Guide to the Steven Kwon oral history interview

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Table of Contents

Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Kwon, Steven O.
Contributor:	Reflections: the Las Vegas Asian American and Pacific Islander Oral History Project
Title:	Steven Kwon oral history interview
ID:	OH-03928
Date:	2024 October 01
Physical Description:	5 Digital Files (0.185 GB) MP3, JPG
Language of the Material:	English

Abstract: Oral history interview with Steven Kwon conducted by Stefani Evans on October 1, 2024 for the Reflections: the Las Vegas Asian American and Pacific Islander Oral History Project. In this interview, Kwon begins by describing his childhood in Seoul, Korea as the youngest of three children during the Korean conflict. In 1960, he served his compulsory military service, which was 18 months for students. In 1964, he followed a friend's recommendation to go to Denmark and attend the folk high school (now the International People's College) to immerse himself in the Danish language, history, and community. He spent one year at the folk high school and later attended the College of Building Technology at the University of Denmark. While he was in his final year, Las Vegas, Nevada architect James McDaniel recruited him to join his firm, which he did in December 1974. After working with McDaniel for one year, he joined Jack Miller Associates for three years and David Welles/ Architronics before opening his own design/build firm, GKG Builders in 1986, which he claims was the first Las Vegas firm to offer both services. Soon after arriving in Las Vegas, he joined the Lions Club and Rotary International and, in 1986 created Southern Nevada's first Asian Chamber of Commerce. He also worked with various politicians at different levels of government to encourage South Korean investment in Las Vegas and Nevada, eventually forming a sister-city relationship between Las Vegas, Nevada, and An San, Korea. Lastly, Kwon recalls how he came to design and build the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) on Bermuda Road for the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church, shortly before Moon passed away.

Preferred Citation

Steven Kwon oral history interview, 2024 October 01. OH-03928. [Cite format consulted: Audio recording or Transcript.] Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada. http://n2t.net/ark:/62930/f13v2d

Scope and Contents Note

Oral history interview with Steven Kwon conducted by Stefani Evans on October 1, 2024 for the Reflections: the Las Vegas Asian American and Pacific Islander Oral History Project. In this interview, Kwon begins by describing his childhood in Seoul, Korea as the youngest of three children during the Korean conflict. In 1960, he served his compulsory military service, which was 18 months for students. In 1964, he followed a friend's recommendation to go to Denmark and attend the folk high school (now the International People's College) to immerse himself in the Danish language, history, and community. He spent one year at the folk high school and later attended the College of Building Technology at the University of Denmark. While he was in his final year, Las Vegas, Nevada architect James McDaniel recruited him to join his firm, which he did in December 1974. After working with McDaniel for one year, he joined Jack Miller Associates for three years and David Welles/Architronics before opening his own design/build firm, GKG Builders in 1986, which he claims was the first Las Vegas firm to offer both services. Soon after arriving in Las Vegas, he joined the Lions Club and Rotary International and, in 1986 created Southern Nevada's first Asian Chamber of Commerce. He also worked with various politicians at different levels of government to encourage South Korean investment in Las Vegas and Nevada, eventually forming a sister-city relationship between Las Vegas, Nevada, and An San, Korea. Lastly, Kwon recalls how he came to design and build the International Peace Education Center (IPEC) on Bermuda Road for the Reverend Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church, shortly before Moon passed away. Digital audio available; no transcript available.

Administrative Information

Access Note

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Acquisition Note

This interview was conducted and transcribed by the Oral History Research Center (OHRC) which is part of the UNLV University Libraries Special Collections and Archives Division.

Processing Note

Interview materials were processed by UNLV Libraries Special Collections and Archives in 2024. Sarah Jones wrote the collection description. Access copies were created for born-digital audio files.

^ Return to Table of Contents

Names and Subjects

- Oral histories (document genres)
- Seoul (Korea)
- Architecture