

# Freeman J. Barnes

as interviewed by Judy Hansen  
February 2014

I was born on the west end of town on the corner of Trinnaman Lane and 1500 North in Lehi on the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 1929. My father was Joseph Earnest Barnes and my mother was Azalia Brooks Barnes. I went to school in the Lehi Elementary school on Center and 2<sup>nd</sup> North. It has been knocked down now but was where the Legacy Center stands today. I graduated from Lehi High School and filled a mission for the LDS Church in Samoa. I was on my mission from October 1949 until May 1952 and served 2 ½ years. I had been deferred from the draft so I could fulfill my mission with the understanding that when I got home I would be subject to the draft. When I got home I had to report directly to the draft board within five days of my return.



I had been home from my mission for 2 ½ months when I married my sweetheart Anna Mae Robinson on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1952; on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August I was taken in at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake and from there I was then sent to Fort Ord which is located along the Monterey Bay of California. I had only been drafted so I really wasn't assigned to any branch of service. When I got to Fort Ord they put me in the Army. I was assigned to the signal corps and sent to Camp San Luis Obispo California for training. Camp San Luis Obispo was actually just a National Guard camp but they used it during the Korean conflict for training. The signal corps is a branch of the Army that has to do with communications, telephones, switchboards, and telephone lines – at least back in those days; Today it would be a lot more high tech than what I was doing back then. There were different trades we were trained in. There was a pole lineman which was sitting poles and stringing wire in the battle field for communication purposes, or there was a telephone installer and repairman, switchboard, and so-on. I was trained as a telephone installer and repairman. I was assigned to the 303<sup>rd</sup> Signal Battalion. The 303<sup>rd</sup> was a battalion that had been deactivated after the end of WW II but it had been reactivated during the Korean conflict as a replacement unit. They took people in that were drafted, discovered what they were suitable for, and then put them on a rotating file situation. If other units in Korea or any where needed replacements for communications they could call for them from the 303<sup>rd</sup>.

When I was in basic training, I had a hernia that popped out and so they operated on it and kept me in the hospital for two weeks. After that they sent me home on convalescent leave. I went to Salt

Lake for a short period of time. When I went back to San Luis Obispo I was washed back to a later basic training company. So between my medical emergency and all the other things that happened I ran out of time and my name never came up to be sent to Korea. That hernia probably saved my life. I was in California about a year.

So as it turned out I was never sent to Korea. They sent the 303<sup>rd</sup> to Fort Hood Texas and I went with them. While all the men were being held waiting for an assignment they would have us do different things to keep us busy such as clerk work, cooks helper, company carpenter, or whatever. This was just to keep us busy until we were called for. I was assigned to the S-4 section which was supply. I was a clerk-typist there along with two or three other servicemen. I stayed in Fort Hood about a year until my enlistment was up. The 303<sup>rd</sup> was moved to Fort Huachuca Arizona but I didn't have enough time left in my enlistment so I was put in another holding company for about two weeks or so and then I was discharged from Fort Hood and came home. I hated the military. One hundred and twelve days before my discharge I started counting the days down when I would be out. I was discharge August 18, 1954. I didn't learn a blasted thing there that I ever used or wanted to use.

My wife Anna Mae was with me during most of my military service except basic training. Before we left for Texas, Bishop Barnes said to us, "Texas has the most cattle and the least milk, the most rivers and the least water, the most trees and the least shade, and you can look the furthest and see the least of any State in the Union." We would go into Killeen, the town by Fort Hood and there would be big cockroaches everywhere. They would crawl up walls and all over floors. There were big tarantulas that had leg spans of almost 8 – 10 inches in diameter that would run across our yard. There were horny toads, lizards, armadillos, scorpions, and skunks; you name it, Texas had it. Anna Mae was turned around the whole time she lived there. She swore the sun would come up in the south and set in the north.

After I got out of the military we moved to Richfield because that is where my wife was from. I worked there as a service station attendant, with the Sevier County road department, and with my father-in-law in the coal business for a while. Then I moved to Lehi with hopes of becoming a brick layer or builder of some sorts but that never turned out so I started driving trucks. I drove trucks all over the western United States for about five years. I wanted to be home more so I chucked that and went to work at the Utah State Prison and retired from there after 22 1/2 years of service.

I have three wonderful daughters; Camille Kay Barnes who lives here in Lehi next door to us. She was born in Texas while I was in the military and was four months old when we came home. She has one child. LeAnn Enderle who has five children and also raised her husband's four other children; she lives in Lawton, Oklahoma. My youngest is Lora Mae Wirthlin who lives in Taylorsville, Utah. She has two children.

My parents had eight children. Three of my brothers: Elwin, Lynn, and Clinton Jack also served in the military.