

Richard Klingner Oral History Interview
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Administrative Information

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Biographical Note

Richard (Rich) Klingner served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras from 1969 to 1971 as a civil engineer (Honduras 15).

Access

Open.

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Oral History Interview

with

Richard Klingner

September 10, 2019
Lesterville, Missouri

By Gail B. Gall

Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Collection
John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum

GALL: [00:00:02] So this is Gail Gall, and today's date is September 10th, 2019. I'm in Lesterville, Missouri, and I'm interviewing Richard Klingner, who was in Honduras Group 15 from 1969 to 1971.

KLINGNER: [00:00:22] Okay.

GALL: [00:00:25] Let's continue. So the most common question is, to start with, why did you join the Peace Corps?

KLINGNER: [00:00:33] I joined the Peace Corps because it was something that I had always wanted to do. I remember as a high school student hearing President Kennedy talk about it, and I was very enthusiastic. It seemed like something that would be a big adventure and also a good way to give something back and be. And that, that motivation was really crystallized by the onset of the Vietnam War. For me, it was, the Peace Corps represented a perfect example of something that I could do that

would be really good for the long-term interests of the United States and also for the country in which, to which I was assigned. So it just seemed like a good choice. And I followed up after, um, after a master's degree in civil engineering and was really pleased to be accepted.

GALL: [00:01:53] Okay. What was your life like before joining the Peace Corps? Sort of a little bit about your childhood, education. You told us you got your master's degree. Other experiences relevant to becoming a volunteer.

KLINGNER: [00:02:09] I had a pretty sheltered suburban life in the San Francisco Bay area. I was encouraged by my parents to put a lot of energy into academics.

GALL: [00:02:32] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:02:33] The, uh, they were both, they were both products of the combination of the Depression and World War II. And the idea that you could, you could be successful, get ahead by applying yourself in school, was just a constant part of growing up for me.

GALL: [00:02:57] And you talked a little bit. You got a master's, you studied, you had a baccalaureate and a master's degree in civil engineering, right?

KLINGNER: [00:03:05] Right.

GALL: [00:03:06] And how did you hear about the Peace Corps?

KLINGNER: [00:03:10] The news, when President Kennedy announced it. It seemed like a really revolutionary idea. And so why not?

GALL: [00:03:24] Okay. And was there something specific that made you want to apply at that specific time in your life?

KLINGNER: [00:03:31] Yeah, as I, as I said, the contrast between something that seemed very, potentially very useful for the United States and for other countries versus the Vietnam War, which seemed not useful at all.

GALL: [00:03:56] So sort of a sharp contrast between war.

KLINGNER: [00:03:59] Absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely. I, at that time, I was a believer in the idea of national service. And I still am, more strongly than ever. And the Peace Corps seemed to be an example of very, very positive national service.

GALL: [00:04:20] Mm hmm. And did you have a specific country or program in mind when you applied?

KLINGNER: [00:04:28] I had no specific country or program. I did express in my application a preference for Latin America, because I thought that the language and cross-cultural skills that I learned in the Peace Corps for Latin America would be useful for me later on in life.

GALL: [00:04:47] Mm hmm. So what was your reaction when you were accepted?

KLINGNER: [00:04:57] I was really pleased. The first thing I did was I went to an atlas and I found out where Honduras was on the map. And then I found out, and I remember that one of the things in the packet that we were sent was the CIA country briefing for the year on Honduras. And I think, I think I started to study that almost as soon as I knew about the acceptance. Yeah.

GALL: [00:05:38] And how did you prepare yourself and others for entering two years of service? So what did your friends and family say? Let's do that first.

KLINGNER: [00:05:50] I think, I think some of my friends thought it was a good decision. Some of them were a little bit amused.

GALL: [00:06:05] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:06:06] The, um, my family supported the decision. Um. The. I mean, I was an adult. I could, I could do what I wanted. I think that my friends and family thought it would be an interesting opportunity.

GALL: [00:06:33] And aside from reading the atlas and the CIA report, how did you prepare yourself for entering the two years of service?

KLINGNER: [00:06:43] It was, I didn't really have to do very much because my technical training was taken care of, A, B, because I had the engineering degree and a master's. And I did wonder a little bit about my Spanish competency and stuff, but there was really nothing I could do. And I assumed that the Peace Corps had a lot more experience than I did in teaching people what they needed. So I went in with a, with an open mind.

GALL: [00:07:19] Did you have some Spanish beforehand?

KLINGNER: [00:07:21] No, absolutely none. I knew *buenos dias* and that was it.

GALL: [00:07:30] And you did say previously that you had stated that you wanted to go to Latin America?

KLINGNER: [00:07:35] Yes.

GALL: [00:07:36] And because you thought it would be worthwhile experience for you in the future.

KLINGNER: [00:07:41] Relevant. Yes.

GALL: [00:07:43] Yeah. And, um, and were you specifically invited to do a particular project?

KLINGNER: [00:07:52] Yes. The, uh, SANAA, S-A-N-A-A, the Honduran government agency responsible for water supply and wastewater treatment systems throughout the country of Honduras, had asked for a civil engineer, which I was. My good fortune was that precisely at the time that I came,

the agency SANAA had arrived and reached a tripartite agreement with Caritas, the Catholic relief agency in the United States, with the Honduran government and potentially with villages in Honduras to put in small gravity feed water systems to villages in Honduras that otherwise would not have been, um, would not have been able to be served by water systems and would not have had the political clout or the money to put in a traditional water system. And the way that the thing worked is Caritas donated PVC pipe.

GALL: [00:09:19] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:09:19] Okay. Well, the Honduran government put troops on the docks so that the pipe wouldn't disappear. They exempted it from import duties. SANAA, the government agency, agreed to do feasibility studies, site surveys, system design, and construction supervision of a system if it actually came to fruition. And the villages agreed to donate about \$1,500 at that time, the equivalent of about \$1,500, for some metal pipe that was used in specific parts of the system, some materials, bricks, reinforcing bars, concrete for water storage tank, and also to donate unskilled labor to dig and fill a trench, join sections of PVC pipe together and such like, basically put in some sweat equity.

KLINGNER: [00:10:32] And the, I have no idea what the genesis was for that tripartite agreement, but it was wonderful because it meant that instead of putting in a couple of hundred meters of water line or sewer line in front of a Honduran congressman's house, just in return for political support, they could actually go out and help improve the, um, the lives of small villages in many different ways.

GALL: [00:11:08] That's a great explanation. So I want to talk a little bit about training and preparation. So where and how were you trained to prepare for your assignment?

KLINGNER: [00:11:21] My training for my assignment was, as far as civil engineering was concerned, absolutely nothing. I had language training and cross-cultural training, and I thought that was, that was excellent. And I continued, because the Peace Corps made it available to me, I

continued language instruction for as long as I could on an optional basis after, after getting in country. I think the cross-cultural training was also excellent. The situations seemed strange and sometimes even comical when they were first presented to us. But, uh. But I found myself in that situation many, many times. Precisely. Very, a very close variation of something that we had already done in training.

KLINGNER: [00:12:38] And I think, I think that the purpose of it was to teach us that no matter what happened in a different culture, in a language that we were struggling to learn, that things could come out okay. We didn't have to do things perfectly. And as long as we weren't, we weren't worried about our egos or, or doing something, doing something foolish. If we put our hearts in it, it would come out. And I really found that over and over again to be true.

GALL: [00:13:16] Is there a particular scenario that they taught that you would like to put into the interview here?

KLINGNER: [00:13:27] Well, the. We had a scenario, a simulation of an interview getting together with a local mayor of a village. And it was done by one of the language instructors, Eduardo. And he did a good job of playing a small town mayor. And he intentionally mangled my name. I was, I was Senor Kleenex. And it was, it was good preparation. The. Because I can remember many, many circumstances like that where I was talking to somebody and the results actually did matter. And it was, it was helpful to think back and remember that, yes, I had been through this before.

GALL: [00:14:43] So, um. So to what extent do you feel the training adequately prepared you for the assignment?

KLINGNER: [00:14:51] Oh, absolutely. Again, leaving out the issue of technical training, because it was assumed that I, that I had that. The language training and the cross-cultural training were just, were just excellent. With respect to the, to the technical training, I will say that, uh, when. There's a big difference between being in an academic environment and having somebody ask you a question and being able to refer to all sorts of available resources to come up with a good answer to that question,

okay? And being all by yourself with no resources except your brain and your possibly imperfect recollections and having somebody ask a question where the answer really makes a difference.

KLINGNER: [00:16:07] On the, on the very first trip that, um, that I took out with SANAA personnel doing site surveys, the. We were interviewing the committee from the village that had been in charge of overseeing the birth and construction of the water system. And because there was no national standard for the size of the brick that were used, the supplier had cheated the community. They had given them bricks that were too small. And I was asked what the village should do about this. And the bricks were to be used for the wall of water tank. And I said, well, okay, if the walls of the tank are, if you make them as thick as they should be, okay, you can figure out a way to do it with the brick, make them make the walls as thick as they should be, and put the steel in the right place. Then the tank will work.

KLINGNER: [00:17:24] And in retrospect, that seems like an extremely simple technical decision. But remember, if you, if you come out of school, and I had some limited work experience working summers, but I'd never been in a situation where I had to have an answer that, right away, that absolutely was correct, okay? And would, would, would be an honest, helpful, correct technical answer to a bunch of people who really were depending on me. And that was, that was a sobering experience.

GALL: [00:18:02] Yeah. Yeah.

KLINGNER: [00:18:03] And so I said, well, put in, put in the brick with the size that you have, it's smaller. And then put another layer with the brick facing the other way inside and then the total, the total thickness will be okay. And all the time I was struggling to find the words to explain this precisely in Spanish and desperately wanting to tell them something that would be correct. And then I was very relieved to be thinking about it later and say, yes, that was absolutely the right decision.

GALL: [00:18:41] That's a great example. That's really good. So how did you interact with other volunteers and host country people during training?

KLINGNER: [00:18:55] Oh, it was, it was good. We played bridge. We drank a lot of beer. The, the, we, we had a, um, an informal bar that was wonderful because we could drink cool Libres and listen to music. And so we wouldn't, we wouldn't feel isolated. And the experience that we were going through in training was really similar. We came from all sorts of different backgrounds. This was probably the first time that I had been in contact with people from all over the U.S. Because remember, I grew up in the San Francisco Bay area which is culturally kind of sheltered, and we had people from the Northeast, we had people from the South, we had people from, from everywhere.

GALL: [00:19:59] And, um, any particular recollections of host country people in training while you were training?

KLINGNER: [00:20:09] Host country people. What we had, um, really two stages of training, because we did language training and cross-cultural training in Puerto Rico in Camp Crozier near Arecibo. And our, the language training was from language instructors who came from a variety of different countries, one of which I think was Honduras. It wasn't, wasn't Angel. Yeah, Angel may have been from Honduras, I'm not sure. So we had to get accustomed to different accents and stuff like that. But sure, I looked at our language instructors as sort of representative of some of the people that we would be dealing with.

KLINGNER: [00:20:58] And then later on, when we came in country, we went through a period of training at an institute, La Colmena, and there we had Honduran trainers and I certainly tried to learn as much as I could from them about how they behaved. We went, one of our, one of the times in training, we had to spend a week with another volunteer, an experienced volunteer. And that was, that was very, that was very useful. I was, uh, it was really important for me to learn as much Spanish as I possibly could. And I might have, I might have frustrated that volunteer, Robert. Robert somebody. Because I insisted in speaking only Spanish with him, okay? So I, so I would have the most possible chance to practice. And he must have thought I was weird and he was probably right. But yes, a lot of different experiences.

GALL: [00:22:25] What was your initial entry into the country like?

KLINGNER: [00:22:33] I remember looking down and taking a picture through the window of the plane of the coast of Honduras as we flew over it. It may have been the coast of Honduras. It may have been one of the Bay Islands. I'm not sure. But I was, I was looking forward to it and also a little bit apprehensive, you know? Well, this is what I've been training for two and a half or three months, two and a half months at that time. And I remember arriving at the airport in Tegucigalpa and feeling, you know, you're surrounded. You're surrounded by Honduras. You're surrounded by Latin America. Yeah, that was, that was quite an impression.

GALL: [00:23:38] And the physical environment?

KLINGNER: [00:23:43] The physical environment. Um, it was, I was struck but not surprised by the poverty because after all this was, we had been, we had been trained to expect it and, uh, with the expectation that we would, we would be living in that environment. And, and, yes, sights and sounds and smells that were not part of our normal upbringing in the U.S.

GALL: [00:24:35] Mm hmm. So I'm going to just push a little bit for an example, to draw a picture for people that might want to listen to this, a mental picture of the sights or the sounds or the smells.

KLINGNER: [00:24:51] The, uh, at the time we came in 1969, the Tegucigalpa was separated by a river from the twin town of Comayaguela, a big central market, and it was impossible to walk through that central market at that time, 30 or 40 years old, big concrete structure. Impossible to walk through that without being assaulted by sights and sounds and smells. Mango pits everywhere, just discarded in the streets. Bags of garbage. Toilets that had probably never been cleaned. The occasional, the occasional dead dog in the gutter. People at the butcher shops doing their finishing. Butchery of cuts of meat just on tables in the open air without refrigeration. Um. Am I answering the question?

GALL: [00:26:39] No, I think, I think that's great. That's kind of, I think this, you've got some really great images there. That dead dog might pick people's ears up. Um, let's see. Can you talk a little bit? You've given us, I think, a really good idea of some of the specifics about the job to which you were assigned. Are there any more details about the job that you'd like to share?

KLINGNER: [00:27:08] Oh, it was, it was wonderful. It's, it's impossible to, um, to overestimate, to overemphasize the effect that clean water can have on a small village. And by small, this would be, this would, this would be an *aldea*, a Honduran village with perhaps three or 400 people in the center. But a total of several thousand people who would be living in the surrounding hills and would come in and would get water from a water system if it were there. Imagine the contrast between the before and after. The before, the community has got some kind of stream.

GALL: [00:28:20] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:28:20] That they're getting, that they're getting water from. There weren't a lot of, there weren't a lot of wells that I worked with in Honduras, but there were a lot of limestone artesian springs. And the springs would be water for everybody, people, cattle, whatever. And so you'd have a stream and people would be, would be getting water in plastic buckets or five gallon jerry cans and carrying that. It was, it would, it would not be uncommon for women to have to walk back and forth several kilometers each way to get water, okay? And it was crappy water. It was polluted water. They'd give it to their kids. The kids would get dysentery.

KLINGNER: [00:29:17] A lack of access to clean water is, has horrible consequences for health, for the social fabric of the community. It means that half the community have to, has to spend all of its time going back and forth for water. Amoebic dysentery can kill a kid in 24 hours, okay? It just screws up their electrolytes and they're dead. If your kid can die in 24 hours from amoebic dysentery and you're in a social system where your kids are your social security, then you have to have ten kids in order to hang onto three, okay? So that means that your wife, who you've married at

15, is going to have ten kids between the age of 15 and 25 before she dies, okay, from a breech presentation or something like that. And we saw this in village after village.

GALL: [00:30:29] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:30:32] This is not, a not a cold, dispassionate scientific thing. This is people's lives. And when you, when you bring in water, okay, now you're letting the other half of the population participate in daily political and social life, okay? You're giving the women and men permission to only have three kids instead of ten. You're not killing the women. The women aren't getting raped on the way to the stream, okay? It's just a tremendous amount of change. Such a simple thing. And we were able to do this for, at that time, around \$5 to \$10 a person. Just simple gravity feed water system. No chlorination. Not particularly important as long as you can run large quantities of pretty clean water through people.

KLINGNER: [00:31:43] And to be, to be a part of that, to help enable small villages to greatly improve their standard of living and the standard of living that their kids could look forward to enjoy, was absolutely wonderful. The history has not been kind in many aspects to Honduras. But as of 2013, 2014, some of the systems that I helped put in were still working, okay? Gravity is very dependable. And a lot of the stuff that I'd hoped to do didn't happen, but a reasonable amount of the stuff that I could never have specifically predicted did happen and was a tremendous positive influence.

GALL: [00:32:54] Great. That's great. Because that means like 45 years into it, they're still working.

KLINGNER: [00:32:59] Yeah.

GALL: [00:32:59] Yeah. Okay. So what did you do during your vacation time?

KLINGNER: [00:33:10] During my vacation time, I traveled into Latin America. Different countries. Yeah. Got with another, another volunteer, a couple of other volunteers and just went.

GALL: [00:33:27] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:33:29] Very broadening. South America on \$5 a day. Tica Bus.

GALL: [00:33:45] Yeah. Yeah. And then what were your relationships with in-country nationals?

KLINGNER: [00:33:56] Relationships with in-country nationals were good. Uh, the, in my job I was working with Honduran engineers who were ten or 15 years older than I. And I think that they may have regarded me as somewhat of a curiosity, but we got along fine. The people who were my age in the office were engineering students who were working as drafters. They would draft plans, and this was a way of working their way through school. And so we were much closer in age and, and closer in, in social position. So I got along quite well with them. When we went, when we went out to the campo, out to the countryside, we would always go with, um, there would be a driver and a surveyor. And usually, and I.

KLINGNER: [00:35:12] And my job was I would be the surveyor's aide. All of this stuff was done, the surveying for the line, the reason we did it was we had to know distances and we had to make sure that the source of water was uphill from the, from the village. And so my job was to direct villagers of what branches to cut down so that the surveyor would have a clear field of vision. And the things we had to watch out for were snakes, because the snakes would be in the branches of the trees. And the villagers with whom we worked were very respectful, kind of curious. Oh, so many anecdotes.

KLINGNER: [00:36:11] I can remember one Sunday afternoon, we were in a village whose name was Rrorruca. R-R-O-R-R-U-C-A. And the villagers were trying to, they, they were trying to help me get down the pronunciation of the rolled R. And so it was Sunday afternoon. We were seated in a, just on the back of a porch overlooking, overlooking a stream. And they had me say nonsense phrases involving a rolled R, like *radio revolucion de Rrorruca*. And every time I did it right, we'd have a slug of guaro. And every time I did it. Guaro was the indigenous alcohol, cane liquor. And

every time I did it wrong, we'd have a shot of guaro. And the, they were unbelievably open and helpful, appreciative, curious.

KLINGNER: [00:37:24] I felt very frustrated in the beginning about not being able to explain to them in Spanish, communicate with them in Spanish, as well as I could communicate in English. And that was really a drive to get better and better and better at Spanish.

GALL: [00:37:45] That's nice. That's good to hear. And did you feel that your language capacity changed?

KLINGNER: [00:37:53] Oh, yes. It took about a year before I felt reasonably comfortable. And I think my language capability continued to improve after that first year.

GALL: [00:38:13] So it was greatest in the first year.

KLINGNER: [00:38:15] Yeah, yeah. The improvement.

GALL: [00:38:20] Yeah.

KLINGNER: [00:38:22] I think, I think that the, what the initial language training that we had and the, was gave us the basics. I, I didn't really feel comfortable until, um, until about a year in country.

GALL: [00:38:42] Yeah. Did your role change over time with SANAA?

KLINGNER: [00:38:58] I think my role stayed about the same, although as, as my colleagues realized that I was, that I was more than sort of an interesting curiosity who might be useful to them, but they didn't have to pay for. As they realized that I could actually do the kind of work that they were doing as well, and that I, um, reacted sort of the same way that they'd seen other human beings react in comparable situations, that they felt more comfortable with me. And I got better at understanding some of the, some of the nuances of situations that they, that they found themselves in. How the bureaucracy worked that, that they were, within SANAA.

GALL: [00:40:17] So you, so I'm hearing maybe you understood their lives more just as they understood your life more.

KLINGNER: [00:40:24] Absolutely. I, I was introduced formally and informally to what their lives were like.

GALL: [00:40:36] That's good. That's helpful. Um. What do you think were your main accomplishments?

KLINGNER: [00:40:46] Wow. Um, being.

GALL: [00:40:50] Just the top five.

KLINGNER: [00:40:51] Being part, I, well, the top one, I would say being part of an organizational effort to, by SANAA, to bring clean water and all of the concomitant benefits of clean water to people who otherwise would never have had a chance at it. So it was a, it was definitely a team effort. But I was able to help that team in some ways that maybe would have been more difficult for a young, a young Honduran engineer, okay? Because I came in with no preconceptions about how the water system ought to work in the village or how people would be able to contribute or whether the, whether the tripartite agreement would work. I didn't have any history with SANAA.

GALL: [00:42:03] Mm hmm. Any regrets?

KLINGNER: [00:42:16] Oh. In a sense, regrets for looking at how history has evolved in Honduras in ways that were completely separate from anything that I did or other volunteers. A sense of sadness for our drug money at work and for how the social and political fabric of Honduras has been shredded.

GALL: [00:42:50] Lessons learned?

KLINGNER: [00:42:52] Oh. Lessons learned. Um. Peace Corps. My Peace Corps experience has been the defining experience of my life. Peace Corps

exposed me and gave me the tools to live in another culture, speak another language, stretch myself in ways that I would never have anticipated. And it opened doors to me that otherwise I would not even have realized existed. After I came back to the States, got a PhD, started teaching at the University of Texas, and did a Fulbright professorship in earthquake engineering at the Central University of Quito in Ecuador for six months in 1982. And at that point, I sort of made the decision, well, the Peace Corps experience can either be something that used to be part of my life or it can be a continuing part of my life going forward. And I chose the, I chose the latter.

KLINGNER: [00:44:19] The experience with the Fulbright taught me how to be a professor in Latin America. And I spent a considerable amount of my career working. My specialty was designing masonry buildings, brick, block, steel, mortar, concrete, masonry buildings to resist earthquakes. And that's very useful in Latin America. And so over the next 35 years, I worked in practically every Spanish speaking country in Latin America doing seminars, short courses, working with code development groups to help work within their existing institutions to improve the building inventory, housing, particularly self-constructed housing. And all of that would have been a world completely closed to me without the Peace Corps experience. I think that I gained much, much more from the Peace Corps than I was ever able to put back, although I tried my best to put back whenever I could.

GALL: [00:45:41] Mm hmm.

KLINGNER: [00:45:41] But it's absolutely, absolutely life changing.

GALL: [00:45:56] So there are three goals of Peace Corps, in case you may not remember. A is to provide technical assistance where requested. B is to promote better understanding of Americans. And C is to promote better understanding of other people by Americans. So in terms of providing technical, so how do you assess your service, let's say, in terms of providing technical assistance when requested or where requested? I've heard a lot so.

KLINGNER: [00:46:43] To summarize, I. SANAA, the Honduran government agency for water supply and wastewater treatment, asked for specific technical assistance from a civil engineer. And I think I gave that to them in spades.

GALL: [00:47:01] Okay. And then to promote better understanding of America, Americans.

KLINGNER: [00:47:10] Well, I, uh. I worked, laughed, played, wept, hugged Hondurans. What they saw was pretty much what they got. And they, uh, to the best of my knowledge, I didn't make any enemies. And I think I made some friends that I still, I still stay in touch with, folks at that time older than I. Some of whom are no longer with us. Folks my own age and villagers that are now probably, were my age and now are probably dead. Yes. We shared a lot.

GALL: [00:48:09] Good. Good. And to promote better understanding of other people by Americans?

KLINGNER: [00:48:15] Well, I understood Hondurans much better by the time I had left. And I, whenever I've had the chance, I try to explain some of what I saw through my eyes to my compatriots who might not have the same point of view or might not understand actions by people, people living at the very edge of existence with a, with a safety factor only slightly greater than one. You know, why they make the decisions they do, rather than why don't they? Why don't they just get smart and do it the way we do here in the U.S.?

GALL: [00:49:09] So through the years, have you continued to have any involvement with your country of service or contact with people from that country? Some of this you answered maybe. Any continuing and then any continuing Peace Corps involvement or other third goal activities such as explaining understanding of other people by Americans?

KLINGNER: [00:49:31] I've had no, no formal continued relationship with the Peace Corps. I worked professionally, short courses, workshops with, um, universities and other institutions in many different Latin American

countries, including Honduras. I was last in Honduras in 2014 doing a, uh, a masonry course. One week for professors and then the second week for students, with the professors helping me teach the students so that each one teach one sort of thing. A good model. And I felt very, very pleased to borrow it from the Peace Corps. And, yes, I still stay in touch with people whose friendships I've made over the years.

GALL: [00:50:50] And so you, I think you've said this before, but the effect of Peace Corps on your life?

KLINGNER: [00:50:57] Defining, the defining experience of my life. If I were to look back at one thing that I would certainly do again, I certainly would recommend to anybody else, it would be, it would be Peace Corps. It was changed my life in many, many ways. Practically all of them positive.

GALL: [00:51:19] Great. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

KLINGNER: [00:51:22] I would like to thank you for the opportunity to do this in addition or above and beyond just talking to a recorder, okay, this is probably the longest chance that the two of us have had to talk, okay, one on one.

GALL: [00:51:50] So it's, so it's been mentioned, you know, you could just read this to yourself and talk into a tape recorder. And so we were kind of toying with like, okay, so what does it mean to have an interview as opposed to just read yourself the outline?

KLINGNER: [00:52:08] I think, I think that having a known, trusted, sympathetic, beloved interviewer, interviewee is really a bonus for this, for this process. Because when I'm talking with you about stuff and I have an anecdote, I can tell when it triggers an anecdote for you.

GALL: [00:52:37] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Good. Well, we're going to wrap up. So this has been an interview with Richard Klingner of Honduras 15, served in Honduras from to 1969 to 1971. And this was completed on September

10th, 2019, in Lesterville, Missouri. And I am the interviewer, Gail Gall.
Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]