

**Bruce Hinman
Veteran**

**Wayne Clarke
Interviewer**

**Interviewed on September 22, 2009
New York State Military Museum
Saratoga Springs, NY**

WC: Would you please state your full name and your date and place of birth please?

BH: My name is Bruce Hinman. I was born August 12, 1944 and Saratoga Springs New York

WC: Did you attend school in Saratoga Springs?

BH: I did, graduated from high school here.

WC: In what year did you graduate from high school?

BH: 1962.

WC: Did you go on to college?

BH: I did.

WC: Where did you go to college?

BH: Boston University.

WC: For four years?

BH: Yes, actually I was there for about five years total.

WC: What did you receive your degree in?

BH: Bachelors in government major.

WC: Once you graduated, did you go to work or did you go into the military?

BH: I went into the military after I finished school for three years.

WC: Did you work for three years before you went in?

BH: No.

WC: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

BH: I enlisted.

WC: You went into the army?

BH: Yes.

WC: Why did you pick the Army?

BH: I remember talking to a recruiter at the time in the city and he offered various options and we talked various interest. He directed me towards something that I had never heard of before. It was in the military intelligence area. He did not get very specific but it sounded like a pretty interesting way to go so I chose that.

WC: When did you go into the service?

BH: October 30, 1967

WC: Where did you go for basic training?

BH: Fort Dix, New Jersey.

WC: How was that basic training? Where are you being prepared for Vietnam?

BH: Yes, your first portion of training was pretty much the assumption that you will be going to Vietnam. However, Because of the field I chose and my next step rather than going to advanced training, I was sent in Fort Holabird for the counterintelligence agent course.

WC: Where is it at?

BH: Fort Holabird, which is located in Dundalk, Maryland.

WC: How long was that school?

BH: That went from March until July 1968.

WC: What did you learn?

BH: Basically interviewing techniques, investigative techniques, and counter intelligence techniques. We were trained to go to Vietnam but it was changed and the policy and part of the presidential administration sending agents overseas up to a certain point and when I came through there, they decided to create a core of agents' states that because of a lack of unrest about the Vietnam War. They needed people to check the background of people going into sensitive positions [unclear 3:35] so they want us to accord stateside agents. So most of my class was assigned to the cities or the states.

WC: Were you offered Officer Candidate School at all?

BH: No, if I had stayed in after my initial enlisting, probably would have gone for warrant officer which is more common for people in that field.

WC: What was your first assignment?

BH: My entire assignment was Boston, Massachusetts as a special investigator doing personnel security investigations on applicants for positions involving sensitivity was my responsibility.

WC: Did you have to go out on the streets and conduct interviews?

BH: All the work was in the field. Government issued vehicles and we went out and contacted references for positions given and try to develop other leads profiling applicants.

WC: Did you wear civilian clothes?

BH: Yes. We dressed in business attire and we also carry bags and credentials much like the FBI investigators do but at that time each service had their own investigative service. The army had theirs and the Navy and Air Force has their own but now it's all consolidated.

WC: Where you armed at all?

BH: No.

WC: These interviews you conducted were for classified and sensitive positions applying for civilian jobs?

BH: Some could be civilian contractors but many were military who will depend on the position. I don't know how they classify these exactly but I know in a case either they were involved with a company doing work and department of defense or with the military position.

WC: Did you ever run into any problems or incidents while doing your investigations?

BH: No, we had a special unit assigned to cases that would turn derogatory. We were in a field office that would have to monitor unrest in certain cities. We had different shifts of dedication will call it when you spend the night in the office and monitor the telex and any information that came in that was of interest with have to be forwarded on to our regional headquarters in Fort Devens, Massachusetts. One night when I was on duty, information started coming on the telecast about riots in New Haven, Connecticut and that was the type of thing at that time that we had to keep track of. It was an additional duty to our investigative work.

WC: How many people on your team did you work with?

BH: I tried to remember that this is looking back 40 years ago; I think we had maybe 25 agents

WC: Did you have females too or strictly males?

BH: There might have been a few clerical females.

WC: Were they civilian or military?

BH: I believe they were civilian.

WC: What were your living quarters like?

BH: The Boston army base, where this field office was actually located was strictly an office building located on the pier in the Boston Harbor so you are responsible for finding your own housing and most of the agents live in apartments or near the city so I lived in a apartment complex with several other agents who actually lived there too.

WC: So you didn't have military inspections?

BH: No, once we left Halliburton we left all that behind us and we became more like civilians.

WC: What about your meals did you have to cook your own meals or eat at restaurants?

BH: You're on your own far as housing and meals strictly work in an office building ministry the type of work that was nothing even remotely related to the military except the work that we were doing.

WC: Did you find the pay compensation adequate to support being in this civilian world?

BH: At the time maybe it was adequate he couldn't do it in the best housing rations but most of us made out OK.

WC: Did you work with a partner at all or you were strictly doing these investigations?

BH: We were assigned to different areas of the city. I had downtown Boston for a while but as time went on, I will be given special assignments to travel to other areas outside of the city south and north of the city to help out other field offices to clean up their work. Sometimes they fall behind so everybody had their own area.

WC: Did you enjoy what you were doing?

BH: Very much enjoyed the contacting the people the people that I've met a team that we worked on in our field office was a great bunch of guys very intelligent and a lot of fun it was a great experience I was very fortunate at that time to be there.

WC: The person in charge a major?

BH: We had to field office I'm not sure if you call them commanders because the first was the captain and the second was a major those were the two I served under for the most part they were great too second one was a controversial character that I remember.

WC: Now where you ever under any sort of heightened security alert or anything special? you were in during the assassination of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy?

BH: I was at Fort Holabird still training to be an agent that's when we learned about the assassination of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy I do remember sometime we will get passes to go home on the weekend and travel on the trains in upstate New York from Baltimore and at the end of one weekend we came back from the train we couldn't get out to union station in Baltimore because the city was under control of the National Guard that point they were having riots in the streets and fires were being set and it was a while before we got out of the railroad station I remember a train will come in letting people off and we can't leave the station said everything was clear and finally we have special escort back to our base to fort Holabird to get to the area safely to meet our curfew we had to be home back to base at 2 o'clock in the morning which is about the time we got there so that was memorable.

WC: Any other points of interest?

BH: It was a routine type of her we had a lot of fun going but we had to do was a service that was necessary non-combatant of course.

WC: Was there anything in particular that stands out in your memory today?

BH: I think just the special people that i met they were all very interesting people many of the people in our office has been assigned to the Boston field office after serving Vietnam and they will come back, not always related experiences but you knew they came from a very different type of military experience then we can hit those of us who came directly from training into the field office so we got to mix with quite a variety of military personality and hear a lot of stories.

WC: Have you stayed in contact with any of the people over the years?

BH: No really have it we were scattered to the far winds once we were dismissed from our service we went on with our lives and we were from all over the country and no I can't say that we have.

WC: Is there any sort of association with military intelligence personnel?

BH: 'm not aware of it there maybe but I'm not aware of it.

WC: Whereabouts where you discharged from?

BH: Well Fort Devens, Massachusetts was the discharge. And then I moved on my other places where were at but actually came back here where I live; born and raised in Saratoga Springs NY.

WC: Did you consider making a career?

BH: I did but it's a lot of us that felt we have been very fortunate to come through the Vietnam era the way we did and most of us did not want to toy with feet so I was interested in the warrant officer possibility and discussed it with another war office I won't point after the three years I've pretty much ready to call it a quits and move on with our lives.

WC: When were you discharged?

BH: October 29, 1970.

WC: Once you were discharged did you go on for masters at all?

BH: No I did not I work for several companies for number of years and eventually settled down with the New York City education department where I just retired from after 29 years of service there.

WC: What did you do with the education department?

BH: Interior design and space analysis for special projects was very fortunate to work on a building that was on the national historic register and did a lot of coordination were related to the rehabilitation of this building and bring it back to its original state it was built 1912 and we did a lot of reconstruction projects in making the floors there.

WC: What building was that?

BH: This is the original state education building in downtown Albany across from the capital is the largest column building in the world except for the 14:43 quite a very interesting place to WC. Work I was very fortunate again to be there.

WC: You spent how many years in that building?

BH: It was 29 years there and when I retired I took my 3 years of military Buy back and went out in 32 years of creditors on my pensions.

WC: How do you think your time of service change or affected your life?

BH: It's hard to quantify what you pick up in the service it depends a lot on your different tour of duty I just think it enriched my interpersonal relationships and unique experience there it was very troubling time and in a sense the populace came very alienated about the Vietnam war we were in the military is often came to have a very different view of them and I was just kind of on days when things started to turn as far as the 15:50 lessons in life I guess you can say it was so many things about it is hard to pinpoint any one particular moment or experience of a person it was in 16:03 experience something that I think everybody should go through.

WC: I didn't ask you this but did you ever run into any problems or situations with any of the protesters?

BH: No we actually had someone who's beak was the college campuses I was in downtown Boston dinner with more of the business community but we had one man whose job was to spend lot of time on campus where the dissidence are starting to grow making a lot more noise fortunately most of that happening after we got out but it was starting.

WC: Where any of those people under investigation?

BH: Yeah it was quite a case file on a number of students as well as civilians.

WC: What about other agencies did you work with or coordinate with the FBI?

Personally I did not except to if there were references happening to be and I police department or fire department that I would interact with those references but I know there were others who were probably working keeping in touch with enforcement agencies local and otherwise. There were different divisions their office handle different areas.

WC: Did you join any veteran organizations?

BH: No.

WC: So obviously you never attended any get-togethers or reunions?

BH: No, not as far as the military I have a great interest in my own family's history in the military I had some great grandfathers that served in the Civil War my great grandfather on one side was in 134th regimem New York volunteers, he mustard in Schoharie New York but they were Gettysburg 18:08 and he also was a prisoner in Andersonville prison in Georgia for about nine months and survived and came back and his experience was the subject of several public talks that he gay he was an attorney after he came back to Schoharie NY.

WC: What was his name?

BH: Chauncey W Hinman and he was in a service for two different occasions at 1 point he was enlisted and another point he was Lieutenant who's in charge of the pioneer core and they were primarily involved in keeping the bridges and rail roads repaired and

going. My other great grandfather was Charles H Burpee he was in 115th regiment New York State Volunteers. He went in and mustard in at fine, New York and 115th kind of interesting I to see there's two books written about these two original histories both 134th and 115 they're at their written modern time so they're very good and I'm just finishing up about 134 we getting back to 115 I know that my great-grandfather group shortly after they enlisted they were captured at Harpers Ferry and they were taken prisoner since 04 Douglas in Chicago and at that time patient program was still pretty much knew an inactive that's another story about what happened to them and how they always seem to be circling taking circus roots around all the main action until they finally get back into it [unclear 19:46] and other places but that's another story.

WC: You bought some memorabilia with you do you want to hold everything up?

BH: I do have a United States Army intelligence communication patch that I wore my uniform I never got to where the uniform turn in my field assignment but I wore through training and So here is a button here that was on my uniform from the intelligence service and here's a picture of me when I was at Fort Holabird; taking there in 1968 spring in Dundalk, Maryland. I was a sergeant.

WC: You attained the rank of sergeant?

BH: Yes.

WC: When you graduated from the intelligence school did you graduate as a PFC or a specialist4?

BH: I believe we were Sergeant E3 I believe.

WC: E3 would be PFC?

BH: Yes. It was G4 we automatically became for the special agent job [unclear 21:16].

WC: You recall how long it's OK for you to attend the wife of sergeant?

BH: I started working in the field office in Boston in July 1968 so it was around January 1969 I was promoted to the E5.

WC: Is there anything else you would like to touch on that maybe we missed? And interesting people or incidents or anything humorous?

BH: The last field officer commander we had rather I phlegm going a character he had come back from Vietnam he really didn't have very good management skills and wasn't particularly respected and he was later discipline that I understand after I left he was disciplined for contributing to not only poor management field office but contributing to poor morale of the office and therefore decline of production of agency we had a nickname form call them crash.

WC: Ok, anything else?

BH: I think that's about it.

WC: Thank you so much for your interview.

BH: Thank you.