

CLYDE BASTON oral history

Interviewee: Clyde E. Baston

Interviewer(s): Jenifer Baker, Tori Roberts

Date of Interview: 9 July 2019

List of Initials: CB = Clyde Baston, JB = Jenifer Baker, TR = Tori Roberts

Location of Interview: Silver Street Jail in Lebanon, Ohio

Transcribed by Ted Hitchens

[Begin Transcript 00:00:01]

JB: Ok. Good morning. Today is July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019. My name is Jenifer Baker, I am the Deputy Archivist with Warren County Records Center and Archives. I am here with Tori Roberts who is our Archives Technician. Uhm, we are conducting an oral history interview and I will give, uhm, this gentleman a chance to introduce himself, so if you would like to go ahead and introduce yourself.

CB: My name's Clyde Elwood Baston. I live at 8073 Fowler Road in Maineville, Ohio.

JB: Ok.

CB: Four five o-three nine.

JB: And Clyde has some experience. He worked at our Silver Street Jail? Is that correct?

CB: Yes.

JB: Ok, so he's going...

CB: That's where I started out at.

JB: ....to share a little bit of his, uhm, background at the Silver Street Jail and then he was also a Hamilton Township trustee? For twenty years or so?

CB: Yeah.

JB: So...

CB: Yes ma'am.

JB: I'm going to ask you some background questions to start with. So, if we, uh, we can go ahead and get that started. Uhm, so when and where were you born?

CB: I was born, uh, July twenty-ninth, 1938. I was born on a Kentucky horse park farm.

TR: Oh wow!

CB: It was called 'Kecko's(?)'... it was called Castleton in at the time. It was. And, uh, we lived down there at the – I think I was about two, or three, and then dad moved to Milford and from Milford we moved to – wound up in Kings Mills at the corner of Columbia and Western Row. Matter of fact the old church – he bought a church. And the old church is still standing there. It's gray now.

JB: Do you want to tell us a little bit about that church? I know we talked about that on the phone.

CB: Well the church – when we first moved(?) – (*indecipherable*)... There was ten of us kids. And, uh, we moved in there, it's got seventeen-foot ceilings in it. And the only lights it had in it was the – no electricity in it, no water, no nothing. And the only, uh, they had the kerosene lamps that you'd pull down from the ceiling, light 'em, put 'em back up. You know. And that way, and then it had big windows

all the way around it. That's – the windows run from, uh, I think the windows is right at thirteen feet high, they were ... (*indecipherable*)

JB: Was your house right by the church?

CB: No no, he *bought* the church.

(*Laughter*)

JB: Oh, he bought the church to live in! Oh, okay!

CB: He bought the church to live in. And, uh, we – back then, uh, well I didn't know what poor was. Just never knew what poor was. We had all the food we wanted to eat as a kid and, uh, had a lot of love so that's, that's all I thought I ever needed down in at so... Dad took the place, and at that time he worked for a Carl Gentry down in Loveland. And back then, refrigerators and, uh, freezers and things come in, cart was – cartons that were made out of plywood. So what we done, we took the plywood, which was seven – six and a half feet high – and, uh, divided the church off into several rooms for the boys, the girls, the kitchen, dining room, mom and dad's room ... divided off into three bedrooms, thr- three bedrooms. And then, uh, then then the kitchen and dining room, but there was no water, no ... no bathroom, no nothing. Couldn't put a bathroom in there due to the fact that the, uh, church had the cemetery all the way around it. We didn't know – I didn't know – (*indecipherable*) didn't know if dad knew or not because when we went to get a permit to put a septic tank in, we couldn't do it. So we had the old-fashioned outside toilet.

(*Laughter*)

CB: So I really never got to an inside bathroom until I was married [*Laughter*]. Good reason to get married!

JB: Right?? ..... Especially in Ohio in winter!

CB: Yeah!

TR: Ohio winter *and* summer.

CB: Yeah, oh winter was a bear! But anyway ... we did put a cistern out in back and uh, dad uh, had a guy come in with a bulldozer and then he got down to where you could see where the graves were and we stopped digging then. And, poured that over and then put a concrete – put a cistern in back of the house...

JB: Were these unmarked graves for the church?

CB: There was no marks there at all in the graves.

JB: Huh.

CB: There was no marks at all. That's when we really found out that there was graves there because when they got digging down in there was ... so, went back to your society try to find out, wound up going to - I forget what denomination church it was – but the records were down in, uh, Cincinnati and had the Cincinnati transfer up here so, we just – no bathroom, no – but we did have running water for a change. Well, us kids we'd say to carry it, there used to be a school on the corner of Western Row and, uh, Columbia and before they built the one in Kings Mills years ago. And uh, it had a well on it. And dad got permission to use the water out of the well through the county, so we carried it probably from here to the main street out here, uh, every day. So I hated Wednesdays because that's when mama washed the extra (*indecipherable*). I had to fill up all the tubs and everything and then wash it when I got there, but...

JB: I mean she had ten kids though to help, right?

CB: Ohh, yeah!

JB: So do you all ... ?

CB: Well my brother and I had to ... that was part of our chores is, uh, take the water – get water at night for mom to last all day next day, and get enough wood in the house because the only thing we had to heat the house was a old-fashioned cook stove. It had a water-heater on the side of it, and that's where we got our hot water at. And uh, we had to put enough – get enough wood in it to last the night and next day, and that was part of the job at doing it. Of course the girls of us, house-cleaning, cooking, things like that there. So it is on that side... And I graduated from Kings Mills in 1956.

JB: So did you go to the school that you guys got water from?

CB: No, that had changed over – the land had sold to a Mister Greene I think the name was. And, uh, he gave permission, but we got permission from the county to get water out of there too. On that still well, we carried water out on five-gallon buckets and, uh, to the house ... on that there, so. Anything? Like I say I mean, I didn't know what poor was until I got out of high school, and that's the truth. I didn't - I mean – we had all the love in the world, we had mom kept our clothes clean, had plenty of food to eat – well of course we raised about an acre of garden every year.

TR: Okay!

JB: That's what I was about to ask. If you had your own ---

CB: Yeah. So, if she didn't raise a good garden, you didn't eat no more! (*Laughter*)

JB: Right.

CB: (*Laughter – Indecipherable*)

TR: Yeah ... That's when a lot of canning happened.

CB: Oh, a lot of canning. They used to power-ball and that's what they'd put ... put in a ... (*indecipherable*) ... it rains out there and put the ... rain out there, and put the tub on top of it and get the water boiling and then put the jars down in there and power-ball on that there, mom did that. And then we had a little place out back that mom stored the stuff in, so... it had the ... I went back and I think "well, how in the heck did dad ever raise ten kids?" I had enough problems raising three of my own and I adopted one, so I mean ... (Laughter)

JB: Right?

TR: I'm one of two, and my parents had enough trouble with the two of us!

JB: Right.

CB: Yeah.

(*Laughter*)

JB: Did you have any chickens or anything, or did you ... ?

CB: No, we never raised no chickens or anything like that. Of course there was always farmers. We was the only family in the southern part of Warren County at that time that didn't live on a farm. So as kids, I've had a job ever since I was ... twelve? Eleven, twelve years old? Matter of fact, my first job paid me a quarter an hour.

JB: (*Indecipherable*)

CB: Quarter an hour, a quarter an hour and you got lunch – working on a farm. So we had the Campbells, the Renners, the Grooms, and the Wiggins, and uh – God I can't think of the other guy's

name – they had two boys, they were ... where Kings – where Kings Island's at right now, at that farm. So we, as kids we had jobs all the time to work. Uh, and I thought of my kids, they "well, I ain't gonna work for that." I thought well, I worked for a quarter an hour, and I worked at three or four different farmers. You know.

JB: What did you uh do at the farms? Or what are some of the jobs ...?

CB: Anything that had to be done. And dig a ... Once, one summer for Mr. Grooms I put a mile fence up. The fence was a mile long, it was all hand-dug. The poles were all hand-dug and stretched and things. (*Indecipherable*). Anything do on the farm. Matter of fact, my first job was going behind a corn-picker. Of course they was just coming out then, and that was taking the corn the corn-picker mix. And you picked it and threw it in a pile, then you come back and picked it all up after the day was over with, on that there. So I mean ... I never thought anything about it. So I, it was just a job, it was on there. I enjoyed it. Go ahead, I'm sorry.

JB: No, you're fine! We're enjoying this!

TR: We like hearing ... anything you can give us.

CB: (*Laughter*)

JB: Yeah, absolutely.

CB: So, while growing up in Kings Mills, uhm, (of) course Kings is a small community. And uh, going to school there, I think there was twenty-eight or twenty-nine graduated in my class then! Of course the old school's torn down, and of course the new school's been built up there - it has. At one time Kings Mills had all the, uh, tournaments because they had the biggest gym in Warren County, and they had all the basketball tournaments down there, so...

JB: Did you play any sports in high school?

CB: I played basketball, I played softball, I played hardball. And uh, that was – that's all we – we didn't have football. We tried to get football but the school would not give us football. They did(n't) so we wanted football. But uh, they had uh – going back in the old days, George Carroll was the, uh, county sheriff at that time. And uh, he lived down in the – matter of fact, my brother and I both worked for George Carroll on his mom's and dad's farm down there on Irwin-Simpson Road is where they lived at, and they had a big farm down there, and we'd go down there and work for him too on there, but uh... George would catch us out at eight-thirty or nine o'clock and he said "you kids had better get home." (*Laughter*) "Your dad knows where you're at, (you) know?" (*Laughter*) But we walked back in. There was no bicycle. Very seldom I used my bicycle, I may have even walked, and then on that so... Everything was about a mile, so fifteen minutes and you was there. Something like that there.

JB: You guys were pretty close to the river in actual Kings Mills. Was it still ... Was the powder company still... ? (*indecipherable*)

CB: Yeah, the powder company was there. I think the last explosion went off ... I wanna say (*nineteen*)fifty-three or fifty-four and that's part of it; I reckon I was over at (*indecipherable name*) putting up hay and it was a beautiful day, I mean a beautiful day, and all of a sudden I heard the explosions and big clouds come up. Of course back then, everybody went to church, you didn't ... you had to go to church; dad said you go to church you go to church – you go to church – you know? (*Laughter*) So uh, we was talking about what a way to go to heaven, seeing the clouds in the sky. About an hour later – hour and a half later – they come got Red his dad was the last one to get killed down at the Kings power company. And that's when they quit making powder down there. It was in the fifties, early-fifties when they ... And it blew out every window on the side of the house.

JB: On the side of *your* house?

CB: Yeah. Every window on the side of the --

JB: Which that's probably what, a mile at least?

CB: Oh, a good mile or so! I mean you could hear it coming across the field. I mean you could hear the rumble coming across, it was...



TR: That's like a sonic boom.

JB: Yeah.

CB: ... on in there so I mean uh, and the old church is, uh, three-brick thick. There's three layers of brick built up on it. It'd be there forever, it never will fall down. That's all there is to it.

TR: Well those are all the original glass windows, right? That got blown out?

CB: Yeah, yeah they were --

TR: Oh my!

CB: They were the original glass windows. And the only thing we could do to 'em - and it took like a week or so to get some people out there to try to get the glass put back in and the insurance and all that, so we had to put uh, blankets up on all the windows to keep the air - keep it dark there.

JB: Yeah.

CB: No, no - no light on that side of the house at all, just blew every window out of the house.

TR: Oh my goodness!

CB: On that there, so --

JB: Huh.

TR: I don't think I quite realized the boom traveled that far...

JB: Right! Yeah.

CB: Oh, it trav—Unreal! I mean – and dad's -- Actually, the first time it blew up I, I wanna say it was around fifty-, fifty-two ... or fifty-three. I'm not real sure the date. And it was at nighttime and, and it just looked like noon. And dad dad's hollerin "get away from the windows! Get away from the windows!" (*Laughter*) Well you can imagine these kids, they're the ones going to see which (*indecipherable*)...

JB: Right! "What's going on?"

CB: And so. We had the windows blown out twice.

TR: Can't even imagine.

CB: Yeah.

JB: Right?

CB: Yeah there was a Queen City gun club up there in Maple Park I used to work at up there as a kid. Trap-shooting is what it was. Matter of fact, the high school's there now. There was a big debate on that land when they bought the land, the school wanted the land...

JB: For Kings Mills high school?

CB: ...For Kings Mills high school due to the fact the lead contents in there from all the buckshot going out. So they had to go in and clean out probably a foot and a half, probably two foot deep, of all that land in where the shots would've went in, uh before they could start building the schools.

TR: There are a lot of athletic fields out there too.

CB: Yeah, yeah!

TR: The big ol' Kings football field.

CB: Yeah yeah, it is back there. And that was one of the problems at that time in Maple Park. It was, but I mean... Nobody thought about lead and stuff back then. They didn't, but...

JB: So how long did your parents live in that church?

CB: Uh, I would say from fifty-two, fifty-three to ..... let's see I graduated in fifty-six, Delores, Rhonda ... *(thinking)* ... sixty-two ... *(thinking)* ... I'd say they lived there until after Kings Island started to build. I don't know when Kings Island came to uh ...

JB: I thought it was open in...

TR: Seventies...

JB: Nineteen seventy-two I believe is what year it opened?

CB: And then dad sold it to Kings Island. He did. Of course the kids were all gone by then, it was just him and mom, you know.

TR: Where do you fall in the range of ten children, if you were born in nineteen thirty-eight?

CB: Sixth.

TR: You're sixth? Okay...

CB: Yeah. My mom passed away when I was a year old.

TR: Oh wow.

CB: And dad then remarried about two years later to my – I called her mom because she raised me. That's all there was to it. And then they had four kids.

TR: Okay.

CB: Yeah. I had to ... (*Laughter*) ... I had to go through the ... (*simulates counting fingers*).

TR: There was ten of ya! (*Indecipherable*)

CB: Well he adopted one. You (*pointing to Jenifer*) was talking about the uh, place out here...

TR: Mary Haven?

CB: Mary Haven.

JB: Oh okay, yeah.

CB: And uh, dad adopted Luanna. So I mean, uh, he adopt her when she was little. About one year old, two years old – I was already married and gone then. And uh, mom started all over again (*Laughter*). She did. So that's what got me interested in, well ... We'll go back to the sheriff's office uh when I first started with them they had the emergency police in Warren County. And Kennard was the sheriff at that time...

JB: What year did you start? Do you remember?

CB: Uh, I wanna say uh fifty-... (*thinking*) ... hmm, no I was in the fire department then ... I – I was in the fire department when I moved to Maineville and uh, dad joined the emergency police and he said he was doing a lot of good, and they did do a lot of good for the kids in Warren County. And uh, I probably - I joined in, I wanna say, sixty.

JB: Okay.

CB: Something like that.

JB: Under Kennard?

CB: Under Kennard, yeah. And then Roy Wallace took over after him. And then I got really interested in law and uh, I uh, went through the programs that they had. And they had uh, Colonel uh Waller(?) Ryan had schooling – uh at least two schools a year, uh, for law enforcement. And I took everything I could take, because once you get the education they can't take it away from you. And you know I got some certificates.

JB: Really quickly, what was the emergency...?

CB: Warren County Emergency Police.

JB: Okay. Can you elaborate on what that is?

CB: Warren County emergency police was set up basically for a, like a training program for people that might be interested in law enforcement. In doing so, they uh set up uh, Kennard set up a program and my dad got into it first. And then I followed him into it. And uh, it was basically uh – like I say, Warren County at that time was a poor county. They didn't have no money, they didn't have nothing. So, they took us in and basically trained us to be a deputy sheriff. And then uh – when Roy Wallace come in – he uh said that uh, started a training program for special deputies. And that was where you had the same power, arrest power, and all powers to – as a regular deputy, but you only got paid one dollar a year. It is; I still got some of my checks for a dollar a year!

*(Laughter)*

CB: And uh, Les Spaeth - I still got one from Wes, Les Spaeth uh – of course he was the Treasurer here for years. And uh, I got one signed by him for a dollar a year. And most of the guys just kept them anyway, yeah that's all there was to it. And then when Roy took that over, he started programs of more intensified training. And they not only did police work, but we did a lot of - emergency police did a lot of good for the community. Uh, we – when I – let's see, would've been (*nineteen*)sixty-one – yeah – sixty or sixty-one - uh, when I joined I was at the Maineville fire department and life squad, then I joined the emergency police. But they did – what I really got interested was that, dad had a big barn over on top of Columbia Road – um Brandon Road - I'm sorry – Grandin Road. When he sold the place over to Kings Island, he moved over on top of Grandin Road which was still in the Kings school district, which Luanna was the last one of the Bastons to graduate from, of the original family. Now my brothers and sisters, they had kids that graduated from Kings too. So, I went into his barn one day and that - I was coming home from work or something – God, there was a whole bunch of people at dad's house so I went in there, and here was about fifteen or twenty guys in there. Men, grown men. They was having the time of their lives. They had toys scattered everywhere. They was there fixing the toys at Christmastime. We would donate them, I mean. I would - I went to Hamilton-Maineville School and got a list of needy families and which they took in Morrow at that time. So – and took in Harlan Township – so, I took anything east of – no, I should say south of – Little Miami. And I took the school districts there; dad took in Deerfield and he took in Mason and part of Turtlecreek. So, the county was split up between all these guys, and it was your place to go get the needy families. So I went to the school and told them what we was doing, and she gave me a whole (*indecipherable*) . And so Christmastime come, we played Santa Claus. Which I thought was great, yeah! (*Laughter*)

TR: That sounds great!

CB: You know, people are funny. I mean, people are proud. They really are proud. And I tell you, people say “well you don’t want, we don’t want nothing. My family don’t need this.” Well, every kid needs a toy at Christmastime, that’s all there is to it! I had a guy over on uh – what is that there, Butterworth Road. Butterworth Road. He had three kids and he been out of work for two months. And just barely had enough to eat. And I said – we was only supposed to give two, two – two toys – to each kid, so... He said “I don’t want it. Get outta here. Leave me alone. I’m not taking it. I gotta go find a job.” And I (said) “Okay.” You know. So the wife, she says “I don’t care what he says. I want the toys for the kids.” So instead of getting them two, I gave each one of them three toys. (*Laughter*)

TR: Oh, that’s nice.

CB: To go. So I mean, the guy come back about six months later and apologized. He said “I didn’t realize how much it means.” Well God I was a kid myself, I remember – I ain’t never (growed) up! That’s all there is to it. So I mean, uh; little things like that the emergency police did. But they was also called in case of the floods and things like that to help out all through the county. And so we done that in the emergency police. But when Walter Rhine(?) come in and start taking um - I wanna say – the schooling, I signed up for every school I could get to. Matter of fact uh, I was in the second class that graduated from, uh, law enforcement school at LCI (*Lebanon Correctional Institute*). We used to have our school training out at LCI. And when we went to – boy, it’s the weirdest feeling to walk in there and everything locks down and locks – you know, another door locks and then-then you’re in the open with all the prisoners. It was a weird feeling to have. But it paid off, it --

JB: You had first-hand experience for sure, right?

CB: Yes. Yeah. I mean really weird.

JB: Yeah. Uhm, really quickly just background question: Uhm, besides working on the farms, did you have any other jobs prior to serving with them?

CB: Honey, I’ve had three jobs all my life.

JB: Okay.

CB: I've had --

TR: So have I.

CB: I – I've, uh – I've been (an) insurance man.

JB: Okay.

CB: I was ten, twelve – no, thirteen years with Western Southern. I drove a tractor-trailer truck for uh, Lee Way. And that was five years. And that's when (*President*) Reagan deregulated everything and the bottom dropped out. Uh, I've been uh like I say, a trustee for twenty years. I was with the fire department, the police department. Matter of fact, my dad and I – through the Sheriff's Office – started Hamilton Township Police Department...

TR: That's cool.

CB: ... years ago because we was having a lot of B-and-E's (*Breaking and Entering*) and robberies down there. And of course, the township didn't have no money and there was a few of us deputies that lived in Hamilton (*Township*), Harlan and Morrow area, Salem, uh that uh the trustees bought a car – an old Pontiac – and they put it in my house. I controlled the – I did all the paperwork for saving up the times you would work (*pointing to Jenifer*), she would work (*pointing to Tori*), and somebody else's times and different times of the day and night so that we had twenty-four hour protection. And - And our B-and-E rate dropped down from like – what was it – I think, I think it was around three or four a month, it dropped down to nothing because... Back then, (*clears throat*) everybody went to bed at nine o'clock. Really! ... On Foster-Maineville Road, my kids after six o'clock at night could go out and play in the middle of the road. Now you can't even back out of your driveway at one o'clock in the morning without traffic stopping you. But there was enough – let's see, there was (*thinking*) -- I had, I had nine special deputies with dad and I, and I set up all times for them to work. And after nine o'clock if I saw you out in your car twice in different parts of the county, we'd stop you and ask you what you was doing there.



JB: So if you did apprehend anyone, did you take them to the county ... ?

CB: Sheriff's office.

JB: Okay, so the sheriff's office.

CB: Everything was done through the sheriff's office. It was.

JB: Did you mention what year that started? I'm sorry.

CB: (*Thinking*)

JB: Or around about ... ?

CB: I, I wanna say in the late sixties, early seventies.

JB: Okay.

CB: It was done through the sheriff's office, it was. Of course we were specials then, but we had already been through school at LCI, graduated, and we had the same power as you, as (*indcipherable name*) or Cecil Vars(?) or anybody else. But Roy (*Sheriff Roy Wallace*) at that time only had like eight – seven or eight full-time deputies for this whole county, it is. So I mean it's a big county...

JB: Right.

CB: ...it is. I can remember one Sunday I come in, Millie Sellamar (*spelling?*), she worked second shift, and she was dispatcher. And we had Millie and um, Fro- ... Fromley was her name, Mrs. Fromley. I'll

think of her name in a minute. Uh, they was our dispatchers. Back then Hamilton County, Clermont County and Warren County was all on the same radio frequency. So uh, they had uh – of course our numbers were all eight's; Clermont County's was like six, Hamilton County's was two. My number was eight-five-five. Dad's was eight-two-seven, so I mean it's, everything was an eight uh to start out with. So when we started out down there, uh - Hamilton Township was the second township in the county to go to a full-time police department. Back then, the law said you had to have a uh, meh- uh ... you had to have a uh lawyer, and we couldn't afford a lawyer, so we worked through the sheriff's office that way. Deerfield (*Township*) still works through the sheriff's office, they do. They started out after we did but they still work through the sheriff's office. Springboro's got their own police department, Waynesville's got their own police department and things now. But back then everything went through the sheriff's office to try to eliminate the costs down so much. So, it's a big county.

JB: Yeah, I didn't realize that that's how that functioned, so that's really interesting to know.

CB: Yeah. It is, on that. Mil- Millie Sellamar, uh she was – she took care of all the records in the sheriff's office at that time. And, if I would go in I would dispatch our ... and check the jail; the old jail that you was talking about on Silver Street. Uh, and Millie took care of all the records.

JB: Was the dispatch located in the jail?

CB: Yes, it was. The dispatch was located in the jail.

JB: Okay.

CB: It was.

JB: Uhm, we have been trying because it's been altered since it was functioning as a jail, and we've been trying to set up like how it was set up inside the jail. So we had the residence in the front part. Was Kennard living there when you started? Do you remember?

CB: No, he was not living there.

JB: Okay.

CB: He was not living there. Roy Wallace wasn't living there either, so I- I mean that was before my time. Now they said that somebody did live upstairs at one time.

JB: Okay.

CB: Because uh that was the jail and the sheriff lived upstairs. But as far as – if you walked from the courthouse into the old jail just right across the alley right there in the driveway you want to call it, and you walk up about five steps and you walk right into the sheriff's office, and to the right was the desk for, uh I wanna say, paperwork and things like that. And right off to the left was a uh, (*pause*) where you bring your prisoners in – set 'em down, talk to them, interrogate. And right also had the dispatch and things was setting up there on the right-hand side, it was.

JB: Okay.

CB: But there was no- no families that – They lived upstairs, they did not live downstairs.

JB: Okay.

CB: -- At the time.

JB: And then – so you've mentioned a couple people that worked with you at the jail. Do you have any memories of other people that worked there with you?

CB: Oh yeah! Troy Gilley (*spelling?*) he uh was a sergeant at the time. And Lyn Ertel(?) uh, was a sergeant. Uh, Har- Ferrell Baker uh was a uh, he was the investigating officer. Uh, (*thinking*) Walter O'Brian was the uh captain and um, Homer Burlowel(?) was a sergeant over the men that was at

Lunder(?) Road, they were on that there, back when I started. It is. But then- that that was the only men the sheriff had at that time. They didn't have nobody else out there, it was, until the specials came in. And when the specials came in, after we went through the training and all like that, they eventually put us out on the road on that there.

JB: Okay. And then, what was a typical day like? Typical work day like, at the jail?

CB: At the jail? Well, I generally worked uh, a split shift. I worked uh, second and part of third. Uh, because after twelve o'clock at night in Warren County back then this county was dead. I mean you wouldn't see nobody. I have drove from Lebanon to Butlerville, come on back down through Morrow, go down through Maineville, come up through Foster's, and get back to South Lebanon before I seen a car.

JB: What was the lighting like on the roads?

CB: There was no lighting.

JB: I was about to say, most of it's in rural areas, so...

CB: It's all- it was all rural, it was all county. I mean it was all farmland at that time. And *(Captain)* Walter O'Brian said the best thing you can do is communication. You see a farmer out there, pull over, stop. And let him pull his tractor up there and talk to him for awhile. Let him know that you're here. Let him know he's important. And get the communication back to the people and where it needs to be. And that's what I tried to install into my men when we started our police department down there to comfort the people on that there. So that's basically the way I was trained at that time. Do your job. Be sure you're right when you do it 'cause there's times that you're gonna mess up. *(Laughter)* That's all there is to it. But I'll tell you what, of all the jobs that I've had, I think I liked the police work better than anything. I really- because, never one day it's the same. It's always, always different. You see some gruesome things; uh, back then we took all reports, accident reports and things like that. The only place to eat in this county at nighttime after eleven o'clock was Franklin truck stop. That was the only place to eat. And we'd all try to meet over there around five, five-thirty uh and eat breakfast and then get back out on the road before traffic really started to hit uh back up then, on that there. So ... was both of you here raised in Lebanon or?

TR: I was.

CB: You was.

JB: I'm from Butler County.

CB: You're from Butler County.

JB: Middletown, Monroe.

CB (*to Tori*): What are you, eighteen? Nineteen? Twenty?

TR: Twenty-five.

CB: Twenty-five? Boy, that's been years ago. There was a schoolteacher in Lebanon. And uh, out here on uh (*state route*) one-twenty-three she had a wreck. And she had (*thinking*) four boys with her. They'd been over to a place over on near Clarksville uh, a bar. And uh, she hit a tree. And you- like I say, you see- some of the things you try to put out of your mind. And you just- you, you, you just can't -- it just won't go. So I was the second officer on the scene. Lyn was the first one and uh, she was sitting in the seat. Her body was cut completely in half, on that there. And the boys never got hurt. So we're trying to find out what she's doing with all these boys at three o'clock in the morning. And you was supposed to be at her house, she was supposed to be at your house, they was all supposed to be somewhere else, but they was all with her. And I, I was elected to go tell her husband that his wife had died. I'll tell you what, I never will forget the day a state patrolman at my door, I was living in Kings Mills at that time. And he said "Mister Clyde Baston?" I said "yeah." He said "You can't be Clyde Baston." I said "yeah." I said "You looking for Clyde E or Clyde O?" Dad is Clyde Owens. He said "Clyde Owens." I said "why." He says "you got a brother named Ronald?" I said "yeah." (Patrolman): "Well he just had an accident and was killed." (*Becoming emotional*) And that was the hardest thing, even today, to take and really go and tell somebody they lost a loved one. Yeah... And I've seen several suicides... Uh... You you put 'em out of your mind; you try to put 'em out of your mind. But something will come along going down the road, a song will come up and somebody will say something and like "wow! That happened thirty-five

years ago and it seemed like yesterday.” Yeah. That’s, that’s just part of the job I guess, on that there. But, uh. The uh building right out here in Green Knoll ... the first building over here on the right-hand side...

JB: Yes.

CB: That’s the one that we built for nothing for the county.

JB: Okay. Is it the one that sits right by the infirmary building? Or the Health and Human Services Building? Right off that same driveway ...?

CB: Yeah, I guess. Yeah yeah. All- same driveway...

TR: (*Indecipherable*) ... by the Banta Building?

CB: If you come down the driveway, it’d be the first driveway to the left and goes back in there –

JB: Right.

CB: The- that was Green Knoll(?) School. It is. And that’s where I first met my first retarded child. I didn’t know what a retarded kid was. Never dreamed what a retar— Never been around one. So the wife and I decided to – gets back to your place out here in (*pointing to Jenifer, referring to Green Knoll School*) - every county had their own home at that time. You know I was talking about the Blevins’. Red(?) and I worked together and his dad got killed. Well a year later, or two years later, I was married – that was three years later I was married – aonnd uh Mrs. Blevins got remarried, and then her and her husband was in an accident that killed both of those. And they had a little baby and I wanted the baby. (*Laughter*) I wanted the baby! And the wife wanted the baby. So we go out here to adopt the baby. So, we was out there and – “you’re too young to adopt, you don’t need to adopt.” We want to adopt the baby. Why can’t we adopt a baby? Well there was so many (re)strictions put on – they even come down... Now I’d just bought a new house – me and the bank had bought a new house (*Laughter*) - down on Foster-Maineville, 103 West Foster. I owned it up until two weeks ago, and I sold it to my daughter.

TR: Wow!

CB: (*Laughter*) I did! Because we bought the house behind her. And uh – so we went out there and we wanted the Blevins baby. Of course there was – there was thirteen of them kids, there was, on there. And uh – so uh – they come out and check the house out. They even went out and checked the ground out around the house! What for? I don't know. Like I'm gonna move all the dirt! And that that's what I asked the guy, I said am I gonna move all the dirt just to get the kid? In the meantime, somebody down in Hamilton County found out that we was looking for a kid. So they come out to us, and they said "well we have a 'Longview.'" Well I didn't know what Longview was. I've never ever heard of Longview. I've never dreamed of what Longview was. And I wanted a boy; I had two girls. I had two girls, I wanted a boy. So – (*Laughter*) - so this snot-nosed, pig-tailed thing come running down the hall and I fell in love with it. And that was fifty-eight years ago (*Laughter*). And she lives in Hamilton Township, she lives in um, Hopewell Commons or (*indecipherable*) Commons or whatever the 'Commons' is – the new home they have down there.

JB: So you got three girls then?

CB: I have – well – matter of – my family went from four to eight in one year.

TR: Oh my!

CB: Yeah! I got Rhonda. Grandma and grandpa moved in with us. And lo-and-behold, the wife becomes pregnant after thirteen years.

JB: Wow!

CB: (*Laughter*)

TR: Did you get your boy?

CB: No! (*Laughter*) Got another girl! Now I got all kinds of boys. I got grandsons and great-grandsons...!!

TR: There you go! It all comes around!

CB: Yeah! It, it all comes around! It really does.

JB: Grandkids are more fun anyways.

CB: Oh yeah! Yeah.

TR: I give 'em sugar and sent them on right home with the parents!

CB: I spoil 'em and send 'em on their way!

JB: Yup.

TR: Perfect! That's what grandparents are for.

CB: That's really all there is to it! We was out to dinner the other night. And uh, had uh, Elody and uh – that's my middle-girl, Elody's her name – and uh she had her, my uh great-granddaughter, her son's daughter. And uh, she said "grandpa, can I have a quarter for--?" One of those machines you put it in and get candy out of. "You can't have that" (*quoting Elody*). And I says "Why can't she have that?" (*Tori & Jenifer laughter*) "Dad, (*quoting Elody*) she hasn't ate her supper!" "Will you eat your supper?" (*asking granddaughter*). "Oh yeah!" (*quoting granddaughter*). So I gave her a quarter to go get her candy! (*Laughter*)



TR: I love it!

CB: It is fun that there. Any more questions ladies?

JB: Yeah, I do. Uhm...

CB: Well, let's go with it (*smiling*).

JB: Okay (*laughing*). Got a little off-topic there, that's okay. Uhm, what were the conditions like in the jail when you worked there?

CB: Really ... nasty. I mean to say it was nasty. Back then, you walked into the jail – you had to open the door, you walked into the jail and there was a walkway all the way around the jail, and we had to check it every hour. And you could go in there at nighttime and see the mice or the rats on top of the patients and things like that. I mean ... they, they ... exterminated it and everything like that, but you just – it was, it was just there.

JB: Yeah.

CB: It really was. Uh they kept it as clean as they could keep it. And they uh did everything that the state required them to do, you know, on that there. But jail isn't supposed to be a luxury.

JB: Right.

CB: Now today they think it should be. But not, not back then, the days I was there.

TR: I don't know, that basement is kinda creepy. I can imagine all sorts of critters coming up through there. Because we've been in the jail...

CB: Uh-huh.

TR: ... now that it's been closed, and the lower-downstairs...

CB: Yeah.

TR: ... the metal door between the residence hall...

CB: Yeah.

TR: ...and that, it's been fused shut.

CB: Yeah.

TR: It can no longer be opened.

CB: It can no longer be opened?

TR: None.

CB: Oh it always creaked and cracked when it opened it! (*Laughter*)

TR: The top one you can still get open.

CB: Okay.

TR: The bottom one you can't. But there's a side door that you have to step over the boiler...

CB: Yeah.

TR: ... (to) the railing. And you can still get into the bottom section ...

CB: You can still get in the bottom section?

TR: Just not through the main door.

CB: Just not through the main door! But uh, there was one night – back then, emergency police wasn't allowed to carry a gun. The E.P. wasn't. And I was sitting desk that night. It was on a Fri—cold night. I mean it was cold, the snow was blowing. And we had a – and I can't - I was trying to think of the guy's name. We had a convicted criminal (we) was holding for the FBI. And it was on the weekend. And they was transporting him back up to Cleveland. And uh, Charlie Lemay is a name you probably never heard of, but Charlie Lemay was the police chief of Waynesville. And uh that night Lyn was in Franklin and Cecil was in Mason, so I had two men out. And uh, Millie was doing her paperwork. And I got a phone call that says uh, "sombodys on your roof breaking into your windows." Says "what are you talking about?" She says "I'm sitting here looking at somebody breaking into your windows right now." So I got on the radio and I told Lyn, I said "Lyn, somebody's breaking in the jail." And I said uh "Millie and I sitting here by ourself." He says "I know." He says "well I'll be there as quick as I can." He and Charlie, the other man, he came on and he said "I'll beat you there!" He- he was in Franklin and Charlie was- Charlie was in Waynesville (*Laughter*). And Charlie beat- matter of fact, Charlie beat him from- beat the city of Lebanon!

TR: Oh my gosh!

CB: He did! He really--

JB: He really wanted to (*indecipherable*)--

CB: Oh yeah! But got up in there – there was foot tracks and things like that. And from that day on I was allowed to carry a weapon when I was sitting (in the) jail.

(*Laughter*)

TR: Oh, that's nice!

JB: Yeah!

CB: It was. Some of the little things that happened, you know – this – you think back like wow. Unbelievable.

JB: That's funny. Uhm, what was the most memorable part for you about working at the jail?

CB: Checking the prisoners at nighttime, the conditions the jail was in. I just could not imagine myself going to sleep and having rats crawl over top of me. And that just put a fear in you that you never wanted to hear that door click behind you because once that clicks, you ain't getting out. That's all there is to it.

JB: Yeah.

CB: ...On that there. Matter of fact I had a real good friend of mine – matter of fact, him and I was trustees for a long time together. He had- he had uh Craig(?), Chris and Kevin, there was three boys. And it was on a- it was late Friday night. They picked their boys up. And I called Freddie, I said "Freddie come and get the boys." "What for?" I said well, they're up here in the jail and I gotta put 'em in jail and I don't wanna put 'em in jail. Freddie says, "well teach them a lesson." I said, "Freddie you don't understand when I--" I said - He said "Clyde, you heard me. Let 'em stay." That was the hardest thing for me – them three boys – good kids. (*If*) you got a kid, you got a kid. You got two kids, you got a half a

kid – you got three kids, I don't care how good they are, you got no kids at all. Because what one don't think of, the other one do and all three of them will go along with it.

JB: Yeah!

CB: So they was knocking down mail boxes.

TR: Ah!

CB: And uh they brought 'em in. They, they caught 'em and brought 'em in. So uh, I said Freddie, you— I hated to put those kids back there in jail because I knew the families. Well back then, everybody knew everybody, it was. I mean, when I took office there was only two-thousand people in Hamilton Township; whole township. And when I left office, there was like twenty-some thousand people in Hamilton Township, it was. But I mean, these are good hard-working kids. And like I say, you got one kid – you got three together, then you don't have no kids. But their dad made 'em go out, put every mail - before they went to court, he would make them go out and make them all pay for their own mail boxes, put them all back up. Made them go – and the judge says, well there ain't nothing else I can do to you!

JB: Right??

CB: Judge Herdman. I don't know if you never heard of him or not.

TR: Paul Herdman?

CB: Paul Herdman, yeah, on that there. So I- I enjoyed his court. I did. Because you never know what he was gonna say or do or think, yeah, on that there. But that was one of the – oh and some of the accidents and things still stick. I had a tractor-trailer truck accident right there at the 22 and 3 – Old 22 and 3 – in Foster's, above Foster's. Back then there was a big gully or on the uh left-hand side coming up. He swerved and missed a car, and the guy in the back was sleeping – there was this sleeper – and the trailer come unhooked and cut the cab in half and cut his whole head off.

TR: Oh gosh.

CB: Well when we got him out, he's still alive – he's still alive today as far as I know.

TR: Oh my gosh!

CB: Just like his whole cranium just come off of it. And uh, we didn't have the equipment then that you got today to pick up that trailer-truck and things. We had to use jacks; and there was a filling station across the street. And we got his and put air hoses and tried to get the trailer up the gate, and once we got him out, we just let it back down and went on. Little things like that you remember, you know, on that. It's just – you sit back and you wonder if it's all worth it, and it was worth it, it really was. And the old jail, they first come out with automatics. Troy Gilley was the first one to have an automatic. And uh, he come in one night, and turned the corner and he's sitting there talking and showing the- everybody wanted to see his new gun. And we was all looking at it and all of a sudden Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! (*Laughter*) He give it to somebody, guy pulled the trigger and he got six shots off all at one time! Boy you talk about some chewing and such that day when the sheriff come in! (*Laughter*)

TR: Oh man! (*Laughter*)

CB: Little things, comical things like that, it was.

JB: I know you've already shared a couple funny stories, but do you have any other funny stories that you'd like to share with us?

CB: (*Thinking*). Nah well ... For years – I had three years or four years in a row I worked Frisch's as a lot cop on Friday and Saturday nights. And uh, of course I don't drink. Never have drink.

JB: Which Frisch's? The one in Lebanon?

CB: Lebanon Frisch's. Well it was back--

TR: The old Frisch's.

CB: The old, old Frisch's. It wasn't in Lebanon at that time.

TR: Where was it?

CB: Well, the old Frisch's that- well there's a- it's got the glass over top of it...

TR: That's now Billie's Burgers and Beer.

CB: Okay. Billie- Billie's Burgers and Beers. That wasn't in Lebanon. That wasn't in... The city of Lebanon stopped at the stop light down- stop light down on the other side of the creamery, we worked down there. And that- Lebanon was in- that was in the city of Lebanon. But on Friday and Saturday night when ballgame's done, there was no place for the kids to go. So they come up and go round, and round, and round...

TR: My dad has told me that he did that in the seventies.

CB: Yes. On that there...

TR: They'd go ridin' at Frisch's.

CB: Yeah.

TR: It was the thriller!

CB: And the only thing that I told the kids was, if you get caught with beer – you may not know it, but there's a definite distinction between a beer cap hitting the ground, and a Pepsi cap hitting the ground. You can tell the difference when it hits the ground. Now, I catch you with a beer, you have a choice. I- I try to give everybody a choice. Give the beer to me and what beer you got left, and leave for the night and don't come back tomorrow night. Because if you come back tomorrow night you're going to jail. That's all there is to it for consumption. So, the- the old saying was you give beer to... I- I didn't drink! I had a garage full of beer. And my wife was just raising Cain about that beer. And I don't know what to do with it - I don't wanna throw it away, I mean that cost them kids money! *(Pause)* I think the last year I worked, the guys was wanting to have a party. Bob Werneke was the manager at Frisch's. Bob Werne- or Dave...Dave - Bob Werneke was the manager and he had a place out on one-twenty-three out here going towards Morrow farm. And he- they wanted to have a party. And I says I'll tell you what guys, you wanna have a party – and how many people's gonna be there – and when I get off work, I'm gonna come out there and see if those people are still there. "Well they'll be there all night, Clyde, we're gonna stay all night! We're gonna stay all ni--" ...Okay. I said, I'll tell you what: come to my house. "What do you mean come to your house?" I said, all the beer that I've collected in the last three years – or four years – you can have. But, I want a list of the names of all the kids that's gonna be there – and there was twenty-six when I got there, there was twenty-five – one girl got sick – and I gave them all the beer. I shouldn't have, I know it was against the law and all like that. But it was their- it was their beer. I mean, I didn't drink it. That's all there was to it. I didn't like beer *(Laughter)*, that there so.

TR: When was this?

CB: Back in nineteen- *(thinking)* ...Let's see, it was before I was trustee. It had to be- had to be in the seventies, it was.

JB: That was before I was born.

TR: It might have been. Who knows with him. Dad turned sixteen in nineteen-seventy ... eight.

CB: He might've been there! *(Laughter)*

TR: He was probably was!



CB: You know what? But I can tell you what...

TR: (*Indecipherable*)

CB: I knew where you were in the county, anywhere in the county. The kids sit there and they would talk and drag race and things like that there, you know. I said guys --

JB: (*Indecipherable*)

CB: -- yeah, that was him! -- It's a -- Back when the streak was on, I even had a guy ... two- two guys streak through Frisch's.

TR: Oh no! (*Laughter*)

CB: Yeah! They'd jump over the fence through a wall there ... (*indecipherable*) ... two loonies waiting for them to pick them up and put 'em in the car...

TR: Is that why his fence isn't there anymore?

CB: (*Laughter*) ...on that there! But you knew, the kids- I don't know. The kids are kids, you know. Matter of fact, I was a kid myself, I was only twenty-two – twenty-three on there. We had a good time. We really did have a good time. A lot of the other deputies wanted the job, and Roy said nope. That boys gets a lot of information for us on them kids up there. And I knew where they was at and what they was going to do and things like that the whole time, on that there. Back then, we had radios. Our cars could be- have a police radio in it. Roy said it's always better to have another set of eyes out there. There was a--

JB: Your personal car had one?

CB: My own personal car had a--

JB: Okay.

CB: Matter of fact, two things: I was going to work one night down at the uh, LeeWay and uh, there was a robbery at the Kings Mills Sohio station right there on the expressway. And I was on the Old 3-C at the time, so I just got on (*Interstate*) 71 - I was going down 71 to the Norwood Lateral and cut over. And uh, here comes this car by me. So I get on the radio and I told the county, I said "I got the suspect in- in view." I says get me a cruiser down here because I can't stop him, although I got red lights in the grille of the car and a siren and things, I said but it's an unmarked car. So uh, Hamilton County – like I said, we was all on the same band. Hamilton County came on and they asked where I was at. And I told them I was just crossing under (*Interstate*) 275 heading towards Pfeiffer (*Road*). And back then uh, you got on top of the hill by Ronald Reagan Highway, down at the little piece there was a cut-off; you could turn around and come back. And uh, I went past there and there was a Hamilton County sitting there waiting, and we caught- we caught a bank robber that night (*Indecipherable*). And uh, so I mean, lit- little things that are uh, - oh what's the other one I was thinking about? We had a lot of fun doing the catching(?). But a lot of the guys are trained different then than what they are today, I mean everybody – you can't do things that we did then and get away with it, you know. Even tough we weren't hurting anybody, but somebody'd say that it'd be against the law today, it would. And so I mean- and you wonder why people don't have no respect for the law enforcement. They don't. The kids today don't have no respect for the law enforcement. I have two - I wish I'd brought them with me – I have two pieces that I'm really proud of. I have a medal that was give to me by the county commissioners for serving in the Hamilton Township Police Department. It means a lot to me. And I think I'm the only peop- person that's in – out of Hamilton County, has a honorary uh thing from the (*indecipherable*) - from them – for uh, police work. Of course I worked down at Highland Towers and I worked at the Queen City Club at nighttime. And of course you get to know the police officers and the horses and things like that. Of course they use- they got a good horse patrol down there. Of course, I asked the guys who come in wanting a cup of coffee. And so I mean, just working with the people, little things, means a lot to me. May not mean nothing to nobody else, but it means a lot to me. It really does, so. I- I guess I'd been in civil work, I wanna say, helping people out ever since I was in high school. Cause when you was in the eleventh grade at Kings Mills, uh Mason Fire Department (would) come over and talk to you. Of course, Mason is way over there and they had Kings Mills uh – your job was if a fire broke out, we'd go get the... And we had the old-fashioned carts that pulled the tanks, and pulled the tank to the fire and it was full of water, until the fire department got there, that was. And then when I got... When the Korean War was on, they started civil air patrol. And they come to the school, and uh Charlie Pierce and I joined up the civil air patrol, and Hank Wig- Hank Wiggins was the captain of that one. And we met down in Loveland in Hamilton County at that time. And Rozzi Fireworks out there on Lebanon Road –

Columbia Road (and) Lebanon Road in uh Loveland in Hamilton County crosses over – they had a uh stand out in the middle of a field. And we'd sit there and count the airplanes that went over at nighttime, which way it was going and could you determine what type of airplane it was. And I done that for five years. They did away with civil air patrol then, they did.

JB: Did you mention that you had a story about the Wright-Pat?

CB: Oh, that's when the air force, the bomber...

TR: Oh, that crashed into the- into the radio tower.

CB: No--

JB: No, there was a---

CB: On old Hamilton Pike (*present-day Wilmington Pike?*) uh back in the fifties uh, flew out of Dayton and it crashed over there and put a ninety-five foot crater in the- in the ground...

TR: My goodness.

CB: ... it did. And that was back – oh man – that was back in early fifties.

JB: Yeah.

CB: Did you look it up?

JB: Uhm, so we have a researcher that comes in frequently and he did a whole bunch of research.  
Uhm...

CB: Uh-huh.

TR: Dwight...?

JB: Dwight Rowe? I don't know if you're familiar with him –

CB: No, I've never heard of him.

JB: -- he volunteers with the historical society –

CB: Uh-huh.

JB: -- but he wrote up a whole thing about it.

CB: Oh, did he really?

JB: He was trying to find information about that- the crash, and then there was someone else uh, in recently wanting to do research on it, which we don't really have a whole lot at the archives.

CB: Yeah.

JB: But--

CB: Well back then they didn't have the – news – or whatever you have today, you know. It's all instant today. Back then, you might've got it a week later or something like that. I know that once the air force got down there, man they just blocked everything off and everybody moved away.

JB: Well, right. Because I mean was it rumored that it was carrying a bomb?

CB: It was carrying a bomb.

JB: Right. Okay.

CB: The rumors said it was carrying a bomb, it was. And we didn't know – uhm – I was working in Mason at that time. Uh, dad and I was working in plumbing. And uh it went off and somebody said an airplane crashed. And I guess we was probably fifteen – some twenty persons there. And all you could see was parachutes hanging in the trees with bodies in them –

JB: Oh my gosh! (*whispering*).

CB: -- and pieces of people laying around.

TR: The coroner's report is not pretty.

CB: No. No it's not.

TR: Because we have it here; we have the coroner's (*report*) and it has pieces of information and says the names of the individuals, what their rank was within the air force and then it says –

CB: Well that I don't know any of that.

TR: Yeah, it has that that and it says some of what you're saying where individuals (*indecipherable*) just body parts were found or somewhere, or very much just –

CB: There was a case where I saw a man – I saw a man pick up a fi- a finger and took a ring off of it. And stuck it in his pocket and put the finger back down. I got so mad, and so disgusted, I ran and I told dad and dad says “you saw what??” I said that man over there – and he had on a real, an old-fashioned - I wanna say a farmer's wool hat. It was checkered, different colors. And he had on a brown jacket on there. It was not a heavy jacket but he had on a brown jacket. And the first officer that I saw that came from the air force, I went up and told him and I pointed the man out. And they went and got him, and they- they took him away in handcuffs that day.

TR: That's terrible.

CB: I said if you need me I'm here. I never heard no more from it, or anything like that at all. But I mean, it's just – it's funny how things come back to your memory and things like that there. It's just ... un- unreal.

JB: Yeah.

CB: ... It is. So, I mean (*clears throat*) I saw several floods. Of course, since they put the Caesar's Creek in, it's eliminated (*coughs*). But most of 'em (*indecipherable*)... One guy down at Foster's, they- there used to be a covered bridge down at Foster's - (*coughs*) excuse me – and the flood took- took it away, and then they put the George Terwilliger bridge up down there. I know it was probably a year or so before they put it there. But at one time, Foster's had seven bars and seven churches!

(*Laughter*)

TR: Gotta level it out!

CB: Yeah! Seven bars and seven churches...

TR: Yeah.

JB: Yeah. We did an exhibit on Foster's --

CB: Did you?

JB: -- and found a lot of that information.

CB: *(Cough)* Yeah.

TR: Yeah.

CB: There was what, three killings down there?

TR: Yes, at what is now the Monkey Bar ... *(indecipherable)*

CB: Yes. I was the first officer on the scene in that bar.

TR: Oh wow.

CB: I got a call from uh, Mrs. Fromley. She says, Clyde there's been a shooting down at Kenny Harris' - we call it Harris' bar - and uh, of course back then, I mean all I had on was a shirt and my three-fifty-seven *(police-issue sidearm)* was when I went in there. And they said "over there Clyde, over there Clyde! Over there! It's over there..." But I was told it was actually in the bar. But it wasn't; it was behind the bar. There was a house sitting where the parking lot is at right now. And there was three killed in there. It looked like Annie Oakley's O-K Corral. I mean there was bullets all over the walls...

TR: My goodness!

CB: ... it was, on that. It's funny you bring that – a guy called me about six months, it may even be a year ago. And he says "Clyde. Yeah I'm so-and-so." "Okay. What can I do for you?" He said "I heard you was down at the Monkey Bar when the shooting went on." I said "what shooting?" I done forgot about it! Would've been two years ago...

JB: Right.

TR: Oh yea.

CB: ... and I remember when Kenny's brother wrecked his motorcycle, killed his wife wrecked his motorcycle and drowned in the river down there, on there. But now over on the other side of the bar – on the other side of Foster's where the sewer plant's at right now – there was uh three bars, a grocery store and a post office, Maineville post office used to be down there. And they moved it up to Maineville when they built the firehouse. When we built the firehouse, we went out and collected – you could buy five-brick, two-brick, one-brick; everybody went out and collected money to buy the brick for the firehouse but to pay for it (*coughs*) because we didn't have no money. And uh Les Ogden was the uh, architect. And uh, he was good friends with the post office down in Cincinnati. And they had talked about moving the post office out of Foster's because of the flooding that went on down there. So - (*coughs*) so excuse me – he figured out a way to pay for the building, put the post office in there and let the post office pay for the building for rent. And that's what helped get the firehouse right in town in Maineville. Now there's a fire company in there – a fire business person there that protects the fire equipment and stuff like that there that- that has the old post office and the rest of it's the firehouse. So they're building a new firehouse down by the administration building; now that's been in plans for years, it has. But we just didn't have the money, now we've got the money to get it done, it has. When we first started – when I was the liaison officer – the trustees met in the firehouse chief. They had three-four chairs, had a desk, and the room wasn't quite – I was say from here to the wall (*comparing dimensions to interview room*), about this wide. And that's where the trustees' office is at met there, on that there. So I mean uh, but dad and I did the help do the plumbing and the wiring in that building, and the turbine power out there – well, it's a storage place now. We did the plumbing and wiring in that; Les Ogden designed that one too, he did. And that's - the Hildebrandt's started out with a- started as a uh tire jack- a carjack place to change tire changers, it was. And then the union came in and they said you can't afford it, and then the union says you can afford it and says they went out of business – said they couldn't afford it.



TR: Interesting.

CB: I know, I'm sorry --

JB: No, you're fine (*laughter*).

TR: (*indecipherable*) We like long stories!

JB: Right, no. Um, I think I'm done with my questions, so if there's anything... When did you stop working for the jail?

CB: When I become a trustee.

JB: So what year was that? Do you remember?

CB: God I don't know, nineteen-eighty I think.

JB: Eighties? Okay.

CB: It'd be- be in the later seventies, early eighties, something like that because when I first ran for trustee, you could do both – you could be a trustee and you could work for the county. Uh but once I got in office, they changed the law says you can't do both, so you gotta do the one or the other, so I thought well, instead of enforcing the laws, I'll be in positions to starting making laws.

JB: Right.

CB: So that's when I decided to be a – Millie and I talked about it a long time. (*Laughter*) We really did. She was- she was a sweetheart. Her husband Don, he- he was a deputy sheriff too. (*Indecipherable*). And I think one of the boys works for the county water department, I'm not for sure...

TR: I'm not sure, I'm not – I don't know that many people in the water department.

CB: ... on that there.

TR: There's a lot of 'em.

CB: Yeah.

TR: There's a lot of guys who work for the water department! (*Laughter*)

CB: Yeah, yeah! A lot of guys work in the water department.

TR: And they're not even all at this building.

JB: Right.

CB: No, (*laughter*) they're not.

JB: Yeah, so that's all of the questions that I have. So, unless you have something else...

CB: I watched Kings Mills- Kings Island grow. Matter of fact, I've got a piece of the Eiffel Tower at home.

*(Group laughter)*

JB: Which is interesting because the church – uh for anybody who is watching this that's not familiar – the church that you grew up in is on the property that Kings Island is on now.

CB: Yeah. Yes...

JB: And they've kept the church there.

CB: Uh, they're using it for storage. They go on in and tore out every room that we put up and it's just one great big church right now, it is. Uh, they uh - I don't know when the church was built, but I do know it's three-brick thick. And it's cool in the summertime and cold in the wintertime in that there because there's trees around it, and the graves and things are out there - you can't- you can't do what you want to do out there with it.

JB: Which is why I imagine it's still there. *(Indecipherable)* ...do much with the land.

TR: Well, they- so there was another cemetery that is on the property that Kings Island is on. It's by the Great Wolf Lodge.

CB: Yeah, that's before you- that's before you get to...

TR: Hence, there was also a campground there before there was Great Wolf Lodge, and some of the graves have been moved.

CB: Have they?

TR: Yes. I think they just relocated them within the graveyard itself. But--

CB: Yeah.

TR: It's not uncommon in Warren County for old graves to be moved because the old South Lebanon cemetery that was in downtown South Lebanon by their old school system is gone. Baseball fields were built on top of it, and then the old gravestones are all cemented together in a line at the bottom of Union Cemetery, or Deerfield Cemetery in Union Township.

CB: I know that what you had to go through to move – we moved some graves from Hoptown to Murdoch. Maineville- or Hamilton Township – has uh Murdoch, has Zoar Road, has uh Maineville itself, has Murdoch and they have one on the old 3-C highway just as you drop over the highway on the right-hand side before you get to Schuster's down there. And so we have five cemeteries that we take care of. Now that isn't counting the private cemeteries that's in Hamilton Township that I know personally myself of four private cemeteries in Maineville, in Hamilton Township for people. You can be buried in your own yard if you want to be, even as of today, you can be buried there. But they do require you to have a vault and things like that now. Of course back then you didn't have that. And there's parts of Maineville cemetery we quit burying in because Rick went down there one day and was digging up a grave and pulled up a head. Yeah, well – now you really got looking back as the paupers' cemetery, they call it. Pa- pauper?

TR: Oh, yeah...

CB: Paupers' cemetery? Where you didn't have no money to pay? So, we just cut off the whole section and says nobody is to be buried there.

TR: Supposedly there was a paupers' cemetery behind the infirmary building here as well.

CB: Really?

TR: Where the parking lot and the facilities buildings are now.

CB: Yeah ... Could be.

JB: That was way back in the early eighteen-hundreds, eighteen-thirties.

CB: Yeah.

TR: Yeah. So almost anything at this point would be dust.

CB: Yeah.

JB: Yeah.

TR: Which is why when cemeteries are relocated for the most part, they only take headstones if they're ... (*indecipherable*)

CB: So ... we- we try to work with the people, but – like I said, in the twenty years, we moved maybe three or four graves, we did, from one cemetery to another or from a – well, the one guy bought the land and knowede that a cemeteries was on the land. And he paid to have them moved into, uh, Murdoch cemetery. So I mean uh ... which was close by, but it still wasn't where they was originally buried at, but it gives him excess ability – and he didn't want them on his land. So they did and moved them for him, on that there so... But the paperwork that you gotta go through is...

JB: It's crazy, yeah.

CB: ...unreal to get them to move. You gotta have a coroner there to do it too.

TR: There's a lot of little cemeteries hiding all over Warren County ... just like that one at Foster's we were looking for and we never found it --

CB: Whereabouts in Foster's?

TR: Uhm, if you go behind the Monkey Bar and follow the bike trail down, um supposedly there was one on the east side of the Little Miami River.

CB: Okay.

TR: About a half mile at most from Old 3-C.

CB: ... Yeah, Old 3-C.

TR: Yeah. We never found it. We went looking. But of course we're not going on anybody's property...

CB: Yeah.

TR: ... because that's not a good idea. But we did not see any headstones from the road.

CB: I think you're talking about the Bell's cemetery.

TR: I'm not sure, it's in... (*thinking*) So we keep all the graveyard information here from what is gathered. It's a very small cemetery, whatever it is.

CB: It wasn't all the way to the end.

TR: No.

CB: It was back this way --

TR: I would say maybe between a quarter- and a half-mile.

CB: Yeah. I think it's before you come to the first house.

TR: I'm not sure. I don't recall. ...(*indecipherable*)

CB: As a kid, we used to run down there. We used to swim down there too. I wouldn't swim in that river for nothing.

JB: Oh ... no!

CB: Well, we used to jump off the bridge. Down in, there's a channel that goes down through there. Well, when Glen Allen -- that's before your time too -- was being built on that, there used to be a swimming pool down there. And the kids come—and the channel would go around the swimming pool and down to the old mill. Of course the old mill is gone and everything's gone on then, on there. And uh, when Glen Irwin(?) -- there used to be a boat cup(?) on this side of uh -- when you turn off of Foster-Socialville and take a left, you would take a right, that's all grown up in there now. It used to be a boat club up there years ago. And uh, Glen and his wife was out -- they used to run boats up and down the river. Of course that's before they even dropped the uh dams out, you know. And uh talk about that, I got a picture of a nineteen... Model T Ford in the middle of the river in- in wintertime. They used to go down there and ice-race all the way up to Kings Mills and back on the river.

JB: In their cars?

CB: In their cars! In their cars.

TR: Okay!

CB: Okay! It was all flat. And it really wasn't that deep I guess, it was about three feet deep – four feet deep, something like that there. But I mean that's going back, early-fifties on that there.

TR: My goodness, I can't even imagine ice-racing on the Little Miami River!

CB: Yeah! Ice racing on the Little Miami River! But when Glen got the – it was called Glen Allen at that time – got the swimming pool built and he had like a little bar and everything down there—and it was going over real good and then... Well one Sunday, the boat club was out going on out, they couldn't - they could not start their boats until after twelve o'clock. Well all the churches and people, they didn't want them making the noise at church. The bars didn't care. The five churches did care ... *(laughter)* ... on that there! So I mean uh he was driving, she fell out of the boat and he ran over her.

JB: *(whispering)* Oh my gosh!

CB: That did away with Glen Allen, it did. And so he says if anybody doing it again, he says – he willed it over to the state – the land over to the state. And that way, nobody can go down there and do anything, so they made a park out of it. That's, I- I don't even ... it was called Glen Allen Park.

TR: I think you're right. We went there.

JB: Yeah.

CB: ... On that there. Now the canoe people put their boats in now to go down to Loveland or something like that there. Yeah, on that there. Well, ladies, I hope I helped you! I don't know...

TR: Very much so!



JB: Absolutely!

CB: Yeah, on that there. Any questions, give me a call.

JB: Okay. I'll go ahead and end this then.

[End Transcript 01:24:16]