

Joseph M. Curley
History 650
May 1, 2007

INDEX

Narrator: Arthur Grover
Interviewer: Joseph M. Curley
Time/Date: 2:00 PM/April 13, 2007
Location: Mr. Grover's Office in the Security and Safety Building at La Salle University

ABSTRACT

Mr. Arthur Grover is the Director of Security and Safety at La Salle university. He was appointed to this position in November of 2004. Mr. Grover is a graduate of La Salle University, class of 1977, majoring in Criminal Justice. Following his graduation from La Salle, he joined the Philadelphia Police Department where he served for over 20 years. Mr. Grover held a number of positions as he rose through the ranks of the department. After graduating from the Philadelphia Police Academy, he was appointed as a patrol officer in a district. Over time, he was encouraged to take promotional tests and he passed these tests. He was promoted to the following ranks: detective, sergeant, lieutenant and finally captain. His final assignment in the police department was as captain of the Police Academy. In this position, he was directly responsible for the training of hundreds of future police officers. Mr. Grover was born and raised in Philadelphia. He is married and has two children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 00:01 Standard interview introduction. Narrator's name, interviewers name, date and time and location where the interview is being conducted and permission to record the interview.
- 00:35 Discusses being born in Philadelphia. His parents are Arthur, he was a Philadelphia Fire Captain, and his mother, Jean, was a "housewife and homemaker." He has one brother, Jerry. He is an administrator for the Philadelphia Revenue Department working in real estate taxes. His extended family included his Aunt Pat (mother's side) and her five children, also an Uncle Charles (father's side) and his four children. All were close in age and he still has good contact with them all. Raised in the Burlhome section of Philadelphia, a "nice quiet neighborhood." Attended Presentation B.V.M. Catholic grade school; "four or five hundred" students. Said it had a private school feel. [3:33 phone rings] He states that his childhood was more "carefree" than what his children are having now.
- 04:35 Attended Cardinal Dougherty High School (CDHS) at 2nd and Godfrey streets in Philadelphia. Started in September of 1969. At the time, "Cardinal Dougherty (High School) was the largest Catholic high school in the world." Said it was "quite an adjustment for me." Stated grade school was small and coeducational and CDHS was over 5000 students with boys on one side of school and girls on the other. Only interaction was during lunch. He graduated in 1973 and he had "four great years." He was invited back in 2002, or 2003 to speak about police careers and it was "a sad visit" because at that time CDHS was only half full, "a smaller, less vibrant place."
- 08:08 States while at CDHS, history was his favorite subject, especially military history. [Reaches behind him and shows me a book he is reading currently, Prisoners of the Japanese, about American P.O.W.s.]
Enjoys biographies of "great men." Playing sports at CDHS; he
tried to play baseball, but could not make the CDHS varsity team. This
was one of the "disappointments of his life." So he focused his
efforts on academics. His family was not wealthy on a firefighter's salary, but
comfortable. Throughout his years at CDHS, he always had a
part-time job, worked during summers and after school. His
father guaranteed him he would pay half of his tuition "throughout his academic
career." [At 11:46, receives a cell phone call and needs to take it
and asks to turn off recorder.]
- 11:56 [Return to recording.] During free time at CDHS, he continued to play

- baseball and got a job at a center city furniture store. Worked after school on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and all day Saturday and during summers. Wonders how he was able to keep his grades up, but gave him money to do things he wanted to do and save some as well.
- the did. Work well.
- 13:36 Explains how he chose La Salle College. CDHS influenced his decision to go to college. It was important to him and his parents that he would go to a local Catholic college, "religion was an important part of our lives." He applied to St. Joseph's, Temple and La Salle. He chose La Salle because he was not going to live on campus-he had to commute. He states that, then and now, commuter students had an affinity for La Salle. [15:15 a jack hammer starts working outside.] La Salle won out because it was a convenient commute on public transportation. Easy bus routes. He started at La Salle in September 1973 and wanted a dual field of study-major in Criminal Justice with a Business minor. Mr. Grover makes clear that he did not plan to be a fire fighter. Thought this course of study would be good for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) or federal law enforcement. Enjoyed his four years at La Salle, he was an above average student. Graduated in June of 1977. A good number of former CDHS were at La Salle with him so a feeling of familiarity existed. He appreciated having women and their viewpoints as part of the La Salle experience [not so at CDHS]. Feels that by this time, women were fully integrated on campus.
- 19:27 Atmosphere on campus: typical of other schools in United States-Anti-war sentiment, "a bent of radicalism in some classrooms from some instructors, but part of the marketplace of ideas..." The regimentation of balancing books and ledgers verses the different level of thinking that was "inconsistent with what was going on in other classrooms." Considers his formal education the best gift his parents gave him. Education based on strong morals and beliefs. Feels this is what led him towards the police department.
- 21:27 When he went to the Police Academy, not many people had degrees. He is happy that over the years, that trend has changed.
- 22:10 Comments on surrounding area near La Salle in the 1970s. It was a fairly homogenous-working class, African-American neighborhood. Did not notice the level of crime back then. States that the trend has gone up in the 30 plus years since he was a student.
- 23:24 Plan to go in to federal service following La Salle. Did not work out due to other candidates having military or prior law enforcement experience. They were the ones that got federal positions. [States that 20 odd years later, the Philadelphia Police Department sent him to the FBI Academy.]

Realizes he may stand a better chance for federal employment if he serves a few years with the Philadelphia Police Department. Entered the Philadelphia Police Department in November 1981, class #257.

- 26:20 Philadelphia Police Department academic demands were not too difficult. Prior to admission, his mother was against it. She thought with his education, he could do other things. [I was given the same speech by my mother.] He initially declined entrance, but a lieutenant named George Smith contacted him and told him that as a young man with an education, he could become anything he wanted in the police department. This conversation prompted Mr. Grover to accept the appointment to the academy. He remembered this encouragement and returned the favor when he was in command of the academy.
- 28:57 First assignment as a rookie was in the 24th District. An interesting place to work. He learned early on that he wanted to do more than be a patrol officer. [30:15 Phone rings.] District supervisors place him in headquarters to go over reports and perform other administrative duties because of his education. He thinks the public was more supportive of the police back in the early 1980s. Talks of Officer Danny Faulkner's being shot and killed and reminded the public just how dangerous this job is. [Mr. Grover got the year wrong, he said 2001, however; Officer Faulkner was killed in 1981.]
- 32:18 Comments on the police culture at that time; states that it was difficult to gain acceptance from the veteran officers when he was a rookie. There was a level of distrust. He had to earn the veterans acceptance. There were a number of scandals involving officers taking money or narcotics that made the news but still says it was a good time to learn.
- 34:34 [I ask a question about being out on patrol in "a wagon or an R.P.C.-a wagon is a police van used to transport prisoners, also known as an E.P.W. (Emergency Patrol Wagon) and an R.P.C. is a radio patrol car.] He says that domestic disturbances were common early in his career, but how those jobs are handled by the police has changed over the years. Routine jobs also included burglaries and robberies. He says police work can be boring and tedious but any assignment can change in a second. Speaks of an officer in his squad who was shot beside a water treatment plant. That was an "intense experience." [Officer is not named, but he made out OK.]
- 36:17 [Discusses his movement up the ranks of the Philadelphia Police Department.] He learned a lot about the administrative side of the police department and he decided to try to become a detective first. Not married, so he could devote time to study and got promoted with only about five years of service. He enjoyed time as a detective [although

short]. Assigned in February 1986 to Northwest Detective Division [where La Salle is]. While studying for detective, he also studied for the sergeant's test. Many advantages to being a detective rather than a sergeant: better shift; with overtime, more money than a sergeant; he liked his supervisors and the independent aspect of investigative work. He scored well on the sergeant's test but considered turning down the promotion. His captain at the time, Tom Seaman [later commissioner] told him to accept the promotion to sergeant and focus on becoming a lieutenant. [States he made sergeant in summer of 2006, really summer of 1986, only five years after he was hired]

41:49 As a sergeant, he was put back into the Patrol Bureau and assigned to the 8th District [in northeast Philadelphia]. Headquarters at Academy and Red Lion roads, close to his house and he was newly married and bought a home on the Rawnhurst section of Philadelphia at Solly and Frontinac Streets. In the 8th District although a supervisor, he was the youngest person in the squad [42:50 Phone rings] and had the least time on the job. If he was sent to a district with younger officers, the transition would have been easier. At the time, he had five and a half years and the next person had 11 and a half years experience, double his. Turned this into a positive and developed his leadership style accordingly and was happy with his time there.

44:50 Begins to mention some of the major events he covered during his career. He met President Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft. Training Bureau handled promotions in 2002 and Commissioner John Timmonee wanted Captain Grover to organize the event that they would attend. He oversaw their visit with the help of another commander, Mike Cooney. Worked with Secret Service and met with the president and attorney general privately. As a routine, he organized promotion and graduation ceremonies. "They were the positive." Sadly, he also had to set up funerals for officers killed in the line of duty. That was the "toughest job." Very emotional time and caused him to think of his own family. He will never miss that particular duty.

48:30 Discusses how the department has changed overtime. The department followed a bell shaped curve. He had two outside commissioners [who promoted him twice]. The thought here is that sometimes the boss should come from somewhere else, not in house. These two commissioners were Kevin Tucker and John Timmonee [49:55 Phone rings]. Tucker implemented new programs such as community policing and a value system for tactics and command. Following Tucker, Willie Williams became the new commissioner. Makes the point that crisis brings about change [John Timmonee is another example]. [51:58 another phone call, he takes the call and tape continues to 53:33]. Predicts another outside commissioner in next 4 to 5 years. Thinks a new point of view is a good

thing.

- 54:54 Talks about his family: wife, Elizabeth [Betty], and 2 sons, Matthew, 15 and Andrew, 8. Wife was a police officer. Discussed difficulty of raising a family where both parents are police commanders. Very proud of the fact that he and his wife were promoted together to police sergeant on the same day, June 26, 1986 [first time in Philadelphia Police Department that happened]. Their son Matthew was not born until 1991, they were both lieutenants at the time-him ”at the P.B.I. [Police Board of Inquiry] and his wife assigned to Internal Affairs. Sees police work, especially at patrol level, is the most stressful job there is for a family to deal with. Children realize that mom or dad may not come home, and parents know that they may not go home to their children as well. The effect is compounded by missed birthdays, holidays, sports events and the shift work. The impact is cumulative; this is one of the most difficult aspects of the business.
- 59:54 Discussed attending outside training at various institutions; The FBI Academy, The Penn State University Police Executive Development Course, Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command. Courses are good opportunities to meet other police commanders and learn of their communities and issues. The FBI National Academy in Quantico, Virginia from June 2000 to October 2000 was a great opportunity, but tough on his family. He thanked his wife again for her help and understanding.
- 1:02:53 Discussed how Philadelphia Police Department attitude changed over the years towards the education of its officers. When he first came on, he received no direct negative feelings towards him about his education. Around 1998, the Philadelphia Police Department changed their attitude about education. Department had supported “the idea of education, but it was difficult for officers to get the time off to do it.” When Commissioner Timmone came to Philadelphia Police Department, he encouraged education and gave points on promotional tests for having degrees. More officers considered going to college. Timmone wanted to institute new types of training at the recruit level; more activity based training. He was sent to New York Police Academy to observe their training. New ideas and programs came back to Philadelphia Police Academy. Obtained space at the Philadelphia Navy Yard to perform training scenarios, moving away from the lecture base and incorporating new training methods. He credits John Timmone for these advances in training.
- 1:05:17 Time at police academy most fulfilling. Told his staff “We have more to do with what this department is going to be like for the next 25 years than the police commissioner does... We can put an imprint on these kids.” If

staff no longer felt the importance of training the recruits, they could leave at any time. This assignment “was too important to leave to chance.” [Captain Grover was commander of the academy for six years, but was also a lieutenant/instructor at the academy for over four years.] Probably 2,500 to 3,000 officers on the police department that he had a part in their training-feels great about that-this was his highest award.

- 1:07:47 Returns to La Salle; could have stayed with Philadelphia Police Department for four more years in a semi-retired role (only 48 years old at the time) but started to look for something after the police department. Several opportunities came up; run the Harrisburg Area Community College Police Academy; become the officer in charge of training for the Philadelphia Housing Authority Police; and the Director of Security and Safety at La Salle University. Visited La Salle to meet with a selection committee. While walking up a driveway at La Salle, a “certain calm and comfort and sense of history and belongingness cam over me.” He had good memories of La Salle and felt relaxed. He told the committee that if they had the desire and vision to do what was necessary, this could be a great place to live, work and study. He was an adult educator for the last ten years of his life, and was aware of distractions in the work place. Not feeling safe is one of these distractions-for students and faculty. He was offered the La Salle position and accepted it.
- 1:11:24 Had to address early on the growing trend of students living off campus. He did not have the resources to secure students living at various places off campus. Wanted to shore up that perimeter. Wanted to make both the reality of safety and the perception of safety one in the same. Employed a secondary security force to extend the reach off campus. [Allied-Barton is the secondary firm] He wants students to be aware of opportunity for crime. More lighting, more cameras, more emergency phones, better communications, new equipment. Plans are moving forward for expansion. [Germantown project]
- 1:13:32 Campus has changed from his time here as a student. More buildings, South Campus Project, Treetops, new library [he uses the library] but feels La Salle is still a small community. He can work one on one with people. When he was here as a student, he did not recall the Security and Safety Department. The parking office was the headquarters at that time, only a few officers. Times have changed and now there is a need for a visible presence on campus. Still sees value in an urban Catholic education.
- 1:16:24 Asked about all of his responsibilities; professional and personal, how does he do it? Stated time management is critical. Search for a balance between home and work. Enjoys coaching his sons and values just spending time with the family. On other hand, La Salle position is demanding and important.

- 1:18:18 Student orientation program for both new security officers and the students alike. All of the officers have prior security or police experience. Mentions Cleary Act. [Federal Crime Reporting Requirements] Training and skills management are critical. He brought Denny Reeber on as an associate director [worked with Mr. Grover at Police Academy]
- 1:20:22 [phone rings] Wants students to be aware of their surroundings. Be aware of ways to lower their risk factors; to use security services; travel in groups; be aware of use of alcohol, don't be impaired, don't be a target.
- 1:23:15 Common student crime reports-thefts, and so on-usually off campus. Does not blame the victim, but try to lower their risk. On campus, there is the occasional missing phone, or purse. Most of La Salle campus is in 35th District. Germantown campus will be in the 14th District.
- 1:25:40 The Cleary Act signed into law in 1990. Named after Ann Marie Cleary-a coed who was raped and murdered in a college dorm room by a fellow student. After investigation of similar events, it was felt that there could have been a chance to warn people of these types of behaviors when they were choosing where to go to school. La Salle complies with Cleary Act. Submits yearly statistics. Issues warnings to students of incidents on and off campus in the 35th District. Good communication with Philadelphia Police Department. Cleary Act enhances security and safety. Keep people informed.
- 1:29:40 Daily number of people on campus could exceed 5,500. Student disciplinary code is administered by the dean of students. They are accountable for their actions. Students have responsibility.
- 1:31:08 His job now is similar to running the Police Academy, but there are differences. Security and Safety officers do not have arrest powers, no weapons. Still has a responsibility to keep people safe. Maintains his contacts with Philadelphia Police Department.
- 1:33:05 La Salle has been receptive to Mr. Grover's suggestions regarding safety. Is more aware of budgeting concerns in current position as opposed to the police department.
- 1:34:36 Security and Safety Department will grow as the University grows. Find out what the new needs will be. Building access control, expand technologies, develop personnel, grow and support the mission of the University and the value of the department will grow.
- 1:36:04 Closing comments. Thanking Mr. Grover for his time.

1:36:12 End of recording.