

Interview with Robert Hanson 4/10/96

INT: Art pretty much covered how it all got started from a little community police academy. Before it got turned into a school of Arts and Sciences, but he doesn't know much of what happened after that, what became of School of Arts and Science.

RH: Well I came to Northern in the fall of 1976. And when I came here, when I interviewed I interviewed with people in computer education. The guy who was in charge a Vice President by the name of Rombouts. Who was, computer education was under his command, his leadership, within that, I don't know if they called that a bureau, what ever the hell that they call that, that is what Art Neiger was, he was kind of the spear head guy for all the things that led up to my hiring. and when I was interviewed, I was interviewed by, there was a guy by the name of J. Jackson and he ? Neiger's ?. When I came here I was one of 3 new faculty that was recruited to come here one was Don ?, myself, and can't think of the guys name now, we called him ?, and Don and I came from representing the Law Enforcement area and can't think of the guys name, he worked out of the corrections area, he was in community corrections in downtown Detroit. The person who recruited me to come here was a man by the name of Ken Fauth. I can't remember if it was in the fall of '76 or fall of '77, but we were, and at that time, Robert Glenn was the Academic Vice President, and we had a meeting called, in the conference room at the Cohodas building, it was announced that formerly that we were an academic department. At this time our office's were located over in Pierce.

INT: This was in Spring of '77,

RH: Yes, I think it was Spring of '77. I think it was about a year, after I got here that we became a department. For most of us who came here, for me anyway, that had no significance. As far as my day to day operation, we had to teach class and try to figure out what it was, because all of us were new to academe. And also on the faculty was Larry Johnson and Richard Johnson, who were not related. Richard Johnson was a Marquette native, who had was now a warden in the Michigan Department of Corrections. He had been a corrections officer in the Marquette Branch, gone to school and had come back here. Larry Johnson came from Downstate Michigan someplace and he was, I didn't know him as well as some of the others, but he was a personable guy. All of our offices were over in Pierce and all of our classrooms as well. But of course that was torn down. I remember when we first got started we were also looking to hire additional people. During that time, Richard Johnson met with, Ken Fauth resigned as department head and took a job with Speigals Corporation and is still there as director of security.

INT: is that why security fell apart here?

RH: No. Actually the security program grew after he left. There are a number of reasons that you could say why security was



discontinued here. For a couple of reasons number one we had difficulty in hiring people to fill that position. Number two it is hard to have a concentration within a major and only have one person teaching that class. And the, there were some serious problems with people getting hired, because we were not preparing people for the kinds of jobs that were open. In the loss prevention the security ?? there are two tiers of education, employment. One is minimum wage, knuckle draggers that are running around guarding warehouses and the others are the people that start out as 75 thousand dollars at the very top end, corporation baits ?, the people who are getting the really good jobs in loss prevention are the ones that have a government background. Ken Fauth got his job because he had a background in army intelligence. It had nothing to do with academic. When we were unable to hire new people for that, that is when that happened. It happened considerably later, that wasn't til '80. Seems to me that we really phased that out, after I came back in '87, about '88 or '89 is when security ?. It was seriously ill before that, but it didn't die until '88 or '89. What else did you want?

INT: Whatever you think is relevant.

RH: In 1978, I think in '77 or '78, '78 or '79 in that range, we had been running a regional police academy. That was run on the same ?, that was run in the same building, ?, It did have more direct connection with the Criminal Justice department. The line of authority went up to continuing education. And they had grants and they were involved in many things, when those things dried up when in 1976, that was the time when Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, LEAA, was on its last in its last days, LEAA was a program that was designed to upgrade, among other things, just like a war on crime kind of, it was designed to upgrade the performance of the police officers by raising their educational level. Came out of the program commissioner, came out of the unrest and the riot side we had in the '60's. One of the recommendations was to better educated police officers and so part of this, there was money given to the police department and also would pay for people to go to school. So people got release time to come to school, come back, we had a lot of non-traditional students in our program, people who were working at Marquette Branch Prison or say in law enforcement or whatever. At the same time we had Grant running all over the U.P. conducting training programs. Again the idea was to raise the professional confidence of the ?. When Ken resigned Rich Johnson took over as department head but he only stayed a short time, he might of been Department Head for a month or two because shortly after Rich agreed to take over that department. He was offered a job as a training coordinator for the Michigan Department of Corrections, which is a nice promotion for him. He moved to Lansing. So Rich, when Rich was unable to, so he resigned, I don't know if he was officially the department head. Larry Johnson had resigned to take the job as under sheriff. When Sheriff Maino became sheriff Larry went to become his under sheriff. And so we were constantly hiring new people. Some of them we have our own version of our revolving door here. Some of them were remarkable



notable characters. But anyway then at this time we were in the School of Arts and Sciences and John Heikinen was the dean. We were we had a lot of students we had a pretty big staff as I recall. Then when John, when Rich resigned, the search was on there was a mad dash to get a department head in a short period of time. That is when Bob Barrington came that was probably '78, probably the fall of '78. Then the fall of '79 ? came from Canada, originally from Wisconsin, he grew up in Wisconsin, Toma Wisconsin. And at this time we were in the process of bringing the police academy into the, make it part of the department. I had run a couple of training programs and I had been given release time to supervise the police academy. And then the position in 1979, early '79 created a position here, they call it consultant, we call it training director, and we had a criminal justice training center. We conducted training in law enforcement and corrections. We had a summer diving institute where we brought people in from all over the world, dive in Lake Superior, ? instructor, instructor ? ?/ ?. So Barrington had, so we had the Criminal Justice Training Center, so I left the faculty position and went to a administrative professional position. We had the economic downturns in about 1981, that position and my job was eliminated. In the mean time at the same time we were working with the IACO, International Association of Correction Officers, and that moved its headquarters here and we started to publish their it was a quarterly newspaper, called the "Keepers ?." I was the first editor of that paper, it was run out of the Criminal Justice training center. When I was able to stay in the area and I came back in 1987, and when I came back a man by the name of Don Lee was the Department Head. Don Lee stayed as Department Head until he resigned in, what date was that, Don Lee resigned in, they have got here about 4 years ago, that would be, he must of resigned about '88 or '89, '89 or '90 Don Lee resigned. then Dale Pelki was a new hire here was appointed the interim Department Head, Pelki took another job in Eastern Kentucky, and a major national search was under way to find a new Department Head, that is when we had, Dave ? that is the genesis of those guys. Now there might of been one person between Don Lee and Barrington, but I don't think so, there was a man here by the name of ?. Tim ?, he might of had a short stint as Department Head but I don't recall.

INT: Where did ? come from?

RH: Dave came here from the University Wisconsin Milwaukee, prior to that he had spent 15-20 years at Michigan State University.

INT: What did he do, I know he is a Ph.D, in what.

RH: In Criminal Justice he has a degree from Michigan State, he spent 10 years as a Parol Officer in Ohio. So most everybody here has, it used to be a 5 year minimum full time paid ?, now it is down to 3 years as a requirement to being hired.

INT: Do you need at least a bachelors degree?



RH: Oh no, a master's degree. In some areas Social Work, a MSW is considered a ? degree. And that is what Mr. ? has, Mr. Davidson has two masters degrees, one in Corrections and one in Education. But those guys, I guess I am not ? I don't have continuous service, but I am probably ? ? ? better here than ? ? career. When we moved, I can remember, I wasn't part of the move from Pierce to Carey Hall, but that was, they confront that with a great deal of resistance, we did not want to move out.

INT: why did they move.

RH: I really don't know. But my guess is, Pierce was falling apart. It was a really good building but it needed to have a lot of renovation done, particularly to the roof and to the windows. And they ended up closing Pierce down and moving everyone to Carey which was in pretty tough shape. It never was really renovated. I ? ? in Gries, Gries was renovated before we came in here, so it looked fit for human habitation.

INT: Where was Pierce Hall?

RH: The other side where the Cohodas building was, they ran parallel.

INT: is that where the church is now?

RH: yes, between the Church and on this side of the street, on the west side, on the North side of the street. It ran it was a rectangle and the narrow ends ran east and west. It was a classic, it was built as a high school, it was like a training school for Northern Michigans Education center and they ran an actual, we used to call them ?, where it was a regular ?, it was a middle school through high school and they actually let students go through it and then they had faculty and then student teachers came in and taught, like a laboratory. It was a fine building, my personal belief it had to do with finances and that Pierce was never paid for and some of these dormitory's were not paid for so by moving some of the offices into the dormitory's they could it had to do with he financing they could pay off the bonds that were issued, to build the dorms, because the expenses in the dorms were getting so high people were living off campus the average student is like what say 25 years of age, when your 25 you out living in a dorm even though, there is a lot of evidence showing that dormitory living is a very positive thing, that you can learn an awful lot by living under those conditions but that is a side issue than what your talking about. There was a lot of resentment from moving among the faculty, among our faculty because we saw no reason to, what needed to be done is fix the windows. And it wouldn't of cost anything, it would of cost less to fix the windows than what it casted to move everyone over there. Well they ? to the very last, we were the very last ones to leave they were about to shut the water off. There was another problem, there was a class in there, they allowed a class in there but it didn't have an elevator, and it was not in ^N with the regulation for the handicap students for the handicap



faculty for that matter. And to put a elevator in a building like that, you are talking about lots and lots of money, 100,000 in revenues, really expensive. That provided an excuse to knock it down, now next to that, Pierce was set up, ? ? the Longyear building, do you remember the Longyear building?

INT: Right next to Cohodas.

RH: Yes, that was Pierce was right next to that. It was a nice view, it was a nice office, really nice office. It was set up as an office there was a central area and there was individual offices off of that central reception area which was off the hall so it was really nice for offices. But it was, you know the infra structure, of these building you know it was tough, they had was like 13 inch poured 10 inch poured concrete floors. When they knocked the building down they took a small bulldozer and went around and knocked the walls down. That was a very well built building.

INT: I really liked the architecture in the old buildings.

RH: Well unfortunately like Longyear, was like Longyear what is happening is that they let it go. So it went through about 8 or 9 U.P winters. being unheated so man it is not. It was bad news. We ended up on the third floor of Carey Hall. That is close to the project as you can get in Upper Michigan. But anyway that brings it up to and of course we moved here last year, about May of '95 is when we moved into these. A move where some people objected to, I have a view of the lake in my office. That is the way that goes. Unless the people in personnel, you got some real characters, somebody ought to ? ? (couldn't understand him). We had one women come here like totally ? credential, we were always hiring, we were in the panic mode, and we thought we all of a sudden had to fill a spot and now we have more stability.

INT: What is some of the more positive ? ?

RH: Who were they?

INT: yes

RH: Well we had Bill Barber here, and Barber was very well known interigator had Ph.D in traffic from the Michigan State Police, he worked on the ? ? ? police department. He was offered, he was a polygraph operator and expert interagator. In fact one day sitting in his office and in Pierce he was connected by telephone to a police department down in ? or someplace, he got somebody to confess to a capital crime. Over the telephone.

INT: That was good.

RH: He was very good at student training programs, he was a very intense type of person he worked for the Attorney General in North Carolina before he came here. Then I had one small problem, he was a epistonic alcoholic and he would go for six to eight ten weeks



without any problems and then he would start drinking vodka or gin by the water glass so right around mid term he ? ?. We would have to confine him. But he was a real interesting guy. We had a guy here by the name of Bill Swan who was a police chief in Madison Heights. Worked his way up from patrol officer to chief. Worked his way up in the education, he earned a law degree in pathology. There was a real character, I will tell you a comical story about that guy. It wasn't drinking at the time, we were in Pierce hall. If you can picture a building like a old high school building, marble floors you know very classic school room look to it, you could smell the chalk dust and the it just reeked of high school days. Classic old high school or elementary school. But Sloan had a dog, a doberman, doberman by the name of Josh, Sloan would take Josh out for a walk, he had one of those little rabbits, volkswagon rabbits and he would tie this dog high enough, if you sat on a chair this dog would look right over your head, that was a huge, 135 pound doberman. He would take this dog out on the back roads and he would smoke cigarettes and run the dog from the car. Josh like it, Bill liked it sometimes he would get some ? from it, you know while driving around on the backroads. He would come in once and awhile and use his office and bring his dog in and left it down the hall. And he came in about one to unlock ? ? that is not the common thing to do. Well josh had the run of the building and while the dog and Bill were in the building, the dog had an urgent call from nature, and being the dog ? ? and he just ? down in the hall way and left this huge calling card. Well Bangston was the first guy in the office on Monday. He sees this and immediately takes it as evidence that the students had come in there and done this as a prank like to show there displeasure and he starts this internal investigation about these students. He didn't want to call in this to administration of public safety. He didn't want to publicize it that students were resulting and leaving dog extriment of a sign of there dissatisfaction. Part of it that Bangston couldn't believe that a animal any smaller than a army mule could of left a pile. I had a lot of laughs about sending it to the crime lab and having it analyzed for lands and ? and all that stuff. We Sloan was a incurable kidder and so he had him convinced that we could send it to the crime lab and have it analyzed for prolific kind of characteristics. Then match it up with another dog or whatever. It was foolish at that time when ? was here Ken was married to a women by the name of Kate while he was here they had a child, at that time the faculty did a lot of things together, when I came here Northern had a very good football team, they had won the National Championship like the year before, 66 or they had won that championship and they were gun hoe, on they had a good schedule because all of their home games were the first month first part of the ? weekend. And there was a beautiful and the faculty got tickets to go to the game, and watched the football game and a lot of socialization, socializing between the staff and there family's. After Ken left a lot of that dropped off and you find now there is very little. People ask me ? ? because wives and significant others get too involved in ? business. Rankin used to take everybody out for breakfast once a semester and try to encourage some ? change. He would bring in some pretty interesting



speakers. Rankin also had conflict with some of the faculty members. I am not so sure how appropriate it is to get in to some of those. There were some pretty pitched battles raised by memo across campus, about one thing or another. The ? flow of academic life. I think part of it within the Criminal Justice is it came upon the academic scene with all the sudy of the Normandy Invasion, all of a sudden you look out over your bunkers and entire allies are ?. There was a lot of resentment among other faculty of other departments because we attracted some of the students we ? we only because we treated as cash ? we don't have to have students, and really out of the 128 only about 48 or 50 are in the major all the others are spent in other departments, ? look at it that way. People tend to look down on our students of kind of being knuckle ?. Typically they would do well in criminal justice classes and not so well in others. There are several interpretations of about that, one of them, charitable ? is that people aren't interested in it. I think we talked about that. ? ? . The charitable one is that people aren't interested in the subject they are interested in the study, the other one that is not so clear is the standard ?. Now some departments pride themselves in a body count. From having some problem of measuring how good you are with how many people flunk out of your program.

INT: Could it be that the rest of the campus isn't aware that it is for professionalize law enforcement personnel.

RH: Well they sure couldn't tell by the faculty we were hiring.

INT: You guys were shafted with funds and resources.

RH: I would say in some cases you know I think a lot of it had to do with stewardship and that when ahm I think that you have to demonstrate that you are good at handling something before people give you merits. I mean if you are given resources that you mismanage even though it might not appear, a student perspective is a lot different. Like the security program there were times when absolute gosh it perpetrated on ?, they were told certain jobs were available with women ? ?, it just wasn't true. People were sold that all you have to do is this and they would be making millions and all sorts of things that weren't true. And people thought that it was true they would be making big bucks and have big expense accounts. ? ? ?. I think that when you have the opportunity to hire people and you hire losers people are going to maybe that is the way ?, you hire people that aren't suited to University rules. Either by there character, work habits or by there background. That this is essential and this isn't an institution higher learning, not a ?, so you have got to be able to be a citizen in the academic world and when we had people on committees or working closer they didn't even participate as much as they should have a lot of our internal problems got a lot of external ?, I could go on and on. sometimes when they talk about university management, trying to run a University is like trying to herd cats, really hard to do that. I think that academic departments people willing to take department head positions like herding cats. At Northern the



department head position is not really, it is either push or fall, if you were in administration or faculty, it is not really management, but it is not line personnel either. I think that we have people at times that department heads had there own personal agenda about what they wanted. I guess the big thing here is that we have been putting out graduates for awhile and our graduates are doing well, for the most part, we have an employment of about 85%. Everybody can get the job they want but there are people who don't try.

INT: Do you have a graduate program yet.

RH: No. There has been discussion of it but graduate programs are very expensive to run, they typically we lose money and you have to, we don't have enough faculty for the people we got. I mean we find that half of our advisory, I found out last year I had 80 advises. Look at the classes to run, we have a huge student body, we have trouble meeting our undergraduate obligations. We have such high enrollment.

INT: Why won't they let you hire more faculty?

RH: Well I think the administration out there ?? faculty, were in the hiring process right now. Somebody is going to be offered a job in the next two weeks to start in the fall. there were two positions lost and another one. Probably has to do with academic ? time. wouldn't want to be in a position like some of these other departments to have to say you have to lay off in history, sociology, or ? so we can hire a new person in criminal justice, that could create a lot of problems and I presumed that. I don't know about that, just when I was a student. That is something you have to ask the dean about. You talk to some Deans ??????????. That was part of a the way I heard the story was that Russ Little came as a Dean, when I came back to Northern I was interviewed with Russ Little who was the dean of College of Behavioral Sciences now is called, that had been switched over and it was a trade deal, I ? support from Heikkinen, so there was an advantage to move to another agency, that made him mad now, now is sick of him, we went over to Behavioral Sciences of Education, the dean in Education really was ? dean. It was a peculiar kind of set up. Plus ? ? ?. Then when Russ Little left we locate those entrance exams and they hired Steve Christopher he is our current Dean.

INT: In Arts and Sciences

RH: No we were in Behavioral Sciences. I can't remember, I can only remember the name of our school, Behavioral Sciences and Aluminum storm door company I called it. Not really It is hard to put this into some kind of overall perspective. I think the major milestones, was when, the I don't think it was ? ?. becoming a department head is critical time. I think the self study, maybe it ought to be called self serving study, because most of them are pretty a lot of pucker, it is pretty hard for academic, in academic



department to criticize themselves and look long and hard at themselves. I think that the emergence even though we have had strong ties with the professional community, and bringing back the actually another this period of renewal here under the accounts of leadership we have made a major turning point this we were at a point we were on leeway with department heads that we were in free fall and it wasn't, wouldn't be long before we would be gone and desinegrated. Fortunately for us a person with vision and leadership came in we turned things around the police academy is coming back in we were starting back in with loss prevention component now there is a security component coming back to the program. We are doing all kinds, we are absorbed in all kinds of unique things, we are working internationally, home page professional officers, were are ??????. But I think that it is hard, we sit here in a very decent physical environment hard to believe what kind of sink hole your in. And some of those kinds of changes would probably would be worth thinking about. I've ? those things out with a time line. What are these significant events? If there was, when your really in times of turmoil and there isn't strong leadership your tension can get pretty high, nobody knows what is going on and just now I think people focus on doing what your going to do. That is really about all that I can tell ya.