

## **Title Page & Abstract**

An Interview with Clarence Senior

Interview #: SAA-A-D-2006-008

Conducted by the Springfield African-American History Foundation  
For the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Born in Springfield, Illinois in 1929, Clarence Senior attended Feitshans High School, received his GED, and served in the Navy. He married Peggie Neal; they had seven children. He was hired by the the Springfield Fire Department in 1963. He discusses discrimination in the workplace and in the community and the changes he has seen in Springfield.

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Interview date(s):  | July 17, 2006                                 |
| Interview Location: | Springfield, Illinois                         |
| Interview Format:   | audio cassette                                |
| Interviewer:        | Rudy Davenport                                |
| Transcription by:   | The Tape Transcription Center                 |
| Edited by:          | Mary Jane Logan, Christy Barcus, Cheryl Pence |
| Total Pages:        | 19  |
| Total Time:         | 50 minutes, 27 seconds / 0.84 hrs             |

Interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

## **Abstract**

### **Clarence Senior Springfield African-American History Foundation Project**

**Biographical Information and Synopsis:** Clarence Senior was born in 1929 and raised in Springfield, Illinois. He was the younger of two boys. He attended Palmer, Lincoln, and Matheny elementary schools and Feitshans High School. He quit high school in his junior year, but eventually received his GED. He joined the Navy in 1951. He married Peggie Neal, and they had seven children.

In 1963, Clarence began working for the Springfield Fire Department. It was not easy for him to get hired by the fire department and he speaks in some detail about that situation. He discusses how some people welcomed him and some people did not. He also discusses other forms of prejudice that existed in Springfield, such as not being able to eat at or patronize certain places of business, and how, after he returned from the Navy, he could see that some progress was being made on those issues.

Mr. Senior and the interviewer, Rudy Davenport, discuss racial segregation and inequality and the Civil Rights Movement. The interview ends with a discussion on the steroid scandals surrounding Major League Baseball and how black baseball players have been punished where white players have not.

**Topics Covered:** Springfield, Illinois, 1920s – present; Springfield Public Schools; Civil Rights movement; Springfield Fire Department; U.S. Navy; discrimination in the workplace; his family; Major League Baseball

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

## **COPYRIGHT**

**This material may be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. “Fair use” criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955**

