

John F. Hausam

After unwittingly avoiding death in war, he eventually established one of the largest real estate companies in Tulsa.

Chapter 01 - Introduction

Announcer: Then he stepped off the path. In his oral history interview John Hausam reflected on his military service during the Korean conflict. He told a story of walking down a path and inadvertently stepping off that path while the platoon leader behind him remained on the path and died because of a land mine. John was allowed to live 89 years, dying September 15, 2020. He studied and worked as a draftsman but later received his real estate license and established John Hausam Realtors. The company became one of the largest real estate firms in Tulsa, and as it grew, John began to give back to the community through various charitable organizations. He served as a National Director for the National Association of Realtors, served on many committees of the Greater Tulsa Association of Realtors and was the past president of the local Multiple Listing Services. Many John Hausam real estate agents lived very successful lives because John stepped off that path. So now listen to John tell the story of stepping off that path and what led to a very successful real estate company on the oral history website VoicesofOklahoma.com.

Chapter 02 - 6:55 California

John Erling: My name is John Erling. Today's date is June 17, 2020.

John, state your full name, please.

John Hausam: John Frederick Hausam.

JE: And your date of birth?

JH: August the 7th, 1931.

JE: Your present age is?

JH: Eighty-eight.

JE: And to be eighty-nine, August 7th. Did you think you'd live to be this old?

JH: No.

JE: Never thought it?

JH: [laughing]

JE: Where are we recording this interview?

JH: In my home here in Southeast Tulsa.

JE: Before we get into the interview, the corona virus, COVID-19, this infectious disease has infected all of America and the world. We're into it now about three or four months. Social distancing, masks, people staying at home. And as of this date, businesses, restaurant openings are going on, although we're told to maintain social distancing and wear masks.

John, how are you handling this? How is it affecting you?

JH: Well, it's affected me like it is most people, I'm having to stay in, I don't go out much except to go to the grocery store or go to the drugstore or the cleaners. And I wear a mask at all times when I do that.

JE: Right. And we see some not wearing masks; does that bother you when you see other people not wearing masks?

JH: No, it's their prerogative.

JE: Yeah, I think it seems like we're protecting each other by wearing masks. And then, of course, you can't go out to your favorite restaurant. They're opening up too now.

JH: Just in the last week or so they started opening up.

JE: And then you're at that vulnerable age, but many of us, over sixty-five or seventy, they say, although younger people are getting some of this as well.

We should also remind people that President Trump is bringing his political rally to Tulsa on Saturday, the 20th, and it's causing angst in our town because this is the first time a political rally is being held under this so called umbrella of COVID-19.

Where were you born?

JH: Great Bend, Kansas.

JE: Your mother's name, maiden name, and where she grew up?

JH: Marie Bernard.

JE: Was she from Kansas?

JH: No, she was a nurse, my mother was. She met my father, I think, in Topeka, Kansas, and they moved to Great Bend when I was born. But she was from, I think, up around Iowa.

JE: What nationality is Hausam?

JH: German.

JE: Your mother was German, I suppose?

JH: No, my mother was French and my mother was German.

- JE:** Okay. And your father's name?
- JH:** Louis Hausam.
- JE:** What did your father do for a living?
- JH:** He was an accountant. He retired from public service when he was around sixty-five or so.
- JE:** Worked for public service for many years?
- JH:** Yeah, he worked for several companies. But he worked for Republic Service for the last ten or twelve years, I know.
- JE:** Your mother, what kind of a personality did she have?
- JH:** She was a very nice little old lady, yeah, just very pleasant. The motherly type.
- JE:** And then your father, what was his personality like?
- JH:** Dad was good, he was strict but never, you know, never beat us or anything like that. But when he said do something, we knew to do it.
- JE:** Right, right. Did you have brothers and sisters?
- JH:** I had a brother that died at eleven and I have a sister that's alive and living in Florida.
- JE:** You had a brother who died at eleven years old?
- JH:** Um-hmm (affirmative).
- JE:** What was that from?
- JH:** He had meningitis.
- JE:** Wow. So you were—
- JH:** Well, he died in '35, so I was four years old.
- JE:** Four years. The first house you remember?
- JH:** Living in?
- JE:** Yeah. And would that have been in Kansas?
- JH:** No, 'cause we moved out of Kansas, we only lived there about a year, where I was born during the Depression. Dad went to California. The first house I remember living in was in Los Angeles, 215 South Manhattan. I'll never forget the address. We lived in the back of the house in the garage apartment.
- JE:** What did he do?
- JH:** At that time, he went to work for the Chamber of Commerce. And we moved to Long Beach, California, after several years, right before the war broke out. And he worked for Bethlehem Steel.
- JE:** As an accountant?
- JH:** Um-hmm (affirmative).
- JE:** What was his educational background? Did he pick it up in school, in college?
- JH:** No, he never went to college. Back then, going through high school was a pretty good chore.
- JE:** Right.
- JH:** He went to high school, or graduated from high school, and then went to a business college.

JE: And then became an accountant.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: The Depression, what are your recollections? You're pretty young—

JH: Right.

JE: . . . so you may not have much thoughts about it.

JH: Well, you know, I was very young during the Depression—

JE: Yeah.

JH: . . . so I don't really recall a whole lot of bad things. Dad had a fairly good job, I mean, we always had food on the table and we lived moderately. I can remember the war breaking out. And then during the war, certain things that you can remember.

JE: All right, December 7, 1941—

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: . . . you were ten years old.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Do you remember hearing about that?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Tell us about where you were. It was a Sunday.

JH: We were living in Los Angeles. We were having dinner. On Sundays we always ate like at two o'clock and had our big dinner. I think the time difference between Pearl Harbor or Hawaii and Los Angeles is about four hours, if I'm not mistaken. But I remember it coming over the radio. Dad, you know, up and turned the radio up and didn't mean a lot to me—

JE: Right.

JH: . . . at that age, you know—

JE: Right.

JH: . . . it's just what's going on. I didn't really realize what it was all about, and they had bombed Pearl Harbor.

JE: Right. Did it affect any members of your family, going into the service?

JH: Well, I had an uncle, my mother's brother, Joe Bernard. He'd been in the navy for years; he was a Chief Petty Officer, and he was on Pearl Harbor, got blown off one of the boats there. But he lived. He was the only one that I know of in the family that was in the service.

JE: Hearing about him being there tend to be kind of a big thing in a young mind like yours at that time.

JH: Oh, yeah, yeah. He was there, he had come home, he got stationed in San Diego. At that time, we had moved to Long Beach, California, and he'd come down and visit us. He would always mess around me, try to box with me, and play around. You know, I was about ten, eleven years old then.

JE: But you remember that—

JH: Oh, yeah.

JE: . . . all these years later.

JH: I remember him very well.

JE: Yeah, he took special interest in you, I suppose.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: That's why.

JH: He did.

JE: So then you're in elementary school, where, what town?

JH: We're in Los Angeles until about the third grade—second or third grade—we moved to Long Beach. And I was going to grade school there, I was going to a Catholic school.

JE: So was that a fun time for you, living in Los Angeles and Long Beach? You had friends and—

JH: Yeah, yes, yeah.

JE: . . . boyhood fun?

JH: You know, we used to have friends, neighbor kids that were my age.

JE: You probably thought all of America had that kind of weather too, huh? [laughs]

JH: [laughs] Yeah, I did.

Chapter 03 - 8:30

Living in Tulsa

John Erling: Elementary, and then we're getting into junior high school, and then, eventually, high school. Where are you going to high school?

John Hausam: I went to high school here in Tulsa. We moved back here right after the war in 1945, or right before. But I went to Central High School.

JE: Then your father was following his profession, and what job was that or company that brought him to Tulsa?

JH: I have an uncle, my dad's brother, Buck Hausam, O. B. Hausam. They were going to go into a business together, and I can't remember all the details, but Dad moved back here and they decided it wasn't a good idea, for whatever reason. I think they were going to open a Laundromat, if I remember right.

JE: Yeah.

JH: You remember back then they had these Laundromats all over town?

JE: Yeah.

JH: You bring your laundry in and they do it and take it.

JE: Yeah.

JH: I think they still have them, I'm not sure.

JE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JH: Almost nowadays everybody's got a washing machine and a dryer.

JE: Right, right.

JH: But back then they didn't have, right after the war, because they didn't manufacture them as much.

JE: He came to Tulsa because of his brother, who was living in Tulsa.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: And that's what brought your family here.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: And then the business didn't materialize.

JH: No.

JE: So then what did your father do?

JH: I don't remember the company he went to work for at that time, but he went to work.

JE: But eventually, PSO?

JH: Yeah, he retired from Public Service.

JE: Well, it was good that he had that background of being an accountant, he could do that most anywhere. Smart of him to go to business school back in the '30s.

JH: Yeah, because when he retired, at that time, I had started a real estate company; had my own company then. He would come over and do my books for me. [laughs]

JE: Ohh, that's good.

JH: So it worked out good.

JE: Yeah.

JH: He kept all my books straight.

JE: How old were you when you came to Tulsa?

JH: Probably about fifteen.

JE: Okay.

JH: Sixteen.

JE: And then you went immediately, to what school?

JH: We first moved to Coweta.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JH: My grandfather, there's a place in Coweta, it's called "Up on the Hill," big white house, you go into Coweta. The road goes down there and goes around this hill—big house up there, still there today. Matter of fact, if you go by there, the sign, I don't the people that own it, it's called "Hausam Hill."

JE: Oh? [laughing]

JH: A little sign out there says "Hausam Hill."

JE: Yeah.

JH: At that time, we moved into the house there. My older uncle, Jay Hausam, who worked for Danciger Oil for fifty years, I guess, he retired from Danciger Oil. That house had stayed in the family. Jay had owned it at that time, so he just let us move into it. We stayed there for nine months or so, and then moved to Tulsa, and Dad bought a house here.

I went to school there for one year, ninth grade.

JE: In Coweta. And then when you came to Tulsa?

JH: I went to Central High School.

JE: Tulsa Central. What was your experience at Tulsa Central?

JH: It was fun, you know, it was just going to school. [laughing]

JE: Yeah. Remember any classmates?

JH: Oh, yeah.

JE: And some names that maybe became important to you maybe later on in life?

JH: Uh, well, there was a few. There's a gentleman, lives in Houston now, John Frees. He lived at 10th and Rockford. I lived at 10th and St. Louis. And we had a friend at 8th and Rockford, named Tell Hendricks. His mother was a second mother to us. There was like John and me and Jim and Tell and his brother Bob. We hung out over there all the time.

We'd get in there and shoot dice up against the fireplace, playing around. She'd get on her knees and play with us.

JE: Right.

JH: I mean, she was just really a great mother, second mother to us. John is in Houston, but he comes up here every once in a while and we go to lunch, and I still communicate with him pretty well. Most of the others are still around but Jim lives up in Claremore. Bob Gibbons is still here but we can't hardly get ahold of Bob, I don't know what's the matter.

But high school, we still have a few of us—

JE: Yeah.

JH: . . . that still communicates.

JE: That's—

JH: Still alive, that's the main thing.

JE: That's exactly right. What year did you graduate?

JH: Nineteen fifty.

JE: What were some of the hangouts? Where did you guys go? Or drive up and down Peoria, or whatever you guys did?

JH: I had a car in my junior year. At the end of my sophomore year, I got a job as a cement finisher's helper, during the summer. And, uh, saved up enough money, I bought me a car.

JE: What was it?

JH: First car I had? 'Twenty-eight or '29 Ford.

JE: And you bought this in the '50s?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: That's like a Model A, or—

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative)!

JE: That was a fun car then, wasn't it, huh?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative). I bought it for like two hundred dollars, I don't remember. Had a lot of fun with it, yeah.

JE: Were you kind of a mechanic type?

JH: No, if it takes more than a screwdriver and a pair of pliers, I can't fix it. [laughs]

JE: Kids with you must have enjoyed riding in it. And that was kind of a fun car.

JH: Oh, yeah, we'd, you know, I'd go by and pick up Tell or John or, you know, two or three of us guys, and we'd get in the car and run around.

JE: In that old Model A.

JH: Just horsing around, we never got in any trouble or anything. But if I look back now, I don't think we did anything very exciting. [laughing]

JE: Were there drive-ins at that time or—

JH: Yeah.

JE: . . . hamburger places—

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: . . . that you might have gone to?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative), yeah.

JE: Remember any names?

JH: Well, they had the Admiral Twin Drive-In Theater. They had one down between here and Broken Arrow on 71st—not there anymore. Some of the places we ate, yeah, there was a couple of drive-ins. The one, I'm trying to think of the name of it, down there about on 11th and Main or Boston.

JE: Was Pennington's—

JH: Pennington's was open, yeah. Used to go to Pennington's. There's a root beer place on 11th Street. We used to go out there because they hired these high school girls. And we'd go out there and, of course, they were real strict with the girls. If you could make a date with one of them or you knew one of them, you couldn't pick them up there.

They took the girls home and they waited until they opened the door and went in the house, closed the door. Then they could open the door and come back out, get in the car. But they made them go in the house so, you know—

JE: Yeah.

JH: . . . they got through the—

JE: There was no responsibility then.

JH: Yeah, there was no responsibility or anything there. We'd try to make dates with those girls. Lot of fun, yeah. It was Webber's Root Beer.

JE: What about sports? Did you play sports or anything?

JH: No, I worked my junior and senior year. I worked, only went to school half a day, we had what you called Zero Hour, eight o'clock class. You took your majors and you didn't take physical ed or you didn't take some of the electives. You had your math and your history and your, you know, your majors.

JE: Right, right.

JH: Then you could go work. And I worked for Coca Cola Bottling Company, and I did that my junior and senior year.

JE: What did you do there?

JH: It was in the advertising department.

JE: You worked in high school in the advertising department?

JH: Well, yeah, that sounds like it's a big job. What it was, you saw all these signs out there, you know, Coca Cola?

JE: Yeah.

JH: And they put them up on grocery stores, big, round deals that were mounted on there. And then these billboards, be repainted, that's what we did. [laughing]

JE: Advertising.

JH: That was the advertising part.

JE: Well, you did work for them.

JH: Yeah, yeah, it was fun.

JE: So that was true.

JH: We'd go out and, it wasn't much fun when it was hot, hot, you know, a hundred degrees outside, but when you're young, it doesn't bother you near like it does when you're older.

JE: Did you feel like you had to work? Or did you have a spirit of you wanted to work or you enjoyed working?

JH: No, I wanted to work and make money. [laughs]

JE: You were money-driven.

JH: I was. I had two paper routes when I was in Long Beach. I had two papers, like they used to have here. They had a morning paper and an afternoon paper. And then on Sunday, the two combined, did one paper. I got up and had a morning route, get up at five, six in the morning, deliver the papers. And then when I got out of school, I'd go deliver the afternoon papers. I did that for a while.

And then about a year before we moved back and we were living in Long Beach, I worked for a gentleman, he worked out of his house in the garage. He had a big garage, and it was turned into a shop, and he redid these starter deals. Take the old ones apart and redo them.

JE: What were they used for?

JH: For automobiles.

JE: Okay.

JH: And I had worked in the shop after school. There for at least a year before we moved back.

JE: You were looking for money then?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative). We weren't dirt poor or anything but we weren't exactly wealthy either. You know, if I wanted something like a car or—not then, I was a little too young, but as I wanted things that just weren't things that your family is going to buy me, particularly. I had to earn it.

JE: Were you buying clothes or guns? Or what were you buying?

JH: I don't recall buying anything big. But, no, Mom and Dad bought my clothes and my school stuff. It was just more money spending that I'd saved it up.

JE: The point is that you knew you'd have to go out and earn money if you needed it and you didn't mind working. You had a work ethic, apparently.

JH: Yeah.

Chapter 04 - 7:20

Korea

John Erling: So you graduate from Tulsa Central in 1950. Then what does John Hausam do?

John Hausam: [laughs] Made a big mistake. A buddy of mine, this Tell Hendricks, we rode down together, we were both trying to figure out—we were going to go to college but we couldn't figure out what to take in college. At that point, we didn't know, like most kids don't. Or at least didn't back then.

So we got the bright idea, "Well, let's do this, let's join the army. We can serve for three years, we come out, we get the GI Bill, we get our college paid for." We thought that was a good idea, so we decided to join the army. June the 5th, 1950, we joined the army. We're sent up to Fort Riley, Kansas, to do basic training. On June 25, 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. [laughing] Our dreams of having a nice three-year tour became a nightmare.

Obviously, they rushed us through the last two weeks, cut it a little short. We were supposed to have a fifteen-week basic training; they cut it down to twelve weeks, and shipped us to Korea. [laughs]

JE: Wow.

JH: So, anyway, spent a year in Korea.

JE: Let's talk about that experience in Korea.

JH: Uh—

JE: What did you do? Where were you? And what was your job?

JH: I was in the infantry and I was with the 7th Infantry Division. Spent one year in Korea.

JE: So then you were in battle scenes?

JH: Oh, yeah, yeah, we were on the front line, 7th Division.

JE: You get bullets or anything coming by you?

JH: Yeah. Had a few of them, yeah.

JE: Soldiers dying around you?

JH: Yeah. Saw a few of them. Yeah. It wasn't like the movies. If somebody hasn't been in a battle or in a war or two or Korea or whatever, you know, the movies make it gung-ho. It's really not quite like that. You spend half your time really not in battle. You're dug in, you're waiting for the enemy, or you're advancing, taking the hill, or whatever.

When you're advancing, of course, you're being shot at and if you can overpower the enemy, then, you know, they're going to run off the hill and you take it. When you dig in, they'll, um, let me back up a minute because you'd have to know what really went on there, and most people don't.

MacArthur landed at Inchon and that was a big deal, because he had to get in and out at a certain time or the boats would be stuck in the mud. Anyway, he landed at Inchon. Really, there was very little battle. We were fighting the North Koreans, and North Koreans didn't have much of an army. And they advanced backward, up toward the Yellow River, which China is on one side and the Yellow River and North Korea. There's just very little fighting going up north, you know, there was a few spots, but they were whipped, and that was it.

And matter of fact, when we got to the Yellow River, company commander said, "MacArthur says we're going home for Christmas. It's over."

Well, unfortunately, it wasn't over. The Chinese came across the Yellow River in masses. The first marine division caught the most of it because they were right up on the, that Chosin Reservoir. And, uh, 7th Division was down below them and to the right. But they came over that early morning, and I mean, in masses.

Anyway, everybody, we ended up getting on boats, they got boats in there and we retreated back to Pusan, and they rebuilt and started back up again.

So there was a lot of misconception about that war, I think. You know, they've made movies, no more like what it's about than the man in the moon. But there was a lot of heavy fighting in the marines. Like I say, they caught hell, 'cause they were right there and they were the first ones they hit. And they came over the, I mean, there was thousands of them, like ants, coming across that.

JE: The Chinese?

JH: Yeah. And, of course, China says it wasn't the army, those were volunteers. Bull. [laughing]

JE: Yeah.

JH: Anyway—

JE: Were you near that scene where they came over?

JH: We got hit but we didn't get hit like the marines did.

JE: Yeah.

JH: But we retreated, everybody retreated, marines and everybody. Anyway, we retreated back over to the coast and they brought ships in there and brought us out. And brought the 3rd Division, the 3rd Army Division, brought them in to pull backup for us to get us out of there.

We left there and the last thing I remember seeing on that boat is the 3rd Division was blowing up everything. Blowing it, all the ammo, everything. Well, they didn't want the enemy to get it. And they took us back down to Pusan. We regrouped down there, they brought in a lot of reserves, army reserve people that had been in World War II, they called them into duty, of course, after it started.

Anyway, they built it back up and went back up. The big deal, and I'll never forget this, one morning, we're sitting up there and, of course, it's colder in the wintertime, extremely cold. I mean, it can be ten below zero, it's nothing unusual. And you've got your sleeping bags but you don't dare zip it up. You put your rifle in with you, but you're scared to zip it up because it might freeze and then you can't get out of it. So you just pull over and hold it because you don't dare let that thing freeze on you, the zipper.

We were up there one morning, and they used to have this big deal with blowing whistles and bugle. They couldn't play the bugle, they just blew it, made noises, and blew whistles. And then they'd charge up the hill. Well, one morning, and it was cold, it was cold, I don't know how cold. Someone said it was ten below but I don't know if it was that or not. Anyway [laughing], we're sitting there and, all of sudden, about five o'clock in the morning, hear the whistles and hear the bugle. Here they come.

Well, we had a machine gun that fired one round, it froze. It had a round in the chamber and they fired one round. M-1s wouldn't fire, everything was frozen up, throwing grenades, they wouldn't go off. Everybody took off, off the hill.

Turned out that we were on point over here, so when we went off we head over to the side and had to come all the way back around. By the time we got back around, the company commander had already went back up and took the hill. Turned out, there was only just a few of them that was charging up the hill, I mean, there wasn't that many, but they made enough noise. And when you don't have weapons that fire, I mean, what are you going to do? Because they're sitting down there in huts and warm and all their weapons are warm and they're firing, you know.

But it was more comical than anything. No one got hurt.

JE: You were eighteen—

JH: Nineteen when I was going over, yeah, August, I was nineteen.

JE: Nineteen years old.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative). Anyway, I got out of there and came home—

JE: When you're under that circumstances, you're kind of fatalistic, *Yeah, I could be killed*, and you just have to live with that?

JH: You don't really think, I mean, I didn't. I don't think you think about it that much, because you're not fighting all the time. Eighty, 90 percent of the time you're just there, dug in waiting, or you're pulled back in reserve, and you get back in reserve. And if there's a creek there you get in the creek and get to take a bath and clean up, you know. You don't really think about it. And when you're actually fighting you don't think about it 'cause you're too busy.

JE: Right.

JH: And when you're not, you don't think about it because you're doing other things.

JE: Right. Well, the Korean War was from 1950 to 1953.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: So now you said you were in Korea for a year?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: And then what happened?

JH: Came home.

Chapter 05 - 6:08

Sergeant Hausam

John Hausam: Huh, well, I got my thirty days leave. Came home the last part of November. As a matter of fact, we had Thanksgiving dinner on the ship coming back.

I went over to Arkansas and was there for about seven or eight days while they were processing all these guys coming back. At that point, I was a sergeant. The sergeant there, I told him, I said, "You know, I just live in Tulsa. It's going to be a few days, why don't I go on home?"

He said, "Take off, leave me your phone number in case, you know, I can get a hold of you."

So I left him my folks' home number. Come home and spend two or three days, and go back. [laughing] Nothing ready, I'd come home for a day or two, go back. Finally, I got my orders and I was sent to 101 Airborne Division. It was actually a training division; it wasn't really a jumping outfit. I mean, it originally was—101st was, you know, the big jump in World War II. The big battle, that was a big deal, 101st. But they made into a training outfit.

So I was put in there as a training instructor, as one of the cadre. And spent the rest of my career there—except for three months—I did go down to Fort Benning, Georgia, and got Heavy and Light Weapons Course for three months down there. But TDY took temporary duty.

Came back, and that was it. I got discharged in 1953.

John Erling: Oh, you made sergeant pretty fast, didn't you?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: So you were showing leadership abilities as a nineteen-year-old.

JH: Well, that and, two, we were losing men, so, you know, somebody has to fill the gap.

JE: Okay. However, as a sergeant, and they put you in leadership training and all that kind of thing—

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: . . . so, I mean, you were fulfilling the role, not just filling out an empty space.

JH: Correct.

JE: You were being a sergeant, you were being a good sergeant. I'm trying to compliment you. But it's obvious that you were if they put that kind of effort into you. Did you enjoy those days when you came home?

JH: I enjoyed them a whole lot more than I had the year before.

JE: Yeah.

JH: Yeah, we had, you know, it was nice because we were down there in training and the job was an easy job. It was just taking the troops to classes and you're taking them out in the field in training. It was a very easy job and it was kind of an eight to five job, really. You got off on Saturdays at twelve, so you had Saturday afternoon, Sundays.

JE: Were you a friendly sergeant? I only ask that question because I went to basic training at Fort Leonard Wood. Of course, those sergeants would be different than the sergeant you were. Those sergeants were drill sergeants.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: And we didn't like them. They probably could have been nice. But in your role, your personality could be used in a better way and probably nicer to the troops. Or were you a hard—[laughing]

JH: No. I was a Field First. Had a First Sergeant, which was with the Captain up in the CP, there. And then the Field First, and we had three platoons, a Sergeant in each platoon, and then a Field First. Actually, it was Sergeant Carol who was the First Sergeant, he was Master Sergeant, he was up there. Him and the three Platoon Sergeants and myself. So there was really like five of us.

All we did is in the morning, we'd fall the troops out. If they went to class, we'd march them to class. Oh, we'd jump their bottoms every once in a while.

JE: Yeah.

JH: I mean, they'd get out of line and, you know, they wouldn't keep the barracks clean or something. We'd do things you couldn't do today. We might come in at night and those barracks looks really bad and we knew there was going to be an inspection tomorrow morning, we'd fall the troops out, right in the middle of the night. Blow a whistle to get them up out of bed and fall them out into a dress-right dress. We'd made them dress-right dress and just leave it there for a minute. "Right, front, dress-right dress." Just, you know, for meanness.

Now we'd take them and, "Now get in there and clean the barracks." And it just might be twelve or one o'clock when we got in, you know. 'Cause we had Class A passes. We'd make them get in there and clean the barracks up. We'd do things like that but we weren't *mean* to them, I mean, as far as abusive.

But you couldn't even do that now, you couldn't fall the troops out now. Somebody would write their mother, and their mother would write a senator, and the senator would, you know, call down there at the general, and the general would move back down to the colonel, and first thing you know, you're in trouble. [both laughing]

JE: Right. When you heard the Korean War came to an end in '53, that had to be a big celebration for all of you.

JH: Well, it never came to an end. Because it was never a war. They called it the Korean War but they never declared war, it was a conflict. So they never even ended the conflict. What they had is, well, they had a truce, and they drew the 38th parallel. So really, it just sort of hung there.

JE: Dwight Eisenhower came in as president in '53. Any recollection of him at all?

JH: No.

JE: Yeah.

JH: MacArthur's the only one we had a relationship with 'cause he was the one in charge.

JE: Did you ever see MacArthur?

JH: No, but he was really good to the troops. When we were in Korea, I guess I'd been in Korea about six months, and it depends on your timing but it was around six months you'd get three days R & R over in Japan. Send you over to Japan for three days and then send you back. But you'd have three days. You'd go in and they'd feed you and give you new clothes and sew your stripes and those deals on and turn you loose.

And MacArthur said, "These guys are young."

Well, of course, you know GIs, they'll mess up a good deal every time. They'd get drunk and tear things up.

But MacArthur told the Provost Marshal, "These boys that are coming out of Korea, you tell your MPs, 'You do not touch those boys.' "

Of course, that eventually had to stop, you know, because the GIs got wind to it and they'd get in fights and throw up bars. You know, they'd mess up a good deal. But he really did take care of them, I'll say that.

But I never met the man. Never saw him.

JE: Yeah. Didn't he use a corncob pipe?

JH: Yeah.

JE: And then famous for saying, "Old soldiers never die—

JH: "They just fade away." [laughs]

Chapter 06 - 3:05

He Stepped Off the Path

John Erling: Then you had another incident that happens to you in Korea.

John Hausam: Yes, I had something that I still can't give you an answer to it. But we took a hill one day. There was no fighting to take; the enemy had already kind of moved off. They had hit it with artillery.

We got up on top and they had trenches all around, where they had dug trenches to fight off the enemy, but, evidently, they didn't stay. When we took the hill, there was two fingers going out on it, one to the right and one to the left. And I sent one of the squads out to the right to make sure that there was nothing out there. There was no trees, like I say, artillery had just blown this place apart.

We went down the left and the platoon lieutenant and I took off and started down the left. As you go, there's a path where, evidently, they had walked a lot of back and forth, digging the trenches and so forth.

For some reason, and I don't know to this day, because normally if you're out in the field or you're walking somewhere and there's a path, you've got to stay on the path. Kind of don't think about it, you just do it. For some reason, I stepped off that path, and the lieutenant stepped off it—he was right behind me so he just followed me.

We got about fifteen feet in front and I called back to my squad leader, and I told Folts, I said, "Bring your men and come on up here. Let's clear this up."

He jumped out and took about five steps on that path, and hit a landmine. Blew him up.

To this day, I, I don't know, I just, uh—

JE: Yeah.

JH: . . . I know that we ended up going down to the end, about another fifteen, twenty, about thirty yards down. I sat down and tried to light a cigarette and couldn't light the cigarette. I

mean, it shook me up so bad, is why I was not on that path? What made me get off of that path? I've thought about it, probably thousands of times, and the only thing I can think, the good Lord did not want me to die at that time.

JE: Yeah. Did you go back then and try to—

JH: No, well, no. I mean, there's nothing I could do.

JE: You moved on.

JH: Well, I had to go back that direction but we stayed off the path.

JE: Yeah.

JH: And went back that way. And we got our men and we had to move back off the hill. There was nothing there.

JE: We don't have an answer, do we?

JH: No, and it's just so funny that you would think, "Well, I've walked on paths before, I've been out on fields where there's paths, you know. Cows have made paths I've walked along. You just do it, you don't think. Like I say, the only thing I can think of is the good Lord did not want me to walk on that path.

JE: In that instant, when you stepped off the path—

JH: Stepped off of it when we started out and I just went around it. Like I say, I don't know, I couldn't answer the question.

JE: Well, I don't know what your faith is but you certainly have said, "Thank you, God."

JH: Oh, you better believe it. Yes, sir. Yeah, the good Lord was not ready for me to go. That's the only answer I have.

JE: And he gave you a great career. Thanks for telling us that story.

JH: Certainly.

Chapter 07 - 6:33

John Gets Real Estate License

John Erling: So you're out of the military, out of the army, then you've got the GI Bill.

John Hausam: Uh-huh (affirmative), big deal. [laughing] Got it the hard way. I went to school down in Okmulgee. Took a two-year course in drafting, architectural drafting, mechanical drafting, and map drafting. It was two years but I went through the summer.

Make a long story short, I went to work in Abilene, Texas, for Skelly Oil Company as a map draftsman.

JE: Why did you choose that field?

JH: Well, I'll tell you the truth, the reason I did it 'cause Tell and I got out about the same time and we decided we were going to go to TU. Well, we'd been out of school for three years. We hadn't looked at a book, so we had to take the entry exam.

So we both failed the entry exam. They said, "Well, you can't."

I said, "Oh, now wait a minute, let's talk about this. I want to talk to somebody."

So we got an appointment with Dean Hargrove. And we went up there, and Dean Hargrove said, "You gentlemen really need to go to another school. TU is not the school for y'all."

And I said, "Wait a minute! Why isn't it?" I said, "My folks live here, I can go to school here, I'm on the GI Bill. We spent three years in Korea, I think we're entitled to at least a try."

"No." He wouldn't, he wouldn't.

I said, "I'll tell you what, just do this: Give me one semester. One semester, and if I don't bring C or above at the end of that semester, I'll leave and no hard feelings."

"No," he said.

About that time—Tell is a little hothead anyway, he jumps up and he says, "Come on, John, take this school and stick it." [laughs] He used other words, but, anyway.

And I said, "Oh, if we had a chance, he just blew it, it's gone." [laughing]

So we decided to go down to Okmulgee, and we did, and it was good. Got out of Okmulgee, and I interviewed Amerada, but they would only pay, back then, I think it was \$250 a month, or \$280 a month, it was less than \$300. I said, "Well, I'll have to think about it."

Well, then I got a chance to interview with Skelly Oil Company, and they wanted somebody down in Abilene, Texas. I didn't know Abilene, Texas, from anybody, I'd never been there. I didn't know anybody. Believe me, then it wasn't much. [laughs]

But they had offered me \$350. And I thought, Wow.

So I went back to Amerada. I'd of much rather stayed here in Tulsa because I could live at home. Anyway, they couldn't match it. He says, "No," he says, "I could maybe get you up to around three but," he said, "I'd have to go and that'd be the tops."

I said, "Okay, appreciate it."

So I went to work for Skelly Oil Company. Well, if you've ever been in Abilene, Texas, back in 1955, then, it's the pits. [laughs] It's changed a lot. No liquor. You know, you got three Christian colleges there. There's no liquor, you have to go across county lines to buy liquor. You can't even buy a beer unless you're, uh, veterans deal there, a vet. You could go in there and get a beer and that's all, if you were a veteran and belonged to it. Not that that's the biggest thing in the world to have to have a place to drink, but, I mean, it was just the type of town it was.

Anyway, I've, I got to get out of here, I said, "I can't stand it." I was there about a year and I thought, *This is it*. So I came up to Tulsa and interviewed with a company called Pohly Exploration Company. They did gravity work, and they offered me a job.

Oh, one thing about my \$350, I hadn't been there thirty days and everybody got a raise in the union so they gave everybody a 3 1/2 percent or a \$20 minimum or something. Anyway, I got raised up within three days to \$370. [laughs] Anyway, I went to work for Pohly for \$400 a month.

And while I was here, I was getting a little bored with doing the drafting, really, that map drafting and doing the stuff. Besides, that's hard on your eyes.

JE: So you're drafting for the exploration of work to be done and that?

JH: Yeah, well, they would go out and do the exploration and come back and we'd put it into maps. And they would do the points there, you draw lines between here and here.

Anyway, my uncle was a builder, O. B. Hausam (Buck Hausam). He hired me on weekends to just clean up the houses and do some odd work. Some of the houses he was building or something. And while I was over at his house one day, Seth Kennard, who was a big developer there at 31st and Yale, back in there that housing division on the southwest part of it there, there's a big housing division, and shopping center in there, he developed that.

And we were there one time over at Buck's house. I said something to him about getting a little bored, "I need to do something."

He said, "Why don't you get a real estate license?" He said, "Come to work for me."

I said, "Okay, that sounds like a good deal." So I got my real estate license. But I got to thinking, *Seth isn't going to be able to help me. He's too busy and I don't know anything about real estate.*

So, anyway, to make a long story short, I didn't go to work for Seth, I went to work for Eva Carmichael. She offered to train me and help me get started and everything, so I said, "That was a pretty good deal."

I worked for her for a while, and then I went to work for McGill, who was out on 21st and Memorial. He had developed that addition out there and had about five agents, and they talked me into coming out there.

Was there about two years, and then a gentleman by the name of Frank Flusche and Jim Haggler wanted to start a company and they wanted me to go with them. So we started a company and called it the Carriage Company. Couldn't think of a name, but we knew it wasn't going to be Hausam-Flusche. It'd be a little confusing.

So I was looking through a magazine one day, and I looked and General Motors on the Chevrolets, I don't know if they still do it or not, but if you open the door there's a little metal thing there, and there's a picture of a little carriage there. So, anyway, I talked to him about it, he said, "That's good," so we changed it around so they couldn't say that we used their emblem. Changed it around a little bit and made a carriage out of it and called it Carriage Company.

Kept that for a year. Jim decided he wanted to go into commercial and do some things. Frank and I stayed as partners until 1968, then we had a buy/sell agreement and he ended up buying me out. And I started my own company in '68.

JE: You got your real estate license in 1958.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Was it pretty easy, pretty difficult?

JH: To get the license?

JE: Yes.

JH: Oh, gosh, anybody could have got one. It was a one-page true and false. Today it's a whole lot different.

JE: Okay, I was going to ask you that.

JH: Oh, yeah, oh, yeah, it's—

JE: Really complicated now?

JH: Yeah. Back then, it was very, very simple to get.

Chapter 08 - 6:11

John Hausam Gallery of Homes

John Erling: So then when you got into the market, what type houses were you selling, and maybe price range and that type of thing?

John Hausam: Well, the multiple listing system, which I'm sure you're familiar with, they didn't have probably a half a dozen houses over \$25,000. Average sale price, and I don't know exactly what it is today, but I know there's a lot of \$10,500, \$11,000, \$13,000, \$15,000.

I listed a \$21,000 house one time and I thought, *Boy, I really hit the jackpot.*

JE: That would have been in the early '60s?

JH: That was a big one back then.

JE: In the '60s?

JH: Yeah, '68, '69.

JE: So that was a big deal, \$21,000?

JH: It was for me, yeah. But most of your big houses—you had Hughes, Jones, and Russell; Cross, Davisson, and Mullhall; they were the country club, you know, boys. They're the ones that used to handle more of the big homes.

But, anyway, I lived down there off of the Brookside area. I bought that house for \$10,250, back then.

JE: Yeah.

JH: A little three-bedroom, one-bath, one-car garage. But I was selling more of the \$10,000 to \$15,000, you know, \$13,500, \$14,000.

JE: But that was average, wasn't it?

JH: Average was probably around \$13,000, \$14,000, yeah.

JE: Yeah. What about mortgage rates then?

JH: Oh, a lot of houses were mortgaged on GI Bill. A lot of them were FHA. Gosh, I don't remember, but I think your Vas were somewhere around 4 percent. That's been sixty years ago, I can't remember that far back.

JE: Right. And when you think today, I just checked it yesterday, thirty-year fix is 3.2.

JH: Yeah.

JE: Fifteen-year fix is 2.74.

JH: Yeah, way down.

JE: What do you think the highest it was, ever, in your career?

JH: Well, it went back when all those savings and loans and all were going under, this was probably back when interest rates went way through the ceilings. I think interest rates were up around 9, 10 percent.

JE: Wow.

JH: When they hit that, I said right then, "We're not going to sell any houses. I mean, there's no one going to take out loans at that." And I'll be darned if a doctor didn't buy one and paid the 10 percent, or whatever it was, 9 or 10 percent. And we survived that.

A lot of them sold on what they call collateralized mortgages, savings and loans. You put up a thousand, they would put up money, and it would collateralize the loan. Down payments is what it was for.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JH: Of course, those savings and loans, so many of them went broke after that. The highest I can remember is that one the doctor—and that didn't last long.

JE: But when you got into it, were you excited about it? You said, "Yeah, I'm making money." It was working for you?

JH: No, it was a slow process. We did pretty good when we first started with the three of us. And then Jim got out and we did all right. Then when I started my own company, I was fortunate enough that we got a few agents that were pretty good agents.

JE: So that was in 1968, then, when you started—

JH: Yes.

JE: . . . John Hausam Real Estates?

JH: Yeah, well, it was John Hausam Galleria Homes. The Galleria Homes.

JE: Okay. Where was your main office?

JH: When I sold to Frank, I didn't know what I was going to do. We made a deal and I got money and he's going to pay me X number of dollars down, and then over three months,

so much a month for three months. I thought, well, you know, I'd been working seven days a week. We were really working to build that company.

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

JH: I thought, *I think I'll take off a couple of weeks and just go somewhere and take a vacation.* Well, I had two or three agents come to me and want to know what I was going to do, and I said, "Well, I don't know right now."

"Well, if you start a company, we want to go with you."

Oh, my gosh. Now what do I do?

So I ended up with some agents and went down and rented a place there at 38th and Harvard. Rented that and stayed in there for a year. Then I went and rented a place at 51st Street, it was between Harvard and Yale, on the south side of the street. Anyway, rented a place there a couple of years.

Then I came up with this lot there at 6000 block on 51st Street, just before you get to Sheridan, two doors west of Sheridan. I built the building there and made a big gallery of homes out of it.

JE: How many floors were in that building?

JH: There was just one floor.

JE: Okay.

JH: I've sold it and they've built something up on top of it.

JE: So you were advancing with your company?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative), we were moving right along.

JE: By that time, how many agents do you think you had with you?

JH: When I built the building?

JE: Yeah.

JH: Well, I had a Broken Arrow office down there. I had opened a Broken Arrow office and the building on 51st, I probably had about twenty-five agents. Broken Arrow had about twelve, maybe fourteen, something like that.

Then we opened an office there on Memorial, built a building on Memorial, actually there across from the cemetery. I had agents in there. Then we opened one in Jenks. Then I built a complex in Tahlequah; that was not a good idea. I'd pretty much turned the company over to my son by then. This was back in the early 2000s, '05, '06, '04, somewhere in there.

I had an office there in Tahlequah but it was really a bad deal. We couldn't get a good location, it was kind of in the back of an old strip center. So we found a lot right there on the main street going into Tahlequah and we bought the lot and built the building on there. Kept that for a while, just didn't work out good.

Anyway, ended up selling the building, ended up selling all of them, eventually. [laughs]

JE: But there was something about you, you had a salesman's personality and you had leadership. People are coming to you, start a company, you could sense that and it began to work for you. You did quite well.

Also you became involved in the community. You donated to Call Rape.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Donated two rooms to the Battered Women's Shelter.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Also helped Twelve By Twelve Drug and Alcohol Abuse Program, United Way, American Heart Association. Your company did all those things. And you felt it was important to give back to the community, apparently.

JH: That's true. They were good to me.

JE: At one time, I read, you had 135 sales associates, maybe more.

JH: At one time, I had about 170 or 180, with all the offices.

Chapter 09 - 6:21

Real Estate-Tough Job

John Erling: Then by that time, what were the other companies that you were either competing with that were also doing the same thing?

John Hausam: Well, Sam Rader jumped in there pretty good with Coldwell Banker. He was probably giving us as big a fit as anybody, I mean, competition-wise.

JE: Gordona Duca was—

JH: Gordona, I trained Gordona.

JE: Oh, really?

JH: Uh-huh (affirmative). Gordona's husband was a police officer and she worked at a bank, she was a teller at a bank. Very sharp girl, very sharp memory, she could remember things that twenty years ago—I mean, she really could.

I'll tell you a story on that. We were in Hawaii. I'd taken some of the agents on a trip because they'd won a contest. We're walking across the street, Gordona and me and a couple of the other agents, there was a stoplight. We got in the middle of the street and she turns over and says, "Charlie," or something, and we stopped.

So she turns around and walks back with him while we kept going across the street. Turns out that she went to high school with him and remembered him.

JE: Hmm (thoughtful sound).

JH: But she did have a fantastic memory and is a pretty sharp girl. She started her own company and did very well with it.

JE: Did that bother you?

JH: No, I'm happy for them.

JE: Yeah.

JH: I've always told agents, "If you want to start a company and I can help you in any way, maybe loan you some money if you need it . . ." Competition's good. Good competition is good for you. Never bothered me a bit; I was happy for them.

JE: McGraw was probably another name too.

JH: Joe McGraw, yeah. Joe was a senator at one time, you know.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JH: Oklahoma senator. And he had a real estate company, but I don't think he had anything back when he was a senator. Finally, yeah, he grew and he was very, very good company. Joe's done well.

JE: Your sales meetings, did you conduct them?

JH: Yes, most of the time I did. Up until the last and the managers connected them because I had five offices and had them very well.

JE: Yeah. What was your style? To help? To threaten? To say, "If you don't . . ."

JH: Oh, no, no, no, you never threaten. You try to help them is what you try to do. You try to find out, you know, what they're weak in or what they're not doing and you just want to try to make them better agents. And the only way you can make them better agents, they have to be willing to start with. And you've got some that are never going to make it; they're not willing to put in the hours. Because it's a tough job.

You know, most people work eight to five, but real estate is evenings, Saturdays and Sundays, open houses, things of that nature. It's not an eight to five type of job. They have to be willing to do that and a lot of people aren't willing and a lot of people can't. A lot of people, women especially, it's hard getting in there, they've got children, they've got families and husbands, and, you know, they have other things.

JE: You think a lot of people went into real estate because they thought it was easy?

JH: I think they think it's a lot easier than it is, yes.

JE: You mentioned females, there was one time though that females weren't really in the business and it was mostly men. Isn't that true?

JH: No, no it isn't.

JE: Oh, really?

JH: Uh-uh (negative). I got my license in the late '50s, and I would say there was probably more women than men.

JE: Oh, at that time?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: And probably today there's more women than men.

JH: Oh, yeah, probably.

JE: Do you think women were more effective than men? The female buying likes to connect with the female—

JH: You know, I don't know because if you look back, and I don't know today because I've been out of it for ten years, almost. I have to think that there's a lot of good men that are salespeople. But it seemed like, at least when I was in it up till ten years ago, that the men just didn't, I don't know, they didn't want to work that hard or . . . women just seemed to dominate it, is all I can tell you. I don't know why. And I think they still do today. I don't have any statistics but . . .

JE: Was there any time during your business that, "I don't know if I'm going to make it. We're going to have to close the doors"? Any time that ever happened to you?

JH: Back when the interest rates went way up I was nervous about it, but, no, I never got to the point where I thought we were going to have to close the doors.

JE: We should talk about your son, John Louis, who goes by JL.

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative), well, he doesn't like that.

JE: Oh, he doesn't?

JH: Oh, he hates that.

JE: JL?

JH: Oh, yeah.

JE: And how did he become known as JL? Was that a change from you?

JH: Well, because when he came to work for me, I'd get a call for John Hausam, he'd get half my calls, I'd get some of his. So I just started calling him JL. Just started it and it became a deal and other people started picking it up. But, no, he never did like it, he hated it.

He belongs to Cedar Ridge and this has been a few months ago, maybe a year ago. One of the guys he plays with comes in and says something about John. And I said, "I'll tell you what, you want to have some fun? When you're out there and he does something, say, 'Hey, JL, this.' Call him JL."

And he did. He said, "He doesn't like that, does he?"

He was someplace and someone called him JL and he says, "My name isn't JL, it's John!" [laughing] And I'm probably the only one that calls him that much.

JE: Yeah.

JH: Anymore.

JE: Had he been in real estate someplace else when he came to you, or what?

JH: He was in the air force and stationed down in San Antonio and he got a real estate license down there. I don't think he did much with it. He kind of played with it but he had a license.

So when he got out, he came up here, he was married, and the girl he was married to was a realtor. She had a little old company, just kind of a one-man office deal. And he went to work for her.

Well, she calls me one day and she says, "Will you do me a favor? Will you take him off my hands and teach him something?" She said, "I don't have the time."

And I said, "Send him over."

So, anyway, I put him in there and tried to help him a little bit. It was a struggle. He had a hard time because he made some people mad. He had that attitude, "I'm the boss's son," and he got kind of cocky and lost a few agents over it.

JE: How did you deal with that?

JH: Uh, very gently. You know, you can't just go in there like a wild man. I just talked to him. I told him, "You know, you've got to understand these people. You can't go boss them around. They're independent contractors, they can go anywhere in town and go get a job. Every broker in town would be loved to hire them. You got to work with them and not scold them."

Anyway, he finally kind of settled down and he learned and he did real well at the last, he was very good.

Chapter 10 - 8:25

South Tulsa

John Erling: In '99, he presented a new image of John Hausam. You became chairman and chief executive officer. And he was president.

John Hausam: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Then he was beginning to be in the front office and taking over.

JH: Well, I was sort of training him for it. You know, I was getting up where I knew, at some point, *I'm going to get out of this*. Been in it back then, what? Fifty years? And fifty gets a little old. So, uh, yeah.

JE: Your company was named in a national relocation and real estate magazine list of 250 powerbrokers, recognized by real estate trends magazines, annual broker list, which identified the company as among the top 1 percent of the nation.

JH: I think that's right, yeah.

JE: It's a nice compliment to your career.

JH: Yes, it was.

JE: I would say real estate was very, very good to you.

JH: It has been good to me, yes it has.

JE: But it was hard work, wasn't it?

JH: Yes, it wasn't an eight to five job. There was many a Sundays I would go to the office around twelve o'clock and be there, 'cause there was no one hardly in the office. And I

could get a lot more done in three or four hours on a Sunday afternoon than I could two days in the office with interruptions and people coming in and all.

JE: Well, you obviously have the charisma to be a leader and to make sales, so you had two things working for you. When we think about South Tulsa, and you saw it grow, 31st, 41st, 51st—

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: I'm in your home right now, you're out here in about 101st and Memorial area. That must have been something that you thought would never ever happen. Or did you?

JH: I don't think I ever thought about it, I mean, really. I can remember when my Uncle Jay, Dad's brother, worked for Danciger. He built a house at 42nd and Harvard. This was back in the late '40s. And I remember my dad asking Jay, he says, "Why in the world would you build a house way out there?"

JE: Yeah.

JH: "The bus stops at 41st and Harvard.

JE: Yeah.

JH: I mean, that was way out. So, yeah, I can remember cow pastures all over this area out in here.

JE: You didn't know but a speculator might have thought, *We ought to go out there and buy land.*

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Did you think about doing that?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: And did you?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Where were you buying south?

JH: Well, I bought some in Broken Arrow. Bought eighty-five acres, me and another gentleman, bought eighty-five acres there at 21st and Elm there. It's right where the expressway cut through it, eventually. Split it, which was good, we made a lot of money off of that because we bought it for nothing, back then bought it it was nothing.

And then I bought a ten-acre track over from the high school, 51st and the county line, it's on this side in Tulsa County. It's on the corner there, the big high school and grade school is across the street, south of it. So it'll go, that's a good location. They built some apartments over there now and it's got a golf course back and a housing just behind it over here.

Those are the only two that I have right now.

JE: Oh, you still have that land?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: What was developed on it?

JH: Nothing.

JE: Nothing?

JH: They're vacant. The one in Broken Arrow, the big theater down there that they've got in Broken Arrow, if you come down to the street, the thirty-two acres we have there backs up to the expressway there. Right next to us, I just got the information on the zoning, they're trying to zone that acreage that just butts up to us and goes this way, for a development. So that piece of land is a good piece of land.

We had an offer on it and the guy backed out at the last minute because they were actually going to put a Reser's Store in there, it's about two years ago, and I guess the grocery business wasn't doing too good. Some of these other stores had come in and they backed out of the deal at the last minute, which is fine, I don't care. It's not going anywhere.

One thing about land, it doesn't go anywhere. Usually it goes up. [laughs]

JE: Some of the best investment is land?

JH: Oh, I think so, if you get the right land, the right place.

JE: And if you need to borrow it's great collateral.

JH: The thing about land is, it's not something you're going to turn overnight. If you're not in a hurry, it's just a good investment. I mean, you can take a piece of land and pay, back then, \$80,000, keep it for ten, fifteen years, and sell it for three or four million dollars. If you see the development going around it.

JE: Were you able to do that?

JH: Well, we haven't sold it, but we will, we're not in any hurry.

JE: Getting ready to make a big sale, maybe?

JH: If not, my kids can have it.

JE: Right.

JH: Let them worry about it.

JE: Right. How many children did you have?

JH: Three, two boys and a girl.

JE: And their names?

JH: John Louis, you got Steven Mark, and Teri Lynn.

JE: Did they go into real estate? The other two?

JH: No, no.

JE: Schools often play a role in selecting a house, isn't that true?

JH: Yes it is.

JE: Was that the case back in the '50s and '60s?

JH: Oh, it's always been the case, yeah. I mean, if you've got kids you're going to look at the areas that the schools are in. If you have a particular school, and some people don't care but a lot of people do.

JE: I remember coming to town in '76, and it was Jenks, and everybody wanted to be in the Jenks School District.

JH: Uh-huh (affirmative).

JE: You remember that too?

JH: Yeah.

JE: Now they've spread out to Union and others and, of course, Tulsa publics too. Not everybody is fleeing the city.

JH: [laughing]

JE: But they did there for a long time there, didn't they?

JH: Yeah, they did.

JE: Condominiums. When did that concept come around? Was that in the '50s, '60s, or when do you think that happened?

JH: I'd say late '50s. I might be wrong but I'd say late '50s.

JE: Were you able to sell the condominiums any?

JH: Never got into them much, huh-uh (negative). I wasn't into condominiums.

JE: When did you turn the company over to John, your son?

JH: Two oh nine, or 2010.

JE: So then he merged with Terry Gartside and Sam Rader?

JH: Yeah.

JE: John Hausam Realtors joined with Coldwell Banker Select and would operate under the Coldwell Banker brand. Doesn't John Hausam eventually under leadership of your son John become a property management and leasing company?

JH: When he did his deal with Sam Rader we had a property management and leasing company that was very profitable, a very good company. And, uh, Sam couldn't take it because he had had a property management company but a year or two before he sold his off, and it had a noncompete clause that he couldn't have a property management company or compete for five years or whatever it was.

So JL took the property management company and stayed with Sam a year or two. I think their deal was a two-year deal. Then he moved over, kept the property management company, and he kept it running while he was with Sam, which was fine with Sam.

JE: And that's what John does today, isn't it?

JH: Yes.

JH: And that turns out to be a profitable business. So he's not selling houses now?

JH: No. Oh, they might sell a house, you know, occasionally—

JE: Yeah, okay.

JH: . . . to somebody that has a lease and wants it sold.

JE: But you started that yourself, didn't you?

JH: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JE: Why did you? Did somebody need a manage my house or whatever? How do you think you got into that business?

JH: Oh, I got into it, we had a girl that worked for us, young lady, she liked to do property management. She liked to do the management, so I just set her up as a property manager and started with that. And then it just went—she left and started her own company and, you know, we hired someone else. We just built it over a period of years.

JE: Probably because, well, I shouldn't answer for you, but it's just kind of by attrition, I mean, you're around all these people with houses and, "Could you do this? Could you do that?"

JH: Occasionally you'll have people that don't want to sell their house. Maybe they're being transferred to LA or someplace, but they know it's only going to be a year or so and they're going to come back to Tulsa. Because they love Tulsa and want to be here and they don't want to sell their house, so they'll want to rent it. There's different reasons for why people will rent their houses.

JE: And then when they're gone, you probably need somebody to manage that house.

JH: Right. Yeah.

JE: So it just flows together, doesn't it?

JH: You do not only the leasing but you do the property management if they want it. You do the whole nine yards if they're out of the country, or out of, you know, Oklahoma.

JE: That had to be, for you, in addition to your real estate sales, a pretty good revenue generator.

JH: That office was very profitable.

Chapter 11 - 7:18

Christmas Day

John Erling: How much luck plays into somebody growing a company above and beyond natural talents? Is there any luck?

John Hausam: Oh, I kind of believe the old saying, "The harder I work the luckier I get." And I'm sure there has to be some pure luck in there but I still think it's back to the old saying, "The harder you work." And I've told my agents that, you know, "The harder you work the more you're going to make."

JE: Well, it seems if we're working hard we put ourselves in a position to have a lucky experience.

JH: Probably, yeah. There's bound to be some luck in anything you do. Timing could be just right, which would be luck. But again, I think it's more hard work than it is luck.

JE: When was the best time, do you think, for you in real estate? The most fun, '80s, '90s, '70s?

JH: I guess I'm kind of stupid in some ways because I think that was all a lot of fun. I enjoyed real estate, I mean, I enjoyed going to the office. A lot of evenings, everybody gone, and I'd look out in the summertime and it's getting dark and it's seven o'clock at night. I mean, I just enjoyed it. And I think if you enjoy something that much you're going to make it.

JE: Yeah.

JH: I don't care what it is you do.

JE: Well, then you must have enjoyed people, you're a people-person.

JH: I do, I'm a people-person, yeah.

JE: Yeah, and so that worked for you.

Young people listening to this and they're wondering, *What kind of a career am I going to have? What am I going to do?* Do you have any advice for youngsters who are—

JH: Yeah.

JE: . . . I might think about real estate, what advice would give them?

JH: Well, first of all, they've got to get their license, that's the main thing. But the license just doesn't teach anything, it just gives you a license to learn. Then I would tell them they need to find a broker that's willing to work with them and help them. Because so many people get in with a company and, you know, "Here's your desk, here's your phone, now you're on your own," type of deal. Not as much today as it used to be, but still, find a company you're comfortable with and know that's going to help you get started. Then just be prepared to work. Don't be prepared to say, "Well, it's five o'clock, I'm going home." Or, "It's eight o'clock, I'll go to the office tomorrow," it's nine or whatever. I mean, you just have to be at the call of the other people and you have to be working toward getting listings and not worrying about the sales, because they'll come if you have the listings.

JE: Oh, so getting those listings is real important then?

JH: To me, that's it. Here's the thing about a listing: I list your house and I put it in multi-lists. You know, I want to sell it but we want to get the house sold, that's the job that you hired us for. So you really don't care whether I sell it or Joe Blow sells it. So now I've got that in multi-lists and it's being shown by other brokers. I try to sell it, certainly, if I can get a buyer. But somebody else sells it, well, I'm going to make money off of it. I get a listing pay, so I'm going to make money when somebody else sells it.

When I take you out to show you houses, I can show you for two days, spend my time and gas and buy you lunch and everything else, and then you go out and buy off a sub-owner or a builder's house. I haven't made a dime.

So the listings are going to make you money, and it's going to generate buyers that might not want your house, but I'm talking to them and I say, "Well, let me show you a couple of houses that might fit." So I can take you out and maybe sell you something else, find you something that you like.

And that's open houses. Very few houses are sold off an open house. I sold one, when I was selling—

JE: Wow.

JH: . . . off an open house. But I got buyers off an open house. They would come in and, "Oh, this isn't really what we want."

And then I'd get talking with them and, "Well, let me see, I've got a place over here, you know, why don't I set up an appointment and show you a few," or whatever.

If you don't have the listings, you aren't going to get the buyers. Where are you going to get the buyers from?

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JH: And where are you going to make any money? So I always taught my people, "The key is, go out and get the listings."

JE: There was a time then when John Hausam Real Estate was a big name in town, as big as any of the names that we've just mentioned.

JH: Probably.

JE: It was. So you get some people calling you too, "We want to sell our home. We know you're big, we know you're good."

JH: Oh, yeah, you'll get calls every now and then, yeah, um-hmm (affirmative). You get people that call you and want you to sell their home. You know, "You sold one down the street and we're getting ready to sell. Why don't you take a look at ours?" Or whatever.

JE: Would you ever get a call at ten o'clock at night and say, "You know what? Would you like to go see something?" or whatever, you have to respond the middle of the night?

JH: No, I got one on Christmas morning.

JE: Really? What was that?

JH: It was another broker. He called me and he said, "I got a contract on one of your houses."

I said, "Oh, okay. How long have you had it?"

He said, "Well, I just wrote it."

"Well, that's fine, okay. Why don't I meet with you?"

Back then we presented the contracts. The agents didn't present them. That's another thing today, agents are nothing but order takers, in a way, I don't want to put them down, but, I mean, they don't do near the selling that we used to have to do.

The contract came in, I'd have to get the agent, and we'd go out and present it to you, sit down across the table, you and your wife, and we'd sit there and explain it to you. If you didn't like it, you'd make a counter offer, and I'd take it back to the, you know, the other agent would come with me but they would sit there and let me do the talking. I'd go over the contract with them.

Today, they just mail you the contract or fax it to you or take it over and drop it in your lap. I won't say there's no salesmanship but it's not like it used to be.

But anyway, there was a time where we presented all the contracts with the agent. Of course, we stopped that because that was working twenty times a day doing that.

JE: Yeah. So the agents had to do it?

JH: The agents had to learn to do it.

JE: Right. So this house on Christmas Day, was it a big house? Was it a big sale?

JH: It was over in Leisure Lanes. I think this was back probably twenty-two, three, four thousand dollar house, at that time.

Anyway, we brought it over and I called the seller and I said, "Yeah, we've got a contract on your house," and I said, "I know it's Christmas morning and this is very unusual, but the people are in here from out of town and they wrote the contract."

He said, "Well, we're just doing the presents. Kids are here."

And I said, "I understand, and if you want to later, we can do it."

He said, "Well, why don't wait until about twelve or one o'clock or something, till we get kind of wrapped up here."

I said, "Okay." So I went over and we sold the house, but it was just very unusual that Christmas morning I got really—I have to tell you, I don't remember the agent, it's been thirty years ago, forty years ago. But I'll tell you, that agent was a go-getter. [laughing]

JE: Okay.

JH: I'll bet he made it. He really should have. Going out on Christmas morning, presenting the contract.

JE: And you felt your duty is you couldn't put him off a day. You said, "No, I'll do it."

JH: No, no, no you don't go do that. Two things can happen: One is they can get what they call the buyer's jitters. They can say, "Aw, gee, maybe we can . . ." and they start getting the buyer's jitters and they can back out. And that's not doing your seller any good.

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JH: So you want to get that contract presented as quick as possible.

JE: Buyer's remorse too is another term.

JH: Yeah, I've seen it.

JE: Don't they have thirty days or something to back out of the deal?

JH: No, they can back out until it's accepted.

JE: Okay.

JH: If you haven't presented it, they can call you can say, "Has that contract been presented?"

"Well, no, we're going to."

"Withdraw it."

Chapter 12 - 1:52**How to Be Remembered**

John Erling: How would you like to be remembered?

John Hausam: I guess I'd like to be remembered as being, really, a kind of a good person. I mean, I wasn't the bad person. I tried to help others. I donate to various charities and I've done some things for other people.

I had one case, a guy came to me years ago. He was with McDonnell Douglas, I guess, out there, being transferred to California. And he had his house listed with us, but he said that, "I don't have very much in it, and I've got a guy out here that'll buy it for five hundred dollars," or something. But he said, "I can't pay you a commission. And I just don't know what to do."

And I said, "Well, what's the deal?" and, you know, I questioned him a little bit about it. And I said, "Well, I'll tell you, just go ahead and sell it and we won't charge you anything."

So, you know, there's been some cases like that, that people are in hardships and you can't just say, "Yeah, I want my money. That's it, I'm entitled to it and I've got a contract." You can be real hardnosed but that doesn't get you anywhere. And it doesn't help the person any, that's for sure.

So there's been some cases that we've given the commissions away. And, of course, I always have to ask the agent to, because they're involved in it. But I explain it to the agent and I've never had an agent that said, "No, I want my commission, you know, I want my part." Probably if they did, they wouldn't be with me very long. [laughs]

JE: Um-hmm (affirmative).

JH: I wouldn't tell them right then but I'd tell them afterwards.

No, I never had one that—so I don't know, I guess I'd just like to be known as the person that was fairer.

JE: And being that way made a successful business for you.

Well, John, I've known you for many years, and this was fun to be able to listen to your story. And thank you for giving your time to this. Your family, and others, can hear your voice for years to come. And learn from what you did. And I would say, it was just plain hard work.

JH: That's 99 percent of it.

JE: There you go. Thanks, John.

JH: Thank you.

Chapter 13 - 0:33**Conclusion**

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