "Fourteen and a half feet tall." And I decided right then and there, mid-seventies, one day I'm going to make one bigger than that. Now, in my mind I thought to myself I don't do this all the time so I will never be as good as Michelangelo. I could live to be thirty more years and not be that good, but I'm going to make one bigger. Well, the original sculpture on the original capitol design was fourteen feet. Well, you know I'm not going to let that happen. So, I decided, well, seventeen and a half feet. And then, I was working at the Foundry and Governor Keating came down to me and said, "Kelly, how big is that one at the Nation's Capital?" I said, "It's about nineteen and a half feet." He said, "Well, can we make this one bigger?" I said, "You betcha." So, I just shot that thing up to twenty-two feet. So, that's why it's twenty-two. That's why it's twenty-two feet. (laughter) But it's the right size.

JE: Yep.

EH: It's just the right size. Not too small and it can't be much bigger.

JE: You've looked at that through wind and storm and snow. Would you like to go up there and see how he's weathering?

EH: Oh, I know how he's weathering because it's just a natural evolution. It can be as much as seventy- five to a hundred years before they'll bring it down and clean it up.

JE: Oh, really?

EH: Yeah, you'll have to bring it down at some time.

JE: So, it has weathered some already?

EH: It does. Any sculpture does.

JE: Because it's been up since 2002.

EH: Right.

JE: And it's started to weather some, you just know that in your mind.

EH: Yeah, yeah, uh huh. Cause I've seen some other work do that.

JE: Which is bronze?

EH: Yeah. Usually though, if it's ground level and stuff you can wash it off with soap and water and polish like new, but you can't get up there and clean that.

JE: Doesn't that give you a sense of pride? As it turns out, the dome, it seems like now, no matter where you are in Oklahoma City, you can see it.

EH: You can see it. It's a capitol. It's a capitol now.

JE: Right.

EH: And I had so many people say to me, like, I didn't, we thought we could do without it and da da da. But, when the sculpture went up, said, "We just changed our mind." I think that made a lot of difference in a lot of people. But, let me tell you what's interesting about the selection of the, quote, "Indian Warrior." There were suggestions for everything, you know, a sculpture of Christ, to a teepee, and all kinds of stuff. Part of the deal was we had Allan Houser do that sculpture in front, it's about fourteen, fifteen feet tall, of a native woman. So, we decided, well we need to do a native man. Part of the reason as I recall is they were getting ready to do this big land run down at Bricktown, and native people as you probably know, don't take kindly to that. I mean it's just a part of our bad history somebody celebrating. It's a matter of fact in history and we understand that part, but the fact is, we don't have to like it. So, that was one way of countering that. I guess most people thought it's kind of natural anyway to do that so that's how that came about.

JE: The male came about?

EH: Yeah.

JE: There was a fifty-thousand-dollar stipend that went with this.

EH: Yeah, yeah.

JE: And, what did you do with that?

EH: I chose not to take it.

JE: Why?

EH: Oh, there's some Rondels inside the capitol. Where the walls of the house and the senate entries, there's about this big. Four of them. I didn't charge them for that either. And as you travel across the state, you see these big blue signs: "History Marker Ahead," with that buffalo and eagle. I did that too. I didn't charge them. When I'm in the legislature and I'm still the head of the appropriations, it's a matter of image and perspective. I decided I don't think I'll do that. I mean, I could use a fifty any time, but I'm thinking I'll make money anyway, so I'm not going to do that. I just gave it to them.

JE: You gave it to the state?

EH: Yeah.

JE: Well, that's got to be a real sense of pride for you to look up at that.

EH: Oh, it is. And more and more. At the time I did it though, see, it wasn't that big a deal. It's just what I do, that's my work. Somebody gonna say, "Draw a circle." "Okay, you've got to pay me ten dollars." Draw your circle, whatever. That's my living. And at the time I did that, I was really pleased with having been selected, but I was so busy running a campaign too. My deal was just get it done and make it look good and do a good job of it. My family will be proud and all that. Well, now from being away from the capitol as I go by and look up, say, "Well, man, I can't believe I did that."

JE: Who did that anyway, huh? (laughter)

EH: You know, who did that? John helped me with that. I've got pictures of him on top of that great big old head, you know, putting clay on a so forth. Yeah.

JE: Wow.

EH: So, it means more to me today in terms of pride for me, then it did at the time I did it.

Chapter 16 - 5:30

Kelly Sings Seminole

John Erling: I should just mention in passing, course you have other sculptures at the Chickasaw Nation Headquarters and *The Chickasaw Warrior*, that's Standing His Ground you mentioned at Seminole State College in Seminole. You've hosted your own weekly TV program. You've narrated and worked as a consultant for the Seminole series of the Discovery Channel of 1993 TV documentary *How the West was Lost*. You've taught at Oklahoma City University. You own an art gallery, Haney Incorporated, and you're still working you art today.

Enoch Kelly Haney: Right, right, right, yeah. You want to know what I'm working on right now?

JE: What's that?

EH: Working on a book. We're about eighty-five to ninety percent of the way through with the first draft manuscript and we'll finally get to the point where we get it published as a book. Then work with movie people. I talked to Morgan Freeman about that. I want him to be in my movie. Now, hope he's still around when they're...(laughter) Hope I'm still around.

JE: You talked to him about it. So, you know him?

EH: Yeah, I hung out with him one night, all night.

JE: Really?

EH: Yeah, him and Willy Nelson of all people.

JE: Where?

EH: At Durant. So, we're going over there and I had a friend call and say, "Do you want to hang out with us?" and I said, "Yeah, I'll do that!" So I went over, and my daughter Brooke and I were working on it, so I gave him the outline and he said, "I like that." He said, "Why don't you and Brooke come to my house in Mississippi." Of course, I became Chief and he's off making thousand of movies. So, maybe in the next six months to a year I'll be able to go down and visit with him again. Lou Diamond Phillips sent word to me that he'd either like to be in it or direct it.

JE: Oh.

EH: See, I know him too.

JE: Anything you want to reflect on? Your most important accomplishments.

EH: My children. Really, I've thought that many times. I've thought, oh, they're my greatest creation is my children. Just simple.

JE: Yep. Well, you've done a lot. You've accomplished a lot. Anything in advice to students that you might offer them as an artist, and a public servant, what would you say to them?

EH: Dream big. Believe in yourself. Work hard.

JE: How would you like to be remembered?

EH: I don't think about that. When I'm gone, I'm gone. You know, whatever memory there's going to be of me, it's either out there or it's not. I've done what I wanted to do. I've been real fortunate in life to be able to do the things I want to do. So, what happens after my life, I don't have thought about that.

JE: You've, you've certainly made and indelible mark on the State of Oklahoma through legislation and so forth, but obviously the one we can see on the dome will be part of your lasting legacy. There's no question about that.

EH: Right, right, right, uh huh, yeah. I'm working on one to go to China right now for Beijing.

JE: A sculpture?

EH: Uh huh, I just set up a new corporation to work with Chinese investors in Oklahoma businesses. I've got some people coming over in the next thirty days wanting to look at

some investment opportunities in Oklahoma City, and the other one is they've shown interest in working with foreign related business in Indian country. So, I have to get a lawyer that specializes in that for instance. They're coming over in about a month. So, I'm still involved in business enterprises.

JE: And you're doing a sculpture for them to have over there?

EH: Yeah. Well, this all ties in. One thing, when you work in China particularly, and I've know this from my years of working there, it's going to take two years to establish a reasonable trust relationship with them. I think what happens if I put a sculpture there, see how fast that moves along. I've got some guys working on it for me right now.

JE: As we finish up, can you say something in Seminole, a saying, or a song, or anything in Seminole?

EH: Oh, you don't want to hear me sing. (laughter) There's a saying that old people used to use a lot because in our language, as it is in many tribe's languages, there's no word for "goodbye." We say, "[phrase in the Seminole language]." As time permits, we'll see each other again.

JE: Very good. That language, what you just said, might be fading, fading, fading, fading. And you speak longer terms to me in your language, couldn't you? Just say something overall about this experience that you've enjoyed or whatever in Seminole.

EH: Yeah, (laughter) it is. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I don't even know what to think. (laughter) You know I speak best whenever I don't think about it. And when people just start talking I reflect.

JE: So then, in Seminole, reflect a little bit on your mother.

EH: Um, [Speaking and singing in Seminole]. What that means is that I reflect on my father who's diseased. I remember him singing this song, the song itself is basically saying no matter what happens, no matter how tired you are, never give up.

JE: Perfect. That's very great. Thank you, Kelly, for all this experiences. I appreciate it very much and now students will hear this forever and ever on this website. Thank you so much.

EH: Uh huh. Oh, thank you, yeah. (laughter) Well, you're doing a good thing too, John.

JE: Yeah, thank you.

Chapter 17 - 0:33

Conclusion

Announcer: This oral history presentation is made possible through the support of our generous foundation funders. We encourage you to join them by making your donation

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