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Interview with Bill Crites

Bill Crites

California State University, Monterey Bay

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Chinatown Renewal Project
Interviewee: Bill Crites
Interviewer: Ashlee Trotter and Paul Zuber
Date of Interview: October 19, 2009
Duration of Interview: 56:57

Ashlee Trotter 00:00

Bill Crites, on October 19, 2009, here at Mr. Crites' home—668 Old Stage Road, Salinas, California. And we have for the end of the interview, we have a release form for you to sign. And we would like to get permission to record this interview.

Bill Crites 00:21

Okay. You have that permission.

Ashlee Trotter 00:23

Okay. And so, the format of the interview—we're going to start with some informational questions, open-ended conversations, and then move into talking about Salinas and how it has changed throughout the years. So first, starting with informational questions. You were born in what year?

Bill Crites 00:49

I was born at the county hospital on Natividad Road here in 1932.

Ashlee Trotter 00:56

And what was the date?

Bill Crites 00:58

February 12, 1932.

Ashlee Trotter 01:03

And your siblings—how many do you have?

Bill Crites 01:10

Four living brothers—one brother died—and one sister. There were six children.

Ashlee Trotter 01:20

And your parents—were they born here in Salinas as well?

Bill Crites 01:23

No, my parents were born—well, dad was born in Atoka, Oklahoma, or he was raised in Atoka, Oklahoma. His birth certificate said he was born in Indian Territory, Oklahoma. My mother was born in Cuervo, New Mexico, in 1909. Dad was born in 1904. [phone rings] And mom, mom and her family, they traveled, were traveling in covered wagons, and they were—Dad worked in agriculture wherever he could get a job, and they wound up in Atoka. And that's where mom went to school, met dad. They got married in, I don't know—1920-something [laughs]. They came to Salinas with dad's parents and

his brother and sister—my aunt and uncle. They came—I'm gonna say 1926 or so. And they lived in a little house on Romie Lane. Dad worked in the produce—Salinas down to Santa Maria. Santa Maria is where my oldest brother was born, in 1927. And my brother just older than I, Gene, who, I don't know—I think he was born in Salinas. But maybe he was born in San Jose. I, I don't recall. I wasn't there. And then—but I know somewhere in that timeframe, that folks moved up on rural, up in the hills out of San Jose, and it was very bad roads and probably 20 miles to town. And I know that before I was born they came back to be in Salinas so they could be close to the hospital. And after I was born, we moved back up on the mountains—actually on Reynolds Road, off Hicks Road in the new, in the Guadalupe mine area of San Jose, off Hicks Road. And we lived there until—for a couple of years and moved down into Willow Glen, San Jose area. We were there for a couple of years, maybe. Mom and dad—they had differences of opinion, and so they split, eventually they divorced. And we moved from Willow Glen to a little house on Hillsdale, and we lived there for, I'm gonna say two or three years. And that's where we lived when I started school at Franklin school in town, on Tully Road in San Jose. Mom married stepdad when I was in the second grade. We moved—just come back to Salinas, and I've been here ever since. We live—when we came to Salinas, we lived on Hyland Drive, which was, at that time, was pretty nice neighborhood. It hit—went to pot since [laughs]. When we first came, there were still a lot of empty lots, and houses were on one acre lots. Everybody had their own. Well, actually, I remember going into the house, first time I went into the little house we lived in. Stepdad had to light a Coleman lantern. So, we got electricity after we moved there. The road was dirt. Hyland Drive was dirt. I remember the county came out one time when I was a kid, they had a grader and they graded the road up into, like, a pile of dirt in the middle of the road, and they had a truck and it mixed oil with the dirt and spread it back out. That was our road. That was our paved road. That was a pretty good road. We used to play baseball and whatever on the road. We didn't have to worry about cars. It was a one-way road, dead end at the end. At the end of the road where Costco sits today, when I was about 12, there was a truck farmer that grew radishes and onions there. And us kids—10, 12, 13 years old—we got the opportunity to work and make the big sum of 10 cents an hour bunching radishes [laughs], onions, and we thought we were really doing good. Later, as I got older, during the summer and later in the, in the year—maybe, maybe it wasn't summer time. I can remember there would be a bus would come up the street, and anybody wanted to work, we'd run and jump on that bus, and we'd go to fields and, and then weed lettuce or just work whatever produce was available in the fields at that time. We didn't do that too much, but we did it when we had the chance. I remember when we first came back to Salinas, I thought it was strange. I started school in San Jose at Franklin School. And I came to Salinas and I went to Roosevelt School, who was our president at the time. Salinas was pop—probably had a population—I, I can't swear, but what I remember is somewhere around eight to 10,000 people. Not many. Hyland Drive was out in the country. We kids would catch a ride as best we could with whatever parent was going in town and then we'd get a ride to school. And after school we'd walk home to—from Roosevelt School. And then in later years, they got the bus system going, and so we didn't have to walk so much. So that was—we thought that was good. And, let's see. At that time during the war the—we were able to get driver's license at age 14, which is a scary thought today [laughs]. But we did, and I had a part-time job in high school delivering bundles of newspapers to Salinas, California, and we had loaded my old car up and delivered to, I don't recall, 20 or 30 different paper boys. I'd have bundles of papers, each one would get a bundle of newspapers. I'd deliver them out in the Alisal area. So, I stayed with that till I got out of high school. And my dad informed me, maybe I ought to get a full-time job rather than just a part-time job. So, I decided I'd better start looking, and I got a job in a couple of weeks.

Found out somebody was looking for work, and I went to work at the Pollyanna Bakery—319 Main Street. It was owned by Bill and Juanita Cordis. It was a good place to start working. Got to eat all the pastries, [laughs] pastries I wanted. And I—job was not much, it was just, I would deliver bakery goods to satellite stores, and then do clean up—clean the floors, clean the pans. Whatever they wanted done, that's what I got to do. I was there a little over two years. The first fall after I was there was—I was not quite, I was 17 and a half, I think. I was 17 when I got out of high school. So, it was the first fall when I was there, and I got sick one day. Mom called—at that time the doctors made house calls. Dr. Wiebe come out and he check me, one thing than another, and he says, take him to the hospital. So, they took me to the Monterey County Hospital again. Did some tests, and they said I had polio. Well, that just scared the bejabbers out of me because there was a lot of people paralyzed with polio. But after a couple of days, my fever went away, and I felt good, and I wanted to go home. But I had to stay for two weeks. It was mandatory quarantine.

Ashlee Trotter 13:26

And at that point, were you still at home with your parents?

Bill Crites 13:28

I was still at home. Yes. With my parents.

Ashlee Trotter 13:34

And can you describe the atmosphere of your home life?

Bill Crites 13:39

Well, it was a [laughs]—we had a bunch of kids, we was always playing or fussing with one another.

Ashlee Trotter 13:49

Did you have strict rules or chores that you had to do every day?

Bill Crites 13:54

Chores, we had a plenty of. We had our own cow. We had chickens. We had to take care of the animals. I got to milk the cow. We needed the cow because all the kids, we need a lot of milk, and—yeah. Gardening—I never was much for gardening. Mom would get me in on it to help her. So, we did that part of it.

Ashlee Trotter 14:35

So, can you describe your mom for us?

Bill Crites 14:38

My mom was a sweet little old lady. Very strong opinions. She went to church every Sunday. Took us kids to church every Sunday. I guess she did pretty good with all of us, I guess. We haven't—most of us children have not been too strict as church goers, but don't say we don't believe in God.

Ashlee Trotter 15:23

And as for your dad, or your stepdad?

Bill Crites 15:27

This was—okay, stepdad, he didn't go to church. He, he didn't do—he was a very strong-willed man, and I'm sure he believed in God, but he didn't go to church. He, he made sure that his boys toed the mark as best he could.

Ashlee Trotter 16:01

The family life—at that point when you were living on Hyland Drive, were all your brothers and sisters there with you?

Bill Crites 16:08

Yes, yeah, we were all there together, and—

Ashlee Trotter 16:15

Can you describe a, a day in the life of a, of the family?

Bill Crites 16:21

Well, we would, of course we'd get up and we would make, our mom would make our lunches. We always took our lunch, took our milk for school, and went to school. We'd catch the bus. When we'd get home from school later, I was—I eat terrifically. I can remember coming in when the garden was going good and pick me some tomatoes, and I'd have about four tomato sandwiches and a quart of milk [laughs]. Get, get me through to suppertime. But I was, I was a string bean, skinny as a rail. And the games, we'd play, oh, we'd play kick the can or hide and seek, or go out on the road and hit the ball. We did a lot of hitting the ball where we'd—we did a lot of kicking the football back and forth. Somehow or other we had a mark. If he would start and if he could kick further than the other boy, you could work 'em backwards, and you'd win the game or something. I don't recall just how it worked, but—

Ashlee Trotter 17:55

And so were there, were there many kids in the, in the neighborhood?

Bill Crites 18:00

There were a lot of children. Next door, we had the Higuerras, and they had four or five kids. Cross the road was Bonzi, so there was two. There's Rangins—they had four or five children. Down the road was Mathises—they had three children. And there were many other children also, but these were ones mostly about my age. Luckily, about a month ago our class had its 60th class reunion. We had three of us boys from Hyland Drive were at it. And one, Richard Higuera, now lives down at Pismo Beach. And Jimmy Mathis lives in Sonora. I thought that was pretty good. Three of us made it that far.

Ashlee Trotter 19:17

And so, going into school, is there any, any memories that stick out to you about school?

Bill Crites 19:24

I couldn't wait to start school, and I couldn't wait to get out of school, with what I remember [laughs]. I wasn't too good a student. I just, I just got by. I learned to read and write, and arithmetic, and I still do a lot of reading and arithmetic [laughs].

Ashlee Trotter 19:58

And as for transportation to school—did your mother or your father take you to school?

Bill Crites 20:04

Mostly it was neighbors would take us early on, when we lived on Hyland Drive. Before that, when I started school at five, they didn't have a kindergarten. So, I started to start in the first grade at age five, which I should have waited till I was six, I guess. But they, they had a bus system that came and picked us up.

Ashlee Trotter 20:42

So, are there any teachers that still stand out in your mind?

Bill Crites 20:48

Well, they've kind of faded away. Yes, I had, I had some good teachers.

Ashlee Trotter 20:58

And once again, what were, what were the schools you went to as a child?

Bill Crites 21:04

First school I started was Franklin School, on Tully Road in San Jose. And when we moved to Salinas, I went to Roosevelt School on Capitol and Central—it's still there. Then I went to Washington Junior High School, and then Salinas High School. At that time, there was only one high school in Salinas. So that was the only one to go to. Now we've got four, I think.

Ashlee Trotter 21:42

How do you remember high school?

Bill Crites 21:46

High school was a, was a fun place. It was. Well, let's—I don't have too many memories of high school. It was learning to get along with people, getting a part time job, trying to figure a way to make a living in the world. Yeah, I wasn't, I really wasn't too good a student, sad to say.

Ashlee Trotter 22:35

So, you described, you described your reunion the other day. When you guys all got together, did you talk about, about those times?

Bill Crites 22:44

Well, we talked about the old times, and this and that, living on Hyland Drive. And one of the boys is still slim, almost slim as he was in school. He does a lot of motorcycle riding, hiking and such. He lives in Sonora. My friend Richard—his health is not very good, I'm sad to say, and I'm just glad that he could

make the reunion. He was, he was a good student. And he spent, he spent his working years working for the government. And then later, he had his own private consulting business, and he worked with the government. And Jimmy, he worked for, he worked for the state prison system. Then he retired from there. Me, I just went to work at Pollyanna Bakery, and worked there for, oh, I was there a little over two years, I guess. Somewhere along there I met, met Shirley, and we got married February 4 of 1951. And shortly after that, I asked the boss for a raise. And Mr. Cordis, he said, oh, I can't afford to pay you anymore. But he could always find another little bit of work for me to do during the week. So, I started looking, and then I got a job at Southern Pacific Railroad. When the produce started in the spring—it was April, April 16th, 1951, I went to work for the railroad. And I was—worked as a clerk, and we did various things. We'd walk, read the numbers on the cars, write it in a piece of paper, and turn that in. All of this stuff now is done by computer, and they have machines that read the car numbers as they go by, and they go by it, I don't know what speed, and they know every car, transmit it, and they know where they're at. But at that time, it was not that way. In the evening, they would bring loads of, of lettuce and carrots into the yard. And we'd have to get a list of each car number, and then they'd have to match it up with the billing. The businesses would bring in a list of the cars that they had loaded and what was in it and where it was going. And we would type up the, the billing information for the car, and it would, they'd put the trains together, the groups of cars together, and take them to Watsonville and then divert them from there, whichever way they needed to go. And so, in the wintertime when there was no produce, I worked in a warehouse. The railroad had a warehouse, they had a freight company—Pacific Motor Trucking, PMT. And we'd work in the warehouse, and I'd work from midnight till eight, or 1am till 9am. And along about that time, I went back to work part time with the Californian, the Salinas paper, and I had the rural paper route out through the country. And I'd go 100 mile a day, or more or less. I think the last route was a little over 100 miles a day. And I delivered four to 500 papers a day to businesses, and I would throw them to people's houses. Like, the paper boys now, they put them in a paper tube—that's pretty good for the customer, but I [laughing] couldn't, I couldn't have made, I couldn't have made my route if I had to put every paper in a tube. So, I would throw 'em as I was going down the road. So, I stayed there till 19—I don't know, about three or four years. We saved enough money to make a down payment on our first house on the Paloma. In 1954 we bought the house on Paloma, was a little two bedroom, paid \$8,500 for it. We lived in that little house till we bought this property and built out here in the winter of, or, yeah, wintertime of 1959. I worked at the railroad in the warehouse until Washington's Birthday, February 22. And somebody bumped me, they had more seniority than I, and so I was out of work. I was hanging around the house, just messing around. And one day one of the fellows from the railroad called and said, hey, so and so looking for some part-time help over at Central Supply. So, I jumped in my car, drove down there, and they give me an application, said bring it back tomorrow. And I thought, well I'm not going to drive home, fill this out, and bring it back. I just stood there and leaned on the counter and filled out the form and turned it in. And they looked at it and said, well, why don't you come in in the morning. So, this—I did, and this was gonna be two or three weeks, just fill-in time. So, I was working alone there making about \$1.90 an hour, I think. And—which was a little bit more than the railroad, not much more than I made at the railroad. Was a little bit more, so that was good. And after I'd say about three weeks, chief clerk, head clerk at the railroad called and said, hey, I need you to come back to work. And I said, "Tex, go around me. You got a lot of men out of work and on the extra board, go around me, and call me when you got them all working." And his words were, "No. Hell no. Either come get to work or give me your resignation." It was the best thing that ever happened to me [laughs]. I quit the railroad and stayed on this—it was

Central Supply then, which is owned by Granite Rock Company, which I had no idea in the world was such a big or nice company to work for. No, I stayed there till I retired. I think I was—it was in '94 I retired. It was a good company to work for. Next.

Paul Zuber 32:16

That's very good.

Ashlee Trotter 32:19

Yeah, so Paul can ask you some questions.

Bill Crites 32:23

Okay.

Paul Zuber 32:26

Let's see, we covered most of your life it seems. But I wanted to ask you a little bit more about, like, what, what you did after high school. More for—we got, we covered your work experience, it seems like. More about, like, what you did for fun and how the area was, how—that kind of thing.

Bill Crites 32:46

Well it was, it was still remote. Open—a lot of open areas. Where Kammann School is today—when I was a kid that was a, there was an airport there. Where all the houses all the way from Main Street, from Rochex to Laurel and on down to where the freeway is today was open land, and it was, was the airport. Beyond that was rolling. And Laurel today was, like I said, was Airport Road, and it went all the way to Boronda Road, and Hyland Drive cut off of Airport Road. And now they've changed things around. And Airport Road ended at Natividad Road. Somewhere in the 50s, they cut Natividad through to intersect with Juanita Boulevard and changed it all to Laurel, Laurel Drive. That made it a lot easier to get from the west side to the east side [laughs] if you were on the north side of town. When I used to ride my bike in the summertime from Hyland Drive, I'd ride into town to Alisal and out Williams Road, pick strawberries [laughs] and, and ride back home. Where Sherwood Gardens is today was rolling, open land. The—where the softball complex is at the rodeo grounds now was open—used for parking for the rodeo. But when they rounded up the Japanese after Pearl Harbor, they put a lot of temp housing in there, and they had it full of the Japanese internees—internees. Interns—the people they had [laughs] interned. Then they also, they had watch towers on the corners with guards. Us kids thought, man, that don't seem right. But they moved that away. Out in the Alisal from Sanborn Road to the airport, they had temporary—the government put in housing for government workers, and the government took over the airport and used it. And after the war, they sold the, sold all the houses that they built—they were, like, 24 by 36 or something, whatever size they were. People would go and bid on them, and then they would—they dismantled them and took the lumber home and built their houses. And that pretty much opened up the land, and somewhere in the, what, 50s Monte Mart went in, which I think was, other than Safeway and Purity Stores, was one of the largest grocery stores, and, and it had all kinds of merchandise in it. Then later, they built the houses around that. Go ahead, ask another one. I'm running out [Bill and Ashlee laugh].

Paul Zuber 37:24

[unclear] How about—so you've been in this area for a long time. How about cultural events? Like were there many community fairs or—

Bill Crites 37:34

I—the only big cultural event that I remember as a kid was rodeo. That's it. When I was 15, bought an old horse for 25 dollars.

Paul Zuber 37:34

That's a good buy.

Bill Crites 37:42

I bought a horse for 25 dollars [laughs], and I rode her to town, rode through the parade and through the rodeo. And that was a hard day on a horse for me [laughs]. No, I don't remember other—there were no strawberry festivals or art and folk festivals or Cinco de Mayos, what have you. When I was a kid, most of the farm laborers at that time were—what I remember, they were mostly Filipinos that they brought over, and they lived in labor camps on the individual farmers', Ranchers' property. They'd have bunk houses, they'd sleep there, they'd sleep there, they'd have cooks hired, and they would cook their meals for them. And they was mostly Filipinos, and then later they brought the Braceros in. And they were the same way. They kept them—they had, they had to furnish the housing for them. It's not like today, where they just hire. And they, well—at that time, it was more controlled in bringing them into the country. And at the end, I, I don't know what happened to them [laughs]. I guess they went home, most of them, but there were a lot, I think, stayed here. But cultural events was the rodeo. And myself, I used—when I was young, I used to go fishing. We'd go fish on the beach at the ocean or we'd go fishing creeks. And then I used to, I used to go hunting every year—deer hunting, mostly in the Sierras someplace. Finally, hills got steeper and I got older and I quit.

Paul Zuber 40:28

And earlier you were talking about the Japanese interns?

Bill Crites 40:33

Yes.

Paul Zuber 40:34

You were telling me that the kids didn't even feel that it was right, that the fact that they had watchtowers and things. And I just wanted to ask about, was there any discrimination?

Bill Crites 40:46

Any what?

Paul Zuber 40:46

Discrimination towards them from the town?

Bill Crites 40:50

You know, when I was—when that happened, that was '41, so I was nine years old. We didn't have discrimination. I remember, there was a little Japanese girl, I thought she was pretty as a button. And then all of a sudden, one day, next day, she's not there. No Japanese kids in school, they were just gone. And we would, no, we would just—as far as discriminating against them, I don't remember it as a child, but I'm sure there must have been. Because I know there was discrimination against the German people. And then some to the Italians because they were fighting with the Germans in Europe. If, if they were here, after, after the bombing in Pearl Harbor, I'm sure there must have been a lot of discrimination. But I didn't personally see it because I didn't see the Japanese kids. I remember we'd have, we'd have block wardens on Hyland Drive. And they would go and check, make sure that everybody had dark windows, blackout curtains. So, there was no light at nighttime because they worried about an attack on the coast of the US coast here. Thankfully, that never happened.

Paul Zuber 42:47

And so, you married your wife, February 4, 1951. And—right, correct? And you didn't really explain how you met her [Bill laughs]. Or when you were engaged to her. I was a little curious about that.

Bill Crites 43:03

Well, I was at a station out on East Market Street where my buddies were working, and I seen this pickup go by. It was bigwig time. And she was—I think she was standing in the back of her dad's pickup as it went by, and I made some comment, what have you. Later come to find out I knew a relative of hers, so I finagled [laughs] a meeting. And so anyway, it went from there, and, and we weren't engaged a long time. And it was—her daddy was not up for her to get married. She was too young. And I, I can see that now. But not at the time. She was 16, I was 19—wait a minute, I was just under 19. I was 18. Yeah. Anyway, that's her—I guess it would have been actually an uncle of hers that we, or I, talked to. And we went to, went to a dance at Corralitos, and her uncle and, I don't remember who—I think he was married to Joanne, a lady that, that I was in, was in my class in school. Anyway, we, we wound up going to the dance and, and things went from there.

Paul Zuber 44:06

How old was she? And so, I wanted to ask, did you have any cultural differences between the two of you, like with raising the children? You said you weren't particularly religious yourself, but—

Bill Crites 45:32

No, no, we did not have any differences like that. We, we didn't discourage them. We just kind of let them go on their own. And luckily, most of all kids have done very well.

Paul Zuber 45:59

So, let's see here. So, since you retired in 1994, what have you been up to?

Bill Crites 46:08

Well, we had a motorhome. We [unclear] other motorhomes. We went to the south in the wintertime, messed around for a month or two or three, and come home, if we felt like it. And first year or two, I think, I helped Scott—son-in-law Scott was building a house on Crazy Horse, and I helped him quite a bit. Took quite a while to get it built—it's a big house—because he was working full time and building

part time. And other than that, it was going to Little League games, the softball games, a lot of fun stuff. We did—we would go take the motorhome, we would go to Thousand Trails San Benito, below Hollister or San Jose—Morgan Hill, that is. And we—that's, we just stayed busy, [unclear].

Paul Zuber 47:46

Earlier we were talking about bowling, and you said you scored, I think a 270-something, right, or—?

Bill Crites 47:52

270-something? It's been a long time ago.

Paul Zuber 47:55

Well, you mentioned that the bowling alley is now gone?

Bill Crites 47:59

Bowling Alley is gone. It was the Rodeo Bowl at that time, run by Charlie Wilkerson, who was a local man, and he made his mark and fame by picking up a big bad spare on TV. They had a program, and I think he won \$10,000 picking up the spare, and he came back to Salinas. His—and was partners with his brother-in-law, and they run the Rodeo Bowling Alley for years.

Paul Zuber 48:41

Was it a pretty popular place at the time?

Bill Crites 48:44

It, well—it was very popular for a bowling alley, and it only had 10 lanes, but very big. Valley Center Bowl had 30 or 32, so it got a lot more business. Where the bowling alley, Rodeo Bowling Alley, was, previously was a skating rink. And I used to go skating in there when I was a kid, in high school. Yeah, it was—we bowled and then finally Shirley started bowling. We had a good time bowling.

Paul Zuber 49:30

So, this is probably roller skating that you're talking about, not ice?

Bill Crites 49:35

It was, it was not ice. It was a roller-skating rink previous, prior to being a bowling alley. And it was—it got a lot of business on Friday nights from the high school kids. Go burn up the hardwood floor [laughs].

Paul Zuber 49:57

How was the cultural diversity around there?

Bill Crites 50:02

Cultural diversity. We had, we had this—there was the uptown people from Salinas, had the, the Okies from Alisal, and had, had the cowboys from Prunedale, I guess you'd put it. But we mostly got along good. Most of the time we got along real good.

Paul Zuber 50:32

That's good. So, there was never any clashes, no—

Bill Crites 50:36

Clashes? The only clashes I remember as a kid was, like, Monterey guys and Salinas—would whoop on Salinas guys if they went over to Monterey, or maybe it was vice versa. I don't know—I, I didn't get in on that.

Paul Zuber 50:57

You were very busy when you were that age.

Bill Crites 50:59

Well, I was, had things to do, yes. At that age, I was, I was not very big. I wasn't a fighter. I was too small [laughs]. I was—I think I weighed 140 pounds when I got out of high school.

Paul Zuber 51:24

How tall were you?

Bill Crites 51:26

I was an inch or two shorter than I am today. I grew till I was in high—till I was 25, I think.

Ashlee Trotter 51:37

Now in talking about Salinas [unclear], how do you believe it's changed over the years?

Bill Crites 51:47

Well, I don't think it's changed for the better. It used to be single family homes and what have you. The politics being what they are—they did away with the Bracero program, and the growers, shippers—the growers needed workers. They're gonna get them however they can get them. You can't blame them for that. They can't do any good with grown produce if they can't get it out of the fields and get it sold. So they've got to do what they got to do. It's—I think somewhere along the way, maybe things could have been done better, but I'm not sure I know the answer to that one.

Ashlee Trotter 52:53

And going back to places that stuck out to you as a child, how do you believe those places have changed?

Bill Crites 53:08

Well, it's—when you say that, makes me think of Airport Road, which is now Laurel. Used to go out and it would go, oh, it would go down a dip and over a hill and down another one and up by Hyland Drive. And in the wintertime, where the post office sits, OSH sits today, that was all—it would flood. Water would sit there for weeks or months at a time. Us kids would gather up the pallets or whatever and make rafts and float out on the water. Catch the devil when we got home, but it was—KSBW started work, started in business as I recall right, oh, probably along about where Adams Street is today. It was rolling, down rolling—it was a little bit of a hillside. There was a dairy right there. Mr. Harden, the produce grower, he either owned it and leased it out. I think he owned it and leased it out to the man

that grew the, had the, had the little dairy. He didn't have very many cows. At that time, I guess they could make a living off not too many cows if they did everything themselves. They leveled, leveled ground and filled in. And I don't know what they did with—the water used to come from North Salinas, where the North Salinas High School is and all the houses around there, is where Mr. Harden's home, house was. And the water used to roll in the wintertime, would roll from there towards what is now the 101 Highway. It would fill that slough up, and then it would get up high enough, and it would catch that ditch that goes out to Moss Landing. Places have changed a lot. At that time, North Main Street went out and virtually ended at San Juan Grade Road. San Juan Grade Road went over to San Juan—that was the 101 Highway. It was, sure made it nice when they made, redid the 101 Highway out through Prudedale. That's it [laughs], run out.

Ashlee Trotter 56:38

[laughs] Well, thank you for letting us interview you.

Bill Crites 56:42

Any more questions?

Paul Zuber 56:44

[unclear]

Ashlee Trotter 56:46

I'd really like to thank you for letting us interview you.

Bill Crites 56:51

Well, thank you.

Ashlee Trotter 56:53

Okay.

Bill Crites 56:54

Okay.