

The following interview was conducted on behalf of the oral history program of Century High School. The interviewee is Harry Beck. The interviewer is Hana Schukis. The interview took place at Hillsboro Nazarene Church on May 25, 2005 at 6:30pm.

Hana Schukis: How and when did you come to Hillsboro?

Harry Beck: Which time? I was out here in the sixties, in the Air force at Mt. Hebo, and I married a Hillsboro girl. We went back east for thirteen years and then came back out to Hillsboro in 1978.

Hana Schukis: From the time period of 1980 to present.

Harry Beck: Well that is how I got back out here. I transferred with the telephone company in 1978. I had two children born in Oregon and came back out, because I got tired of the Washington DC area.

HS: Can you give a general description of your situation having to do with the change and trends in crime and law enforcement?

HB: I would say that anywhere from the sixties all the way up to the turn of the century. Hillsboro was a, even though it was the county seat of Washington County, it was a small town. It had small town mentality, it had small town attitudes. It was a good place to live, but in the eighties with the advent of the war movement against Vietnam, and the influx of drugs, the Oregon area began making some drastic changes.

HS: How did the influx of drugs make you feel?

HB: Well drugs have a tendency to bring crime into an area, simply because for those people who feel disenfranchised, in the inner city they rob, steal, do whatever they can to support their habit. The supporting of that habit generally includes crime. Whether that be car-jackings or robbery or burglary it includes crime so that they can take whatever they steal and sell it so they can get their next fix. Drugs has become a very serious problem in the whole state of Oregon as it is in many states. In the 1980s we had a major influx of people from California. They had several earthquakes; a lot of people ran scared. A lot of the inner city gangs, in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, were taking over because of the liberal attitudes of the politicians. As a result people were leaving there. The property price in California was so high that, when they came to Oregon, especially in the early 80's a buyer could sell his home for whatever he asked for. Well when all of that money started leaving California, you say the criminal element leave also. As they came into Oregon with the extra money then the criminal element moved right along with it, because there is a pyridine that says when you have population shift, you have crime shift. Simply because population induces crime and if the criminal is only going to rob from the criminal, he doesn't have a source, therefore he follows the people. Well Oregon has always been a bastion of liberalism, and they empty their jails. Which means that criminals get out and that kind of information spread over the press draws unsavory to



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this state. Since the 1980s we have seen a drastic change in the number of police that have had to be hired, handle the influx of people. We have had to see both at the county level and at the city level, in almost every city in the state of Oregon, an increase in police. Just simply to handle crime.

HS: Now with the police, have you seen different types of police that have been especially needed here in Hillsboro?

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HB: Well in the 60's through the 80's, the police had five people. I think, when I came back out here in 78, they may have had twice that many. Most of their duties back then, were traffic enforcement, occasionally breaking up fights on Fridays and Saturday nights when the workers would come to town and get drunk. But there weren't that many reported. What we would today call serious crimes. What I am calling serious crimes are rape, burglary, car-jacking, armed robbery. There weren't that many that I can even think of from 78 on. You know from '60 to '78 and then from '78 up into the '80's, there weren't that many so the need for police wasn't there to control crime as much as it was to control the flow of people.

HS: Do you think the police enforce the laws well?

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HB: Oh yeah. I think they try. One of the things that has happened in the 80's is the abuse of the constitution and that is the appointment of judges that no longer interpret law. They make law. So the police work hard to try and capture criminals, they bring them to trial, and the corrupt trial Lawyers Association and the corrupt judges who want to set societies pattern, turn them loose for one reason or another. The police then start to ask the question: What's the sense in me putting my life on the line to arrest these guys and the judges turn them loose? Or the politicians turn them loose when they make up games about jails being to full. Now this is not only Hillsboro, but this is especially in Portland. Hillsboro is close enough to Portland that the over lap with the transit system, we now see a lot of those criminals moving to the suburbs.

HS: So how do you think the max effects bringing in crime, and with the buses?

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HB: Well not the buses as much as max. First of all, most of these inner city people don't have the transportation to be able to come out here. Now they can use the bus, but that makes get away very difficult. When the gangs came up from California, they brought with them their hotrods, and their cars. Now they have a way to get from place to place. Where they can scamper back into the big cities, and I am not just talking about Portland, I am talking about Salem, Eugene, Medford, and Bend. Although, Bend was within the last five years like Hillsboro, in that there was a great deal of crime over there, and was well controlled. But now with the influx of people with Bend and Redmond being the two fastest growing cities in the state, they are starting to see more crime. Well their police forces aren't very numerous. That'll change. Well, what we are seeing are the cites dumping their trash into the suburbs. Tri-met is one way, still very inconvenient, but the Max made it extremely easy for the gangs to get on board, get off downtown, go do their business, get back on, and are gone before the police generally are able to get to the crime

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scene. That has a very negative effect on the populous here, and I believe it is besides the extra expensive that we have had to pay to support the Max, I think that is one negative that the Max has brought to Hillsboro.

HS: Do you think that negative is going to continue to grow, as Max is continued to be used?

HB: Sure it will. Simply because the money is still in the suburbs. All it takes is watching the news, and you see how poorly the cities manage their money. Most of their money, other than going to schools, goes to trying to take care of the destitute. Which is an impossibility, because as you paid for the destitute, the destitute moves in from other areas. When some areas stop paying, like Los Angeles, they move to Oregon, because it's a free meal for them. So you find that the max becomes convenient medium by which they can transport themselves. From inner city, where they can hide, to suburbs where they can commit their crimes.

HS: Do you think that Hillsboro in itself has extremely changed from a small population?

HB: Absolutely. Back in the '60s and 70's, kids would work through the summer, picking fruit, picking berries, picking cucumbers for the farmers. That's how they made their school money. In the '80s the legislature passed a ruling that said if you were 12 or younger, you had to be with a parent in the field. It went even further to say, if the parent wasn't picking, the child couldn't pick. It got so inconvenient for many parents, who would bring the child to the field; they would have to sit with them all day. So the farmer saw the influx coming from Mexico; of aliens, legal and illegal. It used to be that the illegals would come through the summer, and head back to Mexico in the winter. Now they are here to stay, because they are protected. Whenever you see an influx in movement of population, you are going to see crimes move right with it, because that's where the money is.

HS: How have aliens made the change from 1980's to present, with new technology?

HB: Many of them have cell phones. Which makes knowing where the police are very easy. When running patrols, a limited number of sheriff patrols, is easy to spot them. It is easy to tell people by cell phone where they are. It's also easier to get on the net and find out, who died, and what houses are likely to be vacant during a funeral or someone having to leave town because their parents have died, or someone in the family has died. People are all in the network all the time looking for things like that. So that they can come in hit and run and be gone before the people ever make it back, to know they have been robbed.

HS: Do you feel that the internet is a safe place for crimes and law enforcement information to be placed?

HB: The internet is the internet. The internet has been around since the 50's. It used to be used only by the government, and then it allowed the school systems, the advanced

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school systems to get involved. Now it is a process where under the first amendment everybody gets on. You're not going to stop it. And where there is someone who thinks they can make a buck, legally or illegally, they are going to use the network. It is a good advertising media. So from this standpoint, technology hasn't helped us a great deal. But you take a look at the rest of the populous that is gaining from the amount of information from the internet, and it does very definitely make a big difference. I think our population, even hear in Hillsboro. Look at Intel, I mean 80% of the computers that are presently use world wide are using Intel chips. Now why did Intel decide to leave Sunnyvale, California, in its big presence there and come to Oregon? One reason and one reason only, tax breaks. This week's paper talks about the tax breaks that Hillsboro and Washington County have granted to Intel, to keep them here. Once you have given it to Intel, you got to give it to Microsoft; you got to give it to Tektronix's, you got to give it to any body who hires a lot of people. There are a lot of jobs. A lot of these jobs come through agencies, hiring agencies. They start out at minimum wage or just above. Well you take the illegal Mexicans that come in that are used to working for two or three dollar an hour or less in Mexico. They can come up here and do a manual labor job that is a repetitive thing, that doesn't require a great deal of education when in comes to working. At the base level, and make minimum wage working through a hiring agency, they are going to scurry up here. Now, that we have in this United States, not only Washington County, not only Hillsboro, but in this United States, we have no will to stop them from coming or do anything about them when they are illegal. They are going to keep coming.

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HS: What do you think about the neighborhood watch program?

HB: I think it's a good program, from the standpoint that it means well. I don't think that it is effective, simply because, our economy today requires many families to have both people working, and the kids in school or daycare. Who's watching the neighborhood? Neighborhood watch was designed when the mother stayed at home. There was generally someone around the neighborhood, grandma, or someone that was there to see, and question when someone came around, but now the old people that may be around are afraid to approach anybody. Because of the viciousness of the gangs, the viciousness of the people who have committed crimes have never been punished for them. Not because of the police, but because of the courts, and the politicians. They are afraid to get involved. Talk to the people who come up here from Californian, and one of the reasons they left California was because crime was growing in such a rate, they were afraid to get involved. If they went and testified, their whole family was in jeopardy, lives were in jeopardy. We are facing the same thing here.

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HS: Do you think that it has helped decrease the crime rate in Hillsboro?

HB: What, Neighborhood Watch?

HS: Yes

HB: I doubt it. I don't know the figures, and I am not qualified to say. I know from a logical stand point that there may be neighborhoods that use it, and it may work well.

Such as Jackson school for example, those are a high end homes. From people with high end jobs, they make quite a bit of money. It is likely one of the parents, the wife or the man, it could be either now, but it used to be the wife, but now it could either if there could be a stay at home dad. Because those are high paying jobs, it's likely that those kinds of neighborhoods, neighborhood watch is a good thing. In areas such as off of Glencoe road to the north or to the south, it might not work as well, simply because like I say you have two parents that have to work. There is nobody to watch the neighborhood. So I think it's a good plan, it doesn't cost the government anything. Doesn't cost you and me anything, which is a good thing. But its effectiveness, I really don't know.

HS: Are there any programs that you are specifically involved in?

HB: No

HS: What laws do you think helped or did not help Hillsboro?

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HS: Do you think their power structure in how their higher standing can impact the crime and law enforcement?

HB: Absolutely. Look at the number of people that are being set free. Follow the Argus, in there every week. I don't know what day, it may be both days. There is a police blotter that tells you which cases went to which judges. Then there is always a wanted page where two people, generally two people, are show to what crime they committed. Never have they on the wanted page, has the person only been arrest once. Never, it is always failure to appear for, failure to appear for, or three or four or five crimes. If the three strike rule came into Oregon there would be a lot of the people, especially criminals leaving. Because if they knew their third act was going to put them in jail for life they are going to leave. They aren't going to stick around, but Oregon wants the here. It opens their doors to them.

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HS: In what ways?

HB: By not punishing them. Not making them accountable when they commit a crime. That's Hillsboro, Eugene, Bend, that's where ever you are. You find these liberal judges and trial lawyers association getting these criminals out and back out on the street on technicalities that would have never been heard of back in the '80s.

HS: How do you think the media portrays crime and law enforcement?

HB: It never reports it accurately. You take any incident with a police shooting and the media will always paint it as if it was the gestapo tactics of the police that had caused the problem, when indeed if the criminal had not violated. Are there miscarriages of judges? Yes. I would rather take my chances with a miscarriage of justices than I would to take the power out of the police to enforce the law. The media wants to take the power away from the police instead of help them.

HS: On the topic of media, do you think the Argus, over this period from the 1980's to present have been portraying the crimes and law enforcement here in Hillsboro correctly?

HB: Go back to the '60s to the '80s, and within the last ten or fifteen years, the people who owned the Argus were very conservative. The Argus was a well-written paper, it went out and looked for reporters that would do their job, and most of the stories that came through were accurately reported, or if there was a mistake, there was an accurate correction, or renunciation. Since the Argus sold itself to some big conglomerate, I think they came from back east. The reporting has gone down hill and you have seen a movement away from the conservative slant to the liberal slant, because of where they came from. While it still may be more conservative than the Oregonian, it is getting to be about as poorly written as the Oregonian. It spends an awful lot of time not reporting crime and the facts of what's going on, it's this feel good stuff. The living, the artsy, all this sort of stuff. They don't hit you with the facts of what's going on in Hillsboro, it's all this feel good stuff they are promoting so they don't have to report the crime. They don't have to report the illegal stuff the politicians and judges are doing. They are afraid to attack them. That's the transition I have seen with the Argus.

HS: On reports, there have been some people like counselors, and other higher authorities have to report abuses in the home, how do you think that has helped change the way things have been reported.

HB: That is a two head beast. Number one we are in a society today where people who have children think only of themselves and very rarely do they think of the children. We also have a society that is doing everything it can to promote homosexuality. Wherever you see the promotion of homosexuality, you will see the diminishment of the care of the children. San Francisco, families are moving out of there simply because they can't get the funds necessary to put kids who are abused in foster care. They are putting all their money into homosexuality issues. So wherever you see the promotion and push of

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homosexual issues, you're going to see children taken advantage of, because there is not enough money for the government to do both.

HS: When these children are taken advantage of, do you think they are going to have more likelihood of going into crime?

HB: If a child only sees evil and that becomes what they consider to be a normal lifestyle, yes I think that is the case. Take the Arabs; I went to school with Arabs. It was nothing for them to lie, because lying was a way of life for them, and from the littlest age they had to lie to get what they wanted. So lying is not an issue, and that happens in Europe. Lying is not an issue for Europeans. This country is fast moving in that direction, simply because lying gets you somewhere. Lying gets you something, it keeps you from getting punished, it puts the blame on someone else, you know all that kind of stuff. The responsibility is never on the individual that commits the crime, it is always society for perpetuating it.

HS: How do you think society has change the crime here in Hillsboro?

HB: If everyday of the week you got up and before you could leave the house, you had shovel a ton of snow. I think in a very short period of time I'd get tired of shoveling snow, and say I am going to stay in, I am not going to leave home. The populous is that way. The crime issue, and all the supporting issues, government financing, crooked judges, crooked politicians is such a massive problem individually, people don't know how to attack it. Then frustration comes in, and the frustration will stay in place until a movement starts. Once that movement starts, change will occur. I think the population right now is in that stagnation period. I don't know how to deal with this, and you will hear a lot of people say: not my problem. As long as they can live in their own little narcissistic world, and never be touched, everything's fine. The first time they get touched, they want the police to do something, they want the judges to do something, and they want everybody to attend to their problem. When indeed they had gotten involved at some level, and I don't what level that is. If they got involved at some level, they might have been able to change things before it got as bad as it is. If they had stayed in California, for example, and forced changes in California, but rather than do that they got so frustrated that they moved. Now you take a look at our society, it is a mobile society. When things get to bad in a certain area, it is too easy to get up and move. I don't know how to deal with this. It is frustrating. I fought unionism for over forty years, and I beat them at the United States Supreme Court level. For twenty-two years, this case went through the courts, and there were a lot of times when I wanted to back up and say this aint worth it. But I refuse to do it, because I believe in a principle. We don't have a society today built on a principle. We have a narcissistic society that started in the '60s, and carried through into the '80s. With whatever I want to do, whatever feels good to me, get out of my way, and don't expect me to be accountable. That is all the way from the 1960's and when those people became thirty and forty was in the '80s and now they are in their 50's and 60's and now in the government. We are seeing that wave of narcissism mover right through our country.

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HS: What do you think, are the biggest challenges Hillsboro faces?

HB: I think the influx of illegal aliens is going to be serious problem, because our schools are going to be challenged, are medical system is already being challenged, we have one small hospital, and they have to attend to any illegal person who comes in to the emergency room. They can not turn them away. You end up seeing of healthcare going up to help pay for those people. And I think, as I said earlier with the influx of those kinds of people, there is going to be an influx of unsavory people. I think that is going to be a major problem, especially on the west coast. That's not to say that in anyway shape, or form that all Mexicans are criminals, or aliens. You have a whole lot of legal Mexican people who are hard working, pay their taxes, are good family people that do not want hand outs. They want to work for it, and they work hard. They will do jobs that we white people wont touch. We're too good. I am talking about the illegals that are taking advantage of our systems. The school systems and our medical systems. In some cases, they are on our Social Security program, which is already in trouble. That's going to be a major problem, unless the politicians step up, and I don't think they have the will or the backbone. I think in order to run and be a politician, you have to be a coward. I have got little to no use for them, and I know Charles Starr, I like Charles Starr, but I have watched him waffle. I think his son Bruce Starr, is an excellent person. There is too much negotiation instead of standing up. Now Charles Starr made a brilliant stand against the issue of homosexuality. I'm glad he did, but I have seen him waiver on too many things that he shouldn't have wavered on. If he expected the people of Hillsboro to not be over run. It looks like to me that any politician, to be a politician, you have to have a rubber back bone and very little intent. Charles and Bruce Starr, and John Meek are honorable christian men, but some of the decisions that they let go through, they should have made a stand, even if they had been on the loosing side. They should have made a stand.

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HS: Do you have any other information, which could be useful, hat I did not cover in this interview?

HB: I am a student of history, and I can tell you that our society has become so affluent and our attitude has become so narcissistic. That one of two things is going to happen. Both of which will meet scriptural standards. Number one, the United States in a world economy will be second rate. We are fast becoming a third world nation. We already can't compete with China. The Euro has already taken over the dollar as world currency. We are being reduced by our own laziness and narcissistic tendencies to pass up the greatness that we have available. That is the potential, unless there is a movement by a large amount of people. I am not talking about the people who pull away from the government, and go live in the hills of Montana, and Idaho. But there will be a violent uprising of people who get tired of taking it. If that happens, there is going to be blood shed. There is going to be another civil war. Whether it ends up over taxes, whether it ends up over crooked politicians, whatever the driving force is that is the only thing that is going to save us. And that why you see the government trying to attack the second amendment so hard. If they can disarm the populous then they can do just what Hitler did in Germany. As long as the populous stays armed, there is always that underlying fear that if you tick off enough people and enough area, and the get a movement started,

A look into the future and a quote at end summing up why there are still problems

liberals are going to hurt, and they know it. One of two things, we are going to be reduced to a third world society, or there will be another uprising, and another civil war. I don't know which. I wish it didn't have to be. I don't think it has to be. I think if Hillsboro wanted to make a real difference, if its politicians would turn the running of this city over to God, and do nothing without prayer and leadership, and start setting up Hillsboro as the shining star, God would use that to show other areas, this is how you can survive. I don't think the politicians in Hillsboro have the will to do that, but that will work. IT has worked in other area. Talks about France. But if Hillsboro wanted to be the shining star of Oregon all it would have to do is say: we are not going to do anything immoral, we are going to allow God to rule this town and if you don't like it, leave. But you would see such an influx of people, because there would peace and calm, there would be almighty battles won that people would want to come and here just for the peace and calm of their families. Yet again the politically correct groups that are in power do not have the will or the way. Outside of doing that, one of the other two things is going to occur. Is it going to occur in my life time, at 64 now? No, I don't think it will, but it is going to come. When I started working for the telephone company 45 years ago, unionism in this country was big, up to 32% to 34%. The public employees were not allowed to unionize. (Continues to talk about unions.) Some one has said that those who refuse to study history and learn from its mistakes are guaranteed to repeat them.