

*The
Kerr County Historical Commission
presents*

An ORAL HISTORY

of

ROBERT L. ZUMWALT

Born 1930, Ingram, Texas

*Kerrville, Texas 2018
Transcribed & Edited by Jeanie Webb*

*The Oral History Project is a project of the Kerr County Historical Commission,
a volunteer organization. The Oral History Committee chairperson is Francelle Collins.*

Kerr County Historical Commission
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Name: Robert L Zumwalt

Date of Birth: July 6, 1930

Place of Birth: Ingram, Texas

Education: Tivy High School 1948
Southwest Texas State Teachers College, San Marcos

Father: Isaac William Zumwalt
Mother: Elver Ann Sublett
Wife: Audrey Smith
Children: Mike Zumwalt, Kathie Zumwalt Wilson

SUMMARY

Robert Zumwalt is a descendant of 19th Century Kerr County settlers, the Schumacher and Sublett families from the Ingram/Hunt area. After graduating from Tivy High School in 1948, Robert worked for a family produce delivery business before joining the Kerrville Police Department in 1952, beginning a career in law enforcement that lasted over 50 years, including service with the Abilene Police Department, and then U.S. Customs in California, Louisiana, Florida, and Michigan as well as Texas. In his hobby, Robert excelled with the bow and arrow, and served as president of the Texas Archery Association. His children also became enthusiasts, travelling with Robert and Audrey all over Texas to compete in archery tournaments. In this interview, Zumwalt shares interesting stories of Kerrville law enforcement in the 1950's including his beginning when the department had only 2 police cars. Robert also talks about his work with U.S. Customs. After retirement from U.S. Customs in 1988, the Zumwalts moved back to Kerr County where Robert worked for the Sheriff's Department and the District Court for another nearly 12 1/2 years.

Interviewee: Robert L. Zumwalt

Interviewers: Francelle Robison Collins
Bonnie Pipes Flory

Date: December 12, 2017

Place: Kerr County Courthouse
Kerrville, Texas

An Oral History of Robert L. Zumwalt

My name is Francelle Robison Collins and I am with the Kerr County Historical Commission, Oral History Project. Today is December 12, 2017, and I am here at the Kerr County Courthouse, Kerrville, Texas, with Bonnie Pipes Flory. We are talking to Bob Zumwalt, and his wife, Audrey, who understand that we are making audio and video recordings of this interview and that a typewritten transcript of our interview will be provided so that changes can be made. The audio and video tapes, however, cannot be edited. This information along with copies of any family pictures and documents provided by you will then be turned over to the History Center, Schreiner University Archives, and the University of North Texas Portals to Texas History where they will be available to the public unless specific restrictions are placed on them by you. These restrictions will be noted in the Release forms after you have had a chance to review the transcripts. Are you clear on what we are doing today?

ROBERT: Yes I am.

FRANCELLE: What is your given name?

ROBERT: Robert L. Zumwalt

FRANCELLE: What does the L stand for?

ROBERT: Initial only.

FRANCELLE: And when and where were you born?

ROBERT: I was born July 6, 1930 in Ingram, Texas.

FRANCELLE: Were you born at home?

ROBERT: I'm not for sure, I think that's right.

FRANCELLE: Do you have any siblings?

ROBERT: I have 3 brothers and 2 sisters that are all deceased.

FRANCELLE: And what was your father's name?

ROBERT: Isaac William.

FRANCELLE: And where was he born?

ROBERT: In Lavaca County.

FRANCELLE: And when did he come to Kerr County?

ROBERT: That I'm not sure of, I think in the early teens.

FRANCELLE: And what was your mother's name?

ROBERT: Elver Ann Sublett Zumwalt.

FRANCELLE: And so she was a Sublett from the Ingram area. And was she born there?

ROBERT: Yes.

FRANCELLE: And what was your father's occupation?

ROBERT: Well, he had several. Mainly he ran a gas station. He also had a dance hall called the Big Drive Inn. They called it the BDI. It was located where Gibson's is now.

FRANCELLE: Yes, we know a lot about that, a lot of people have talked about that. So your Dad started that?

ROBERT: He opened it and ran it.

FRANCELLE: Ok, that was a very important place to people in Kerrville at that time. And did your mother work outside of the home?

ROBERT: She had a café at one time out at the airport, with hamburgers.

FRANCELLE: That was the airport that was out there on the Junction Highway...

ROBERT: The old airport between Kerrville and Ingram.

FRANCELLE: Was your mother a good cook?

ROBERT: I think so.

FRANCELLE: What was her specialty?

ROBERT: I don't know, I liked the way she fixed venison, like a chicken fried steak.

FRANCELLE: Did she soak it in something?

ROBERT: That I couldn't tell you.

FRANCELLE: And what about your grandparents, did you know them?

ROBERT: Yes, my grandfather on my mother's side was Jesse Sublett, and his wife was Ida Schumaker Sublett.

FRANCELLE: And you're related to the Schumakers also, long time people in that area. And did you say those were both grandmothers?

ROBERT: Grandmother and grandfather, and on my father's side was William C. Zumwalt and his wife was Susan Miller Zumwalt.

FRANCELLE: And what did the Zumwalts and the Schumakers, what did they all do in that area?

ROBERT: Well, Subletts had land between Ingram and Hunt, had quite a few acres up there. And one time when he out was plowing, he was struck by lightning and it almost killed him. And he was paralyzed from the waist down, and he couldn't talk....more than da dad da da.

FRANCELLE: Very unusual to live through a lightning strike. You very seldom hear that. And where did you start school?

ROBERT: My first four years were at Tivy. Went to Ingram five and six, I went to Torrance, California, in seven and Morris Ranch back in Texas in eighth, and then ninth through twelfth back in Tivy.

FRANCELLE: And why the change in all the different schools? Was that dependent on your father's job, then?

ROBERT: Yes. During the War we went to California and he worked as a guard or security in the shipyards. And that lasted a little over a year. And when we came back we had a ranch type farm between here and Fredericksburg. The Lewis Ranch originally. And we lived there for several years, but I came into town after about a year and stayed with my sister Eula.

FRANCELLE: To go to Tivy?

ROBERT: Yes.

FRANCELLE: So when you were at Morris Ranch, now, where did you go to school?

ROBERT: Morris Ranch, up to the 10th grade.

FRANCELLE: Oh they had their own school.

ROBERT: There were several grades in one class, and they had about four or five classes or something like that, you might have the six, seventh, and eighth grade all in the same room, with one teacher.

FRANCELLE: Was that started for people that worked out there so their children could go to school?

ROBERT: Yes.

FRANCELLE: So there was one teacher.

ROBERT: No, they had several teachers but he might be over 2 or 3 classes.

FRANCELLE: Did you walk to that school?

ROBERT: I lived about five to six miles from that school. I had a choice. I could ride a bicycle, ride my horse, or walk. A lot of times I would walk because you wanted to get to the highway and somebody else going to school would stop and pick you up.

FRANCELLE: Did you ever ride your horse?

ROBERT: Yes, there were several of us that rode horses, they had a place where we could tie them up, put them in the pen, feed them.

FRANCELLE: What do you remember about that school. What all did you do there. Was it hard to get there if the weather was bad?

ROBERT: Not really.

FRANCELLE: Were there low water crossings?

ROBERT: No, the little highway, it's still there today. It goes up through Morris Ranch, you go about 200 -300 yards, the school is up on the hill a little bit. It's still there.

FRANCELLE: It's still there? When did they close that school?

ROBERT: I don't know, as far as I know, it was still operating, it was up to the 10th grade though. That's all they had.

FRANCELLE: And so when you came to Tivy, then, what year did you graduate?

ROBERT: 1948.

FRANCELLE: What do you remember about Tivy that you want to tell us?

ROBERT: Well, it was, everything -- it was a normal high school type thing, I took one year of trade and industry, T&I, which was where we went out and built a house, the teacher bought the land and we started from scratch on the house.

FRANCELLE: So he taught you as you went along, to build it? I bet that was a good experience.

ROBERT: It was.

FRANCELLE: Could you build a house now if you wanted to?

ROBERT: I believe I could. My son does it.

FRANCELLE: That's a great thing to learn. To keep from having to pay other people. What about your teachers, do you remember any of your teachers you had at Tivy?

ROBERT: Well, my history teacher in high school was Hattie Garrett. She'd been there all of her life. She was very good. And Mr. Rees was mathematics. He taught trigonometry and mathematics. He had a very unusual way of keeping grades. He had his book, and when you answered a question, he would give you a mark. And at the end of the year he had so many marks, for what your grade was.

FRANCELLE: That's a good way to do it.

ROBERT: Well, one semester there I got a "C" and I went back and said why? And he said well you didn't have many marks. And the next six weeks it went to an "A", went back up.

FRANCELLE: So then what did you do after high school?

ROBERT: First I went to San Marcos to the Southwest Texas State Teachers College for a semester. And then I quit that and I moved to Houston and went to work for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company.

FRANCELLE: What took you to Houston? That job?

ROBERT: Yeah, I went down there and applied for a job. Actually, at that time, Audrey's brother and I shared an apartment. He was working at a bakery and I worked at the telephone company.

FRANCELLE: But y'all weren't married then?

ROBERT: Oh no. That was right out of high school.

FRANCELLE: And so how long did you do that?

ROBERT: Six months.

FRANCELLE: Decided that wasn't for you?

ROBERT: That wasn't for me. We came back to Kerrville and I went to work for my sister and brother-in-law in the produce company. They had a place there on the 600 block of Clay Street. The building is still there. They sold the business way back to Gillespie and I don't know who Gillespie sold it to.

FRANCELLE: So they sold produce out of that?

ROBERT: We made one to six trips a week to San Antonio. Got up at midnight, the market opened at about 3:30 or 4:00 a.m. We loaded the truck and came back home and delivered produce out of there.

FRANCELLE: So they had a produce farm then?

ROBERT: No, well, they had a business.

FRANCELLE: So they didn't actually farm?

ROBERT: No, but the business lasted for years and years.

FRANCELLE: What was the name of it?

ROBERT: Smith Produce.

FRANCELLE: You said the building is still there?

ROBERT: The building is still there.

FRANCELLE: Is there something in it?

ROBERT: I don't know, but it's in the 600 block of Clay Street.

FRANCELLE: So then what was your next job?

ROBERT: Well, after the produce, at night, when we got up to go do the produce, we'd go to the Chatterbox, which is no longer there, and have breakfast, and lots of times Ed Smith, who was the night chief of the police at that time, well he was like an assistant, he always talked to me and we became good friends and he said I should apply to the police department. And I said, no, I'm not interested. But I finally said, well, and I went down and made application to Chief Thompson who was the chief at that time, and when I went in to talk to him and he called up the city manager at that time and I went in and talked to him.

FRANCELLE: And who was that?

ROBERT: Bill Pestich. And he wanted somebody 21 years old but with 40 years experience! That don't work. And anyway, Chief Thompson had a heart attack and died, and they hired Walter Moss as the new chief and at that time I came on as a new police officer on May 1st of 1952.

FRANCELLE: And how many policemen were on the force then?

ROBERT: They had nine officers. We had one vehicle. Actually there was two, the chief had one and we had one. And everybody used the same one. Well, our shifts were different than normal. Our shifts were 9:00 at night to 5:00 in the morning, and 5:00 in the morning to 1:00, and 1:00 to 9:00 at night.

FRANCELLE: One man in the patrol car?

ROBERT: Well, usually if there was two they worked the midnight or the night shift for a little more support.

FRANCELLE: So could you tell them which shift you wanted?

ROBERT: Well, the Chief usually said whatever.

FRANCELLE: You had to rotate?

ROBERT: Yeah, I was on the night shift and the Chief wanted me to coach Little League as a representative of the police department, and I said well I can't do that, I'm on the night shift. And he said you're on the morning shift now.

FRANCELLE: Did you enjoy doing that? Coaching?

ROBERT: Oh yeah.

FRANCELLE: Well that was nice to have a representative from the police force.

ROBERT: There was one little item as a coach...you have leftovers from the year before, and then you bid on more players. I went over the ones I had left from the year before, and I had each one give me their name and the position they played last year and if they wanted to try for a different position. And these boys came up and gave their names and said I was this and I was that. And this other little boy came up and said my name is Joe Wilson and I'm the best second string catcher you've got! Which I thought was pretty good.

FRANCELLE: Did you do both of those for a long time, then? Coaching and....

ROBERT: Well for a year or two and that worked out real good.

FRANCELLE: So how long was Mr. Moss the Chief of Police?

ROBERT: Well, he had been a police officer earlier. I don't know what dates. But he was there for a long time.

FRANCELLE: I remember him on a motorcycle, did that sorta help out so you could use the car more?

ROBERT: Well, one morning I was on patrol. And the Chief called me into the station. He says, can you ride a motorcycle? I said, no, I've never rode a motorcycle. He said, do you ride a bicycle? Well, I don't now, but I have, I used to have a bicycle. He says, c'ome, we're going to make a trip. So we got the car and we went to Uvalde. They had a big Harley, I call them a Hog. The Uvalde police, they bought it, so Moss got on it and drove it to the city limits. And I followed with the car. He got out and he said, this is the gas, this is the spark, here's your brake, get on, we're going to Kerrville.

FRANCELLE: You learned while you were doing it.

ROBERT: I had about 5 minutes instructions. Then we came to Kerrville and I rode it quite consistently, I finally got to where I worked as a motorcycle officer mornings and evenings.

FRANCELLE: So that kind of freed one of the cars then.

ROBERT: I was trying to think, I had an early, I think it was in February or May, I was clocking a speeder coming in at Five Points, coming into town, and Handy Andy at that time was there in the Five Points, they had a grocery store there. And this man from Center Point, he came out of the grocery store, between me and my speeding car, and I layed the bike down and spent 11 days in the hospital.

FRANCELLE: Oh my, did you break things?

ROBERT: Yeah. Shortly after that they purchased, they got rid of that one and purchased a new 3-wheel motorcycle.

FRANCELLE: I guess that's the one I remember.

ROBERT: Yeah, and they used that one for parking meters, they used it for funerals, and they used it for parades and things like that.

FRANCELLE: And wasn't Bo Moss, wasn't he...?

ROBERT: He came in, I can't remember the year, but he came in I would say probably in the mid-50's, I guess it was.

FRANCELLE: Mr. Moss, did he retire, or did he stay there until he passed away?

ROBERT: I think he became ill because he was in the hospital a longtime and then in a rest home before he died.

FRANCELLE: And then who became Chief of Police?

ROBERT: Ed Schreiber was a patrolman. Well when Ed Smith, who was the night assistant chief, he retired or quit and went to Oklahoma. And at that time Chief Moss made Schreiber a captain. So that lasted for about close to a year and a half. And at that time Chief Moss changed the titles. His captain rank went to sergeant, and Dave Wilson was a sergeant, and I became a sergeant. We had our shift sergeants. So I stayed until about '57. I wanted to get rich. So Peterson had the American Pure Milk Company. They more or less had the milk routes sewed up. And Pete Neutze, who lived in Uvalde, came up here and got the deal for Foremost dairies. And I was hired to bring Foremost into Kerrville. Which I did. And in about 2 or 3 months they changed trucks on me, into an ice cream milk truck, I also had ice cream.

FRANCELLE: You were delivering?

ROBERT: Yes, I had all the stops in Kerrville, I had 3 stops in Ingram, and for a while there for about a year, I went to Hunt.

FRANCELLE: Was that to the businesses?

ROBERT: Yes, the stores. And because I knew pretty much most of the managers and I had Center Point on the way out, I got to work at 5:00 o'clock or shortly thereafter and I had businesses in town, went to Ingram, and back to Center Point. When I got through with Center Point, all I had to do was

drive to San Antone and reload and come back and get ready for the next day. It made it a long, long day. And I had Jimmy Colbath, I finally got to where I had the business where I had to get a helper, and I trained him and I got where on certain days instead of going with me to San Antone, I'd let him come back and go to the big stores and put up the milk and stuff like that. And I'd get where he was doing it. Occasionally I would make out what I wanted him to load and I would drop off at Center Point and come back to Kerrville and he would go to San Antone and make that part of the trip. And Mr. Neutze says, well, that's OK, but he says that I was responsible for the truck and so he wanted me to stay with the truck, he didn't want Jimmy to go into San Antone. I thought that was too many hours and I was getting tired of that and I wasn't getting that rich, so I quit and come back to the police department.

FRANCELLE: How long were you away from it?

ROBERT: A year and seven months. And when I quit the Foremost milk truck, he hired Jimmy to take over, because I had trained him, and I went back to work for the police department here for almost 2 years.

FRANCELLE: Had anything changed in the time you were gone?

ROBERT: Not a whole lot. I was still there, and at that time I was doing a lot of archery tournaments. And we went to Abilene to their invitational. Normally your shoots at the invitationals are like for one day. But Abilene that year it was a little different. They had a fourteen target night shoot. And what they had was, at the target they had these smudge pots that give off light, and they would have somebody to walk you with a flashlight to the shooting position. And they turned that off and all you had for vision was smudge pots.

FRANCELLE: What was the purpose of that?

ROBERT: Well, it was just a night shoot, a fun shoot, I guess you'd say, and they'd just give ribbons on that part of it.

FRANCELLE: You had to be really good to do that one.

ROBERT: Well, in archery there's two different types of shooting. There's what they call "instinctive," which you just bear up and shoot, but in the "freestyle," which they had a sight, which was different classes. They had aides, I guess you'd say, with the sights.

FRANCELLE: Did you ever shoot an animal?

ROBERT: I killed deer. Our group went up to Possum Canyon and went deer hunting up there and I killed a doe.

FRANCELLE: You have to be good.

ROBERT: It worked out pretty well.

FRANCELLE: Well, tell us a little bit about the police department when you worked there. What do you think the big crime was at that time?

ROBERT: Well, we had a lot of burglaries which were car and/or business burglaries. And there was your regular traffic enforcement. And I think we went four years without a traffic death in Kerrville, which was....

FRANCELLE: So you were staying on people to make sure they were slowing down.

ROBERT: We hoped!

FRANCELLE: I wonder how much a traffic ticket was back then?

ROBERT: Very cheap. You run a stop sign, it was five dollars. We ran a program for a while where we had a little stub that broke in half. And we would stop somebody for minor traffic, stop sign or minor speeding, we would give them what was called a warning. The ticket had a perforation, you tear the ticket in half and the violator got the top part and you took the one that you had back to the office and hung on a rack. If you got two warnings within 30 days then they went ahead and filed the cases. But very seldom did that happen.

FRANCELLE: Tell me about the Texas Rangers. Did local police force work with the Texas Rangers?

ROBERT: We had a Texas Ranger, Mr. Purvis, and he worked on all the big investigations.

FRANCELLE: And he was stationed here in Kerrville, correct?

ROBERT: Oh yes. He had some other counties but this was his headquarters, you might say.

FRANCELLE: At what point would you bring Purvis in?

ROBERT: Sometimes on the business burglaries we would bring him in. But one thing, to back up just a little bit, while I was on the milk truck they had a burglary at Your Way, a grocery store on Sidney Baker that is no longer there, there was a Methodist Church on the corner of Jefferson and Sidney Baker and Your Way was between there and North Street. And they had a burglary, with several appliances taken.

FRANCELLE: Did they have alarms back then?

ROBERT: They didn't, no. But Johnny Hunt and Harry Hunt run Your Way. And I delivered milk in there one day and they said, you should be back on the police force. And I said, why? And they said well we had this burglary here and they haven't solved it yet. And I said oh I can do that without going on the police force, I just spouted off. And two days later, Lester Dolezal had a shop over in this part of town and I stopped in to see him. And I saw an article that was in for repair or something, and I saw the name on it. And I said, Lester, that unit is part of the Your Way burglary. I said, can I call the police. And he said, sure. So I picked up the phone and talked to Moss, and Moss and Purvis were there before I could....Heh, hang the phone up! And I solved their....

FRANCELLE: And what was it that you saw?

ROBERT: It was an electric amplifier, one of the things that was missing. It wasn't the amplifier but the name that was on there. One of the ones that we knew "borrowed" things.

FRANCELLE: So there were no alarms on the buildings, just mainly driving patrol to catch somebody doing, or see a door open or something. That probably wasn't too often was it, in this town back then?

ROBERT: Not that often. But one night I was on patrol and Purvis was riding with me and we came up to Atkinson's, which was at the high school, at Barnett and Tivy Street. Front door was standing open, so we go in and check the building out. And as far as I know, that one was never solved. But very seldom he rode with us but he did on occasion.

FRANCELLE: Did you have any murders while you were here and on patrol?

ROBERT: I don't think, well like I say, we didn't have any traffic deaths or murders like that, they came later.

FRANCELLE: Pretty calm. Luckily there wasn't a lot of drugs probably back then either, huh?

ROBERT: Yeah, there was drugs but it was not nearly anywhere close to what it is now.

FRANCELLE: So, how were drugs involved in the community? Selling it, or bringing it in?

ROBERT: Well, when you stop them, they would have marijuana and/or pills or non-

prescription pills.

FRANCELLE: Way back then? And did y'all work with the sheriff's department?

ROBERT: Oh yes.

FRANCELLE: So the sheriff took care of the county and y'all...

ROBERT: Yeah. He had the county. Moore was the sheriff at the time. And they worked, like I say, outside of the city limits, and one of the deputies, he hated to stop somebody in the city limits for a traffic violation because if we got to them first – they run the stop sign, our was \$5 – and their's was like \$18 dollars just for the cost, and on up. And usually they're taking on like in their 20's or 30's.

FRANCELLE: And that was a lot then.

ROBERT: Yeah. He said I don't want to stop anybody in the city limits for a traffic violation for that reason.

FRANCELLE: Okay, and then did you say you left the police force here and went...

ROBERT: Okay, and when I left the police force here in July of '61...

FRANCELLE: Had you and Audrey been married at that time? What year did y'all get married?

ROBERT: We married June 25, 1950, so we've been married 67 years. When I went to Abilene on that tournament, we drove over the night before the shoot and we drove around, and we liked what we saw, so I went back and made application and I went up there. And when I was hired there was 40 people took the exam and there was five passed it, and three that were hired out of the 40, which was a bunch.

FRANCELLE: And you were one of those?

ROBERT: I was one of those. And because I had 8 years or better experience they had me working undercover. Because Taylor County was a dry county. There were no beer joints or things like that. But the porters in a place like that, you could buy from them if you knew what to make contact with them. The porters at the hotels. And I was I guess undercover for about a little less than 2 months and so Impact was a little place, they'd incorporated, just started the town, and so they could go over there and buy whiskey or beer or anything you wanted to legally.

FRANCELLE: There was a little store called Impact?

ROBERT: Impact was a little town, a little incorporation, they had more or less did it just so they could have their stores, and then I came out from undercover at that time. I had 28 buys, which is pretty good for somebody that don't drink.

FRANCELLE: Do you close them down at the time when you buy it then?

ROBERT: Oh no, I would take it and turn it in to the – I worked what they called Special Services, there was a lieutenant and four officers that worked in the Special Service. And we did odd jobs for the Chief, what he wanted me to do, and I worked under that lieutenant for a month and a half and I reported back to him. And I was given money to spend on a buy, and I would turn it in with the merchandise and the initials where I could identify it in court.

FRANCELLE: Do you think overall that people had respect for the police force in those days?

ROBERT: Yes and no.

FRANCELLE: What's the no?

ROBERT: Well, there were several people that I knew of that had been stopped, not by me, but by somebody else, and they held a grudge against the department for having received a ticket. It's alright to give them a ticket but they shouldn't give me a ticket! But I gave one of our rich millionaires a ticket for no driver's license, and the Chief got a very nice letter saying that, he said -- I appreciated that. A little fine didn't bother him of course -- but he said, I didn't know my license was expired, had been expired for about 6 months, and he says that's wrong. I could have had a wreck, and no good would have come out of it. But he said I appreciate the way the officer conducted himself.

FRANCELLE: I can remember some kids, though, back in the day, that would get into trouble and their parents had money and it seemed like, you know, that sometimes they got a little extra help. But that's probably a small town thing, I would think.

ROBERT: Abilene at that time was a little over 100,000 population. And I was made sergeant, and I made lieutenant. You had to be in the grade for a year before you could move up and then there had to be a vacancy before they would even give you the test. And after you'd been given the test they would select one of the top of all the tests plus your performance, and then you were promoted and you had to stay, like I say, a year in that grade and they had to have a vacancy for the next grade up. So in seven years I went from patrolman to a lieutenant. One of the officers on the force had gone

to U.S. Customs, and he enjoyed it, so I filled out my paperwork. In those days you had to go to the post office and pick up an application and you filled that application out and then you had a certain time you were notified to come to the courthouse for a four-hour exam. And that exam covered – each section had a time limit on it – and when you finished that portion you had to turn that one in. So that's where I really fouled up there, I think it was on the math.

FRANCELLE: Is that like a civil service exam?

ROBERT: Somewhat, you had to get on that roster before anybody, and from that exam you went to U.S. Customs, IRS, Secret Service or the U.S. Marshalls. You had to pass, I think it was 75 at that time to get on the list. And while I was there on the list, Bill Black, he was a U.S. Marshall for about 18 counties, and he drove, he was on the road you might say all the time, and he come by one day where I was part-time security at the bank in Abilene. And he said I'm going to get help, I'm going to get another officer to help me, I got so many miles to cover and everything. He said, if you take that exam, I'll see what I can do. Well, anyway I took the exam and I got on the roster and about 6 weeks later he came by. He said, I got bad news. I said what's that. He says, they told me that when I fill the position he would be black. They said if you don't have anybody black in Texas, we got lots of them in Washington, we'll send you one. So that knocked that one in the head. But then right after that, I had a call from Customs and they wanted to know if I wanted to come to work for Customs. And I said, OK, I would like that because the other officer from there, he had put down.... before that time he had transferred from Customs over into Narcotics. And so I was hired as a Customs port investigator, which we worked the shifts coming through the airport and we worked the boats in New Orleans.

FRANCELLE: Did you like that?

ROBERT: It was a fun job, I guess you might say. There were lots of times we would go down to one of the big ships coming in and we would check the seamen as they were coming off the boat and check to see what they declared as having purchased foreign. On this one occasion while we were doing that, there was a motorcycle being lowered off the ship, and all of a sudden it stopped and it went back on board. So I went on board and talked to the Captain, and he said, well, what you need to do it go down into the other deck and see Bosun so and so. So I did. And he had put that thing back on board and he put it in a room and it was sitting on its hind wheels in a little room, and I said, unload it. And they unloaded it, and I seized it. I told him he could petition to get it back, which he didn't. And he told me one day after that he said, you probably saved my life because riding that thing would have gotten me in trouble.

FRANCELLE: Did y'all come back to Kerrville then after that job?

ROBERT: From there I went to Calexico, California on a promotion to Special Agent in the Fall of '69. And we were there for 8-1/2 years. On July 1, 1973, DEA was formed, they changed it from Bureau of Narcotics to Drug Enforcement Administration. And when they did that, they took -- like in our office we had 25 people there at the time. And they took 21 of them. And when the news got out, I was on a San Diego grand jury, and the supervisor called me and said well, the list has come out, and you're not on it. He said, I'm going, and I can get you on it. And I said well, if they didn't want me, I don't want them. So I stayed with Customs and I was promoted up to the Resident Agent there in Calexico. I had myself and four agents to work with, and mostly it was smuggling. That was the big thing, smuggling people or drugs. You'd be surprised the way things were -- you'd stop cars going out there, raise the hood, and under the hood would be full of like, a 100 pound sack of beans with whatever they were smuggling. Because they also smuggled a lot of guns and ammunition. One of the officers that wasn't a Customs officer came over, probably DEA, and said, do you want a gun case or ammo case? I said, sure. He said, well, there's two nationals in the store buying ammo. I said, well, can you stay with them until I can get up there? So two or three of us went up there, and we watched them, they're loading ammo into the car. So when they come from El Centro back into Calexico, I figured well, they're going to Mexico with it. Well they didn't, they turned onto a side road into a swap meet. And one of the guys went into the swap meet and the other was tearing the door open and pulling the seats up and he was hiding ammo everywhere it could go. And when he finished, he still had a case of ammo left and no place to put it. So guess where he put it? He raised the hood up and put that ammo on that hot motor. And anyway he came out and when we stopped him going into Mexico, I said, get that ammo off of that motor! It didn't go off but it was close because the bottom of the case was warm and it could have exploded.

FRANCELLE: Now when did you finally retire?

ROBERT: Well, I went from Calexico to San Antone for a year and a half or a little better, and then I went to Michigan for four years and after Michigan I went to Miami, Florida, for the last 4 years. And I retired in 1988. And we came back to Kerrville shortly thereafter.

FRANCELLE: Well tell us about your family.

ROBERT: My mother, dad, brothers and sisters are all gone. In my personal family I have two children, Mike and Kathie. Mike lives in Ingram Lake Estates, he has a cabinet shop, he builds cabinets for new homes. My daughter lives in Houston and she married Scott Wilson and they formed a commercial overhead door business in Houston. And he had a hard time getting started, he didn't have any credit, you might say, but now he can order a hundred thousand dollars worth of materials just by picking up the

phone. And they live in the Bear Creek area. They also purchased a ranch between Kerrville and Junction in the Mt. Home area, it's part of the Schreiner Ranch way back then because at one time he owned half of Texas and that was an original part of it.

FRANCELLE: Well, thank you for your time. Did you have anything else you want to add.

ROBERT: Well, I was going to stay that while I was in Abilene, in my archery, I was field governor for about three years. As field governor, I had about 14 counties, and if somebody wanted to put in a new range or have a question on archery, I was the one in their area to contact and I would go in and inspect the range and approve it, and after that I was president of the Archery Association of Texas for one year. Because we were fixing to move out so I kept it for only one year.

FRANCELLE: Do you still do archery? Or do you have enough strength? You probably taught your children to do archery.

ROBERT: No ma'am, don't have enough strength. There was a gentleman in Abilene, Jake Bentley, one of the archers. He was a retired coach, he worked for the electric company there. And he made bows, and he made one for Mike and one for Kathie. And on a weekend we'd go to tournaments all over the state. Both the kids shot, and when we got back here retired, we went through some of our trophies and we got 170 of them and we gave them to the Lions Camp and to the boys' camps, and they would take the metal part off and use them to give to the kids.

AUDREY: You were also instrumental in building an archery range in Kerrville.

ROBERT: We did that, we had the archery range, originally in was in Starkey Manor, in the brush part in the back where it goes up the hill toward Hilltop, and we would shoot in there and we had a club.

AUDREY: And then the Sheriff's Department too.

ROBERT: Well, when I got out of Customs, for the first 6 months or so I didn't do anything but play golf. And then I went to work at the Sheriff's Department, and Frances Kaiser was the Sheriff. And she hired me as a part-time bailiff, and they'd call me and hey, we need this day for so many hours or whatever. I started out in County Court at Law, and then the couple that had the upstairs in District Courts, the 198th and 216th, they retired, and that was 12-1/2 years, and also I did transport work for the Sheriff's Department, and I spent another 6 years roughly transporting prisoners for the 216th Probation Department. In court, the defendant would plead to something and he would go to school for his alcoholism or drug problems or whatever, and they'd also have schools for the ones that

couldn't pay their probations fines or wasn't paying them, and they would go to their location and I transported them, Uvalde and San Antonio mainly – I'd go to Abilene, Lubbock, Deer Park, the other side of Houston and Corpus, and it worked out pretty well.

FRANCELLE: I think you spent a lot of time...

ROBERT: Fifty-six years.

FRANCELLE: And I think you loved every minute of it.

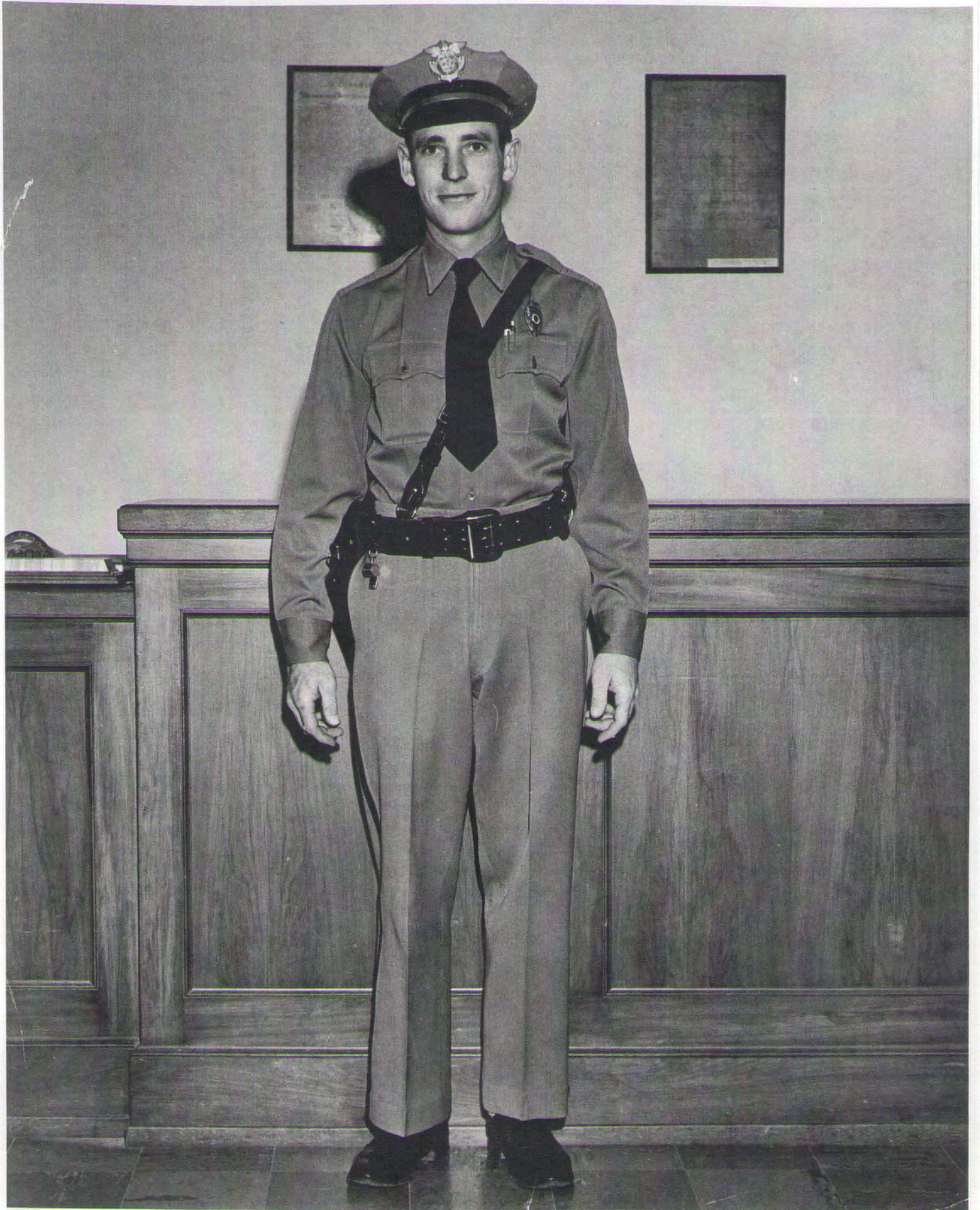
ROBERT: Yeah, pretty good.

FRANCELLE: Well, thank you, we appreciate your time.

ROBERT: Thank you, Ma'am.

end

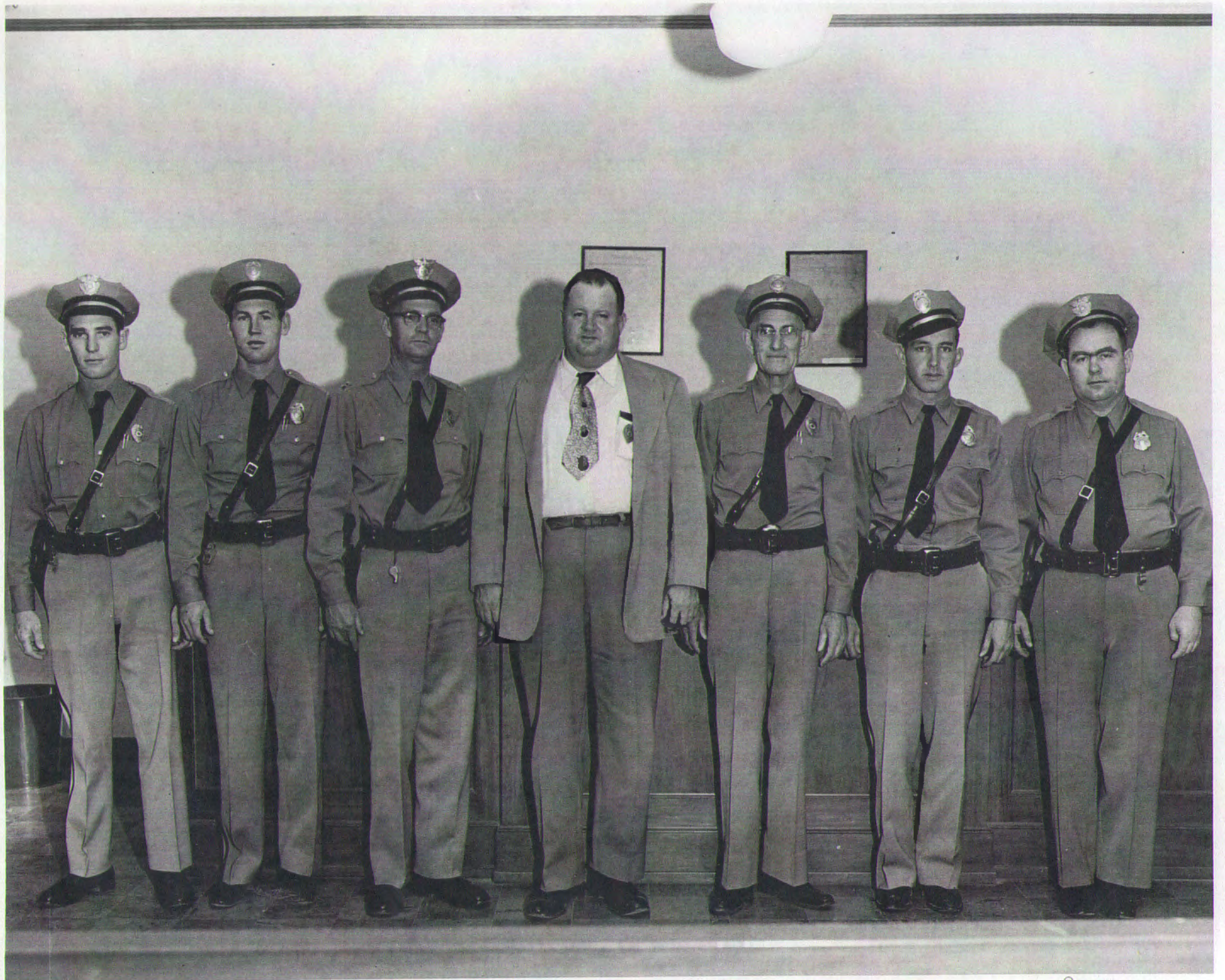




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KERRVILLE, TEXAS

ROBERT ZUMWALT, 1955

KERRVILLE POLICE FORCE IN 1955. ROBERT ZIMWALT, JACK HYDE, CAPTAIN A.E. SCHREIBER, POLICE CHIEF WALTER MOSS, GRADY SEEFERS, LOUIE WOOTTEN AND DAVE WILSON

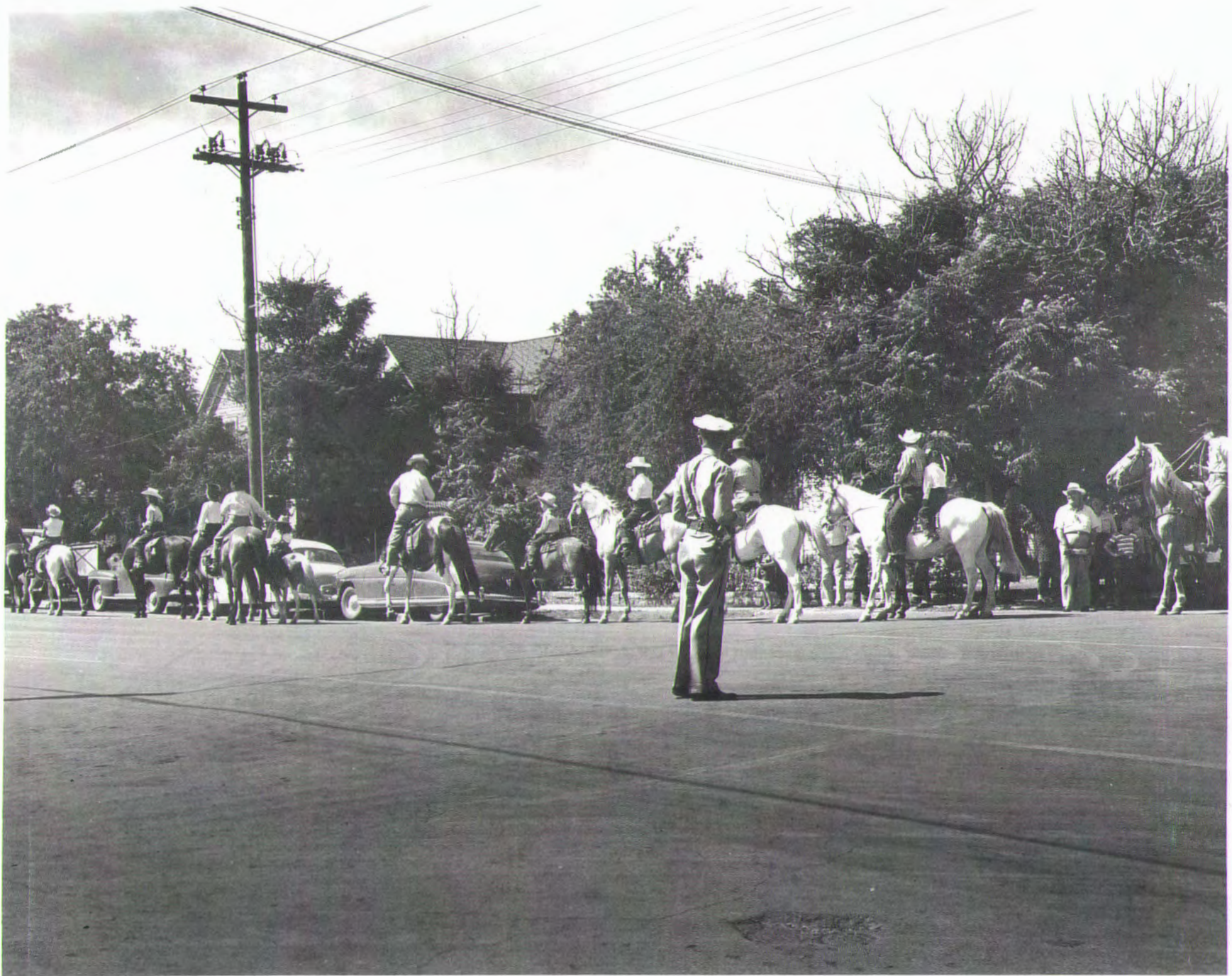


BOB ZUMWALT IN KERRVILLE POLICE CAR, 1957



POLICE CAPTAIN A.E. SCHREIBER STANDS OUTSIDE POLICE CAR AS OFFICER BOB ZUMWALT RADIOS

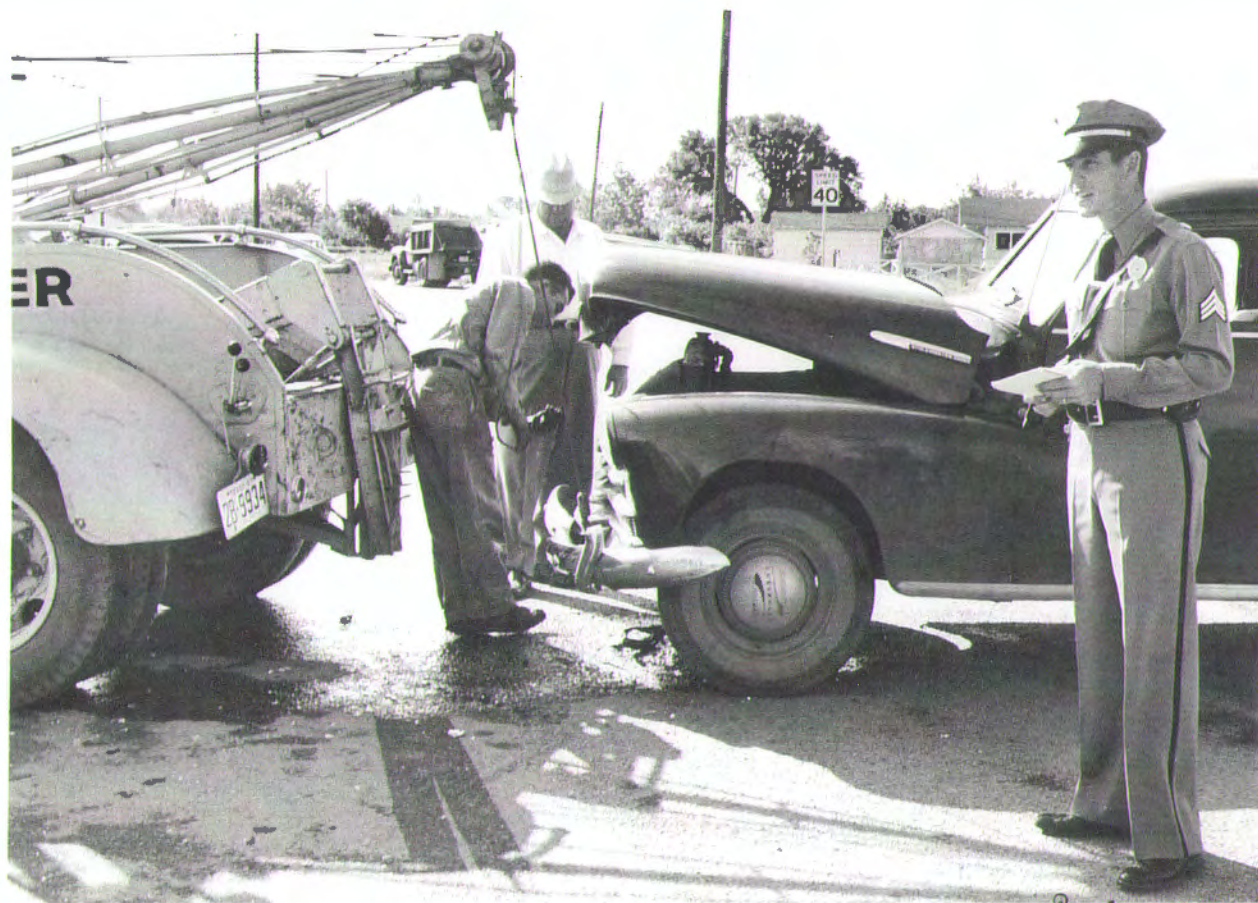






 *Kerrville* BOX 347
KERRVILLE, TEXAS

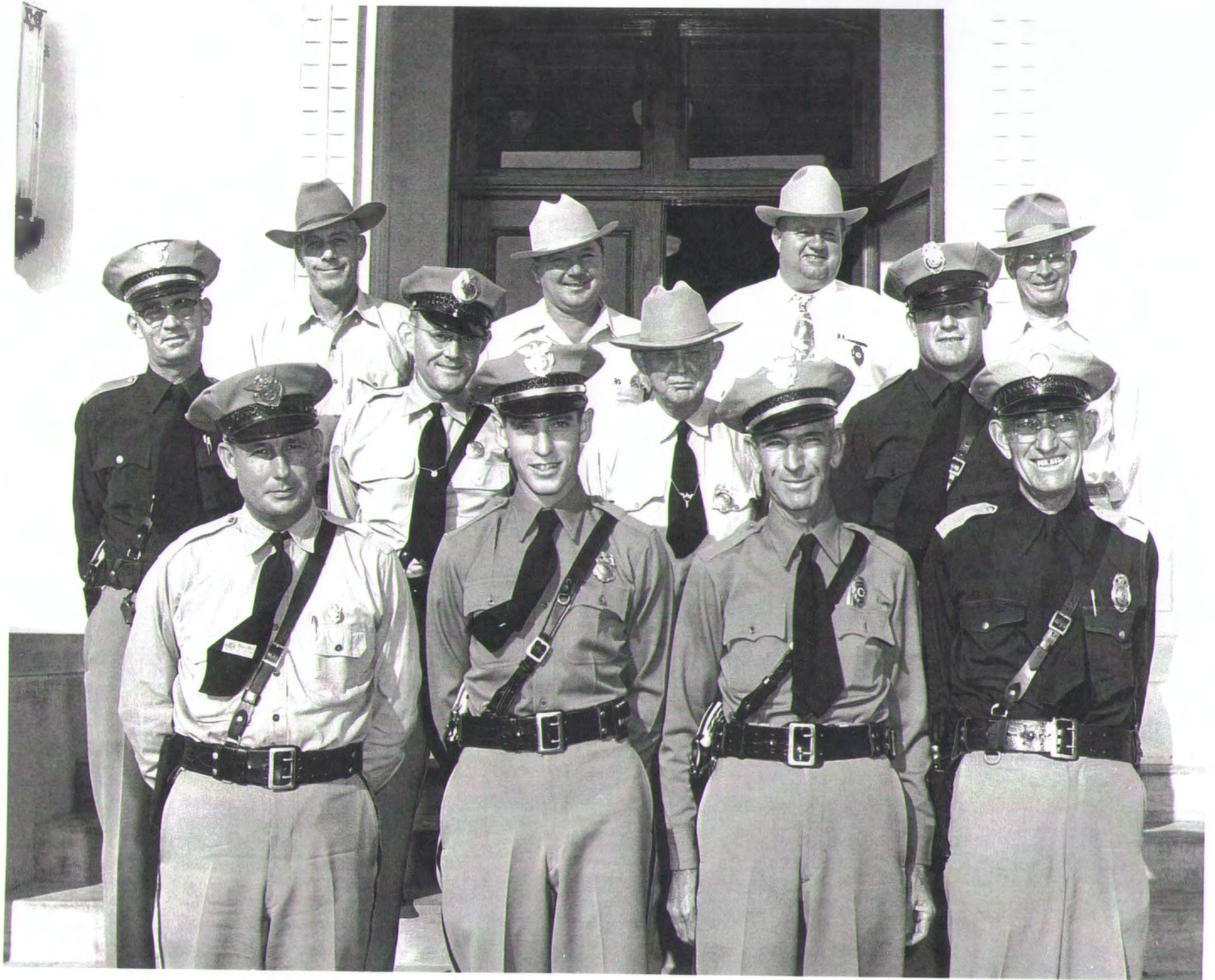
KERRVILLE RESIDENTS BEING INTERVIEWED IN FRONT OF THE BLUE BONNET HOTEL, 1955



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OFFICER ZUMWALT AND POLICE CHIEF MOSS AT WRECK SCENE

KERRVILLE LAW ENFORCEMENT 1952. ROBERT ZUMWALT FRONT ROW, SECOND FROM LEFT

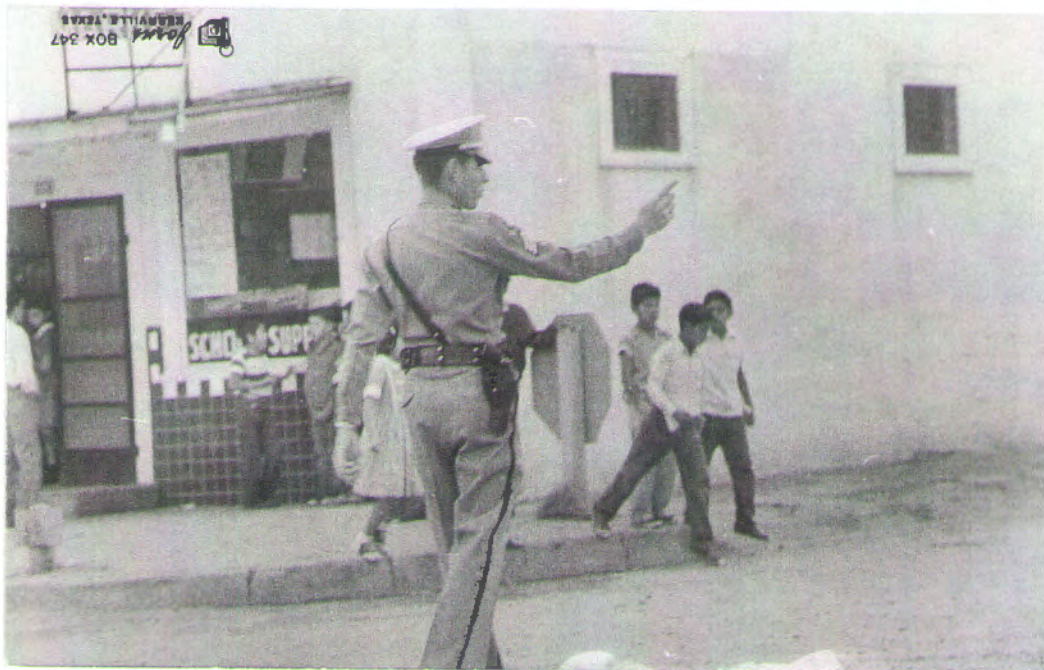


1956 KERRVILLE KATS BASEBALL TEAM. BOB ZUMWALT ON FRONT ROW





OFFICER ZUMWALT AND FELLOW OFFICER HELP LOAD TIVY STUDENTS IN BUS



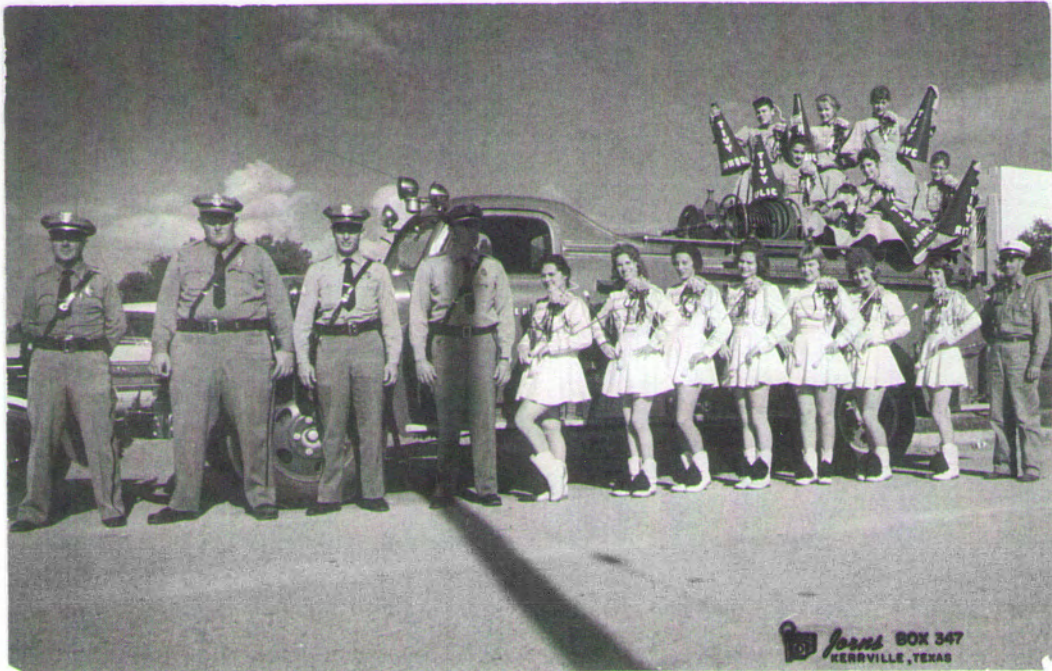
OFFICER ZUMWALT CROSSING CHILDREN GOING TO TIVY ELEMENTARY



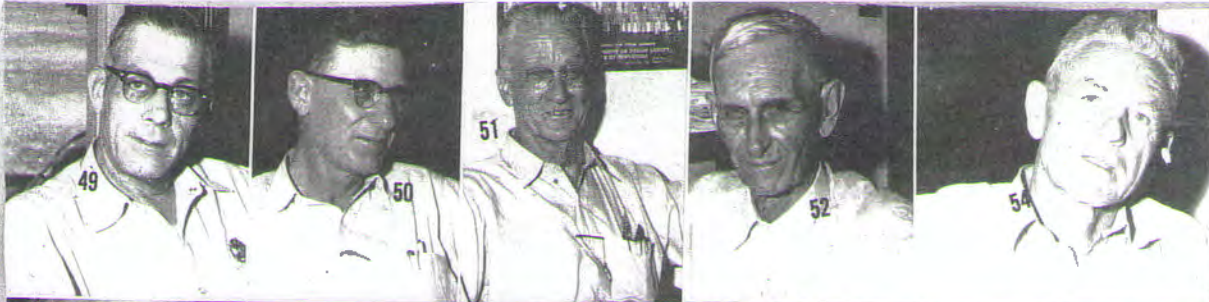
FIRETRUCK PASSING BY IN FRONT OF PIGGLY WIGGLY



KERRVILLE'S NEW MOTOR CYCLE , 1956 OFFICER ZUMWALT STANDING



POLICE OFFICERS PREPARE TO MAN TRAFFIC AT TIVY DOWNTOWN FOOTBALL PARADE



**KERR COUNTY OFFICERS
& KERRVILLE POLICE.**

KERRVILLE POLICE DEPT. GIVEN SERVICE PISTOLS



Kerrville's efficient Police Department personnel are rated among the best in the State, and are regarded as one of the finest equipped in Texas. Police Chief Walter Moss announced the officers have been furnished 38.44 Smith & Weston service pistols and new Sam Brown

belts. The new guns were only issued last week. The department officers pictured above, left to right are Robert Zumwalt, Jack Hyde, Capt. A. E. Schreiber, Police Chief Moss, Grady Seegers, Louis Wootton and Dave Wilson. (Jorns' Photo).

KERR COUNTY, KERRVILLE—No. 49—Kerr County Sheriff Oliver Moore. No. 50—Chief Deputy Sheriff Alton Smith. No. 51—Capt. Harry Bickers, Office Deputy. No. 52—Judge Virgil Storms, Justice of the Peace of Pct. No. 1. No. 53—Capt.-Reverend P. B. Hill, shown with his lovely little granddaughter, Anna Catherine Armstrong. When the photo was made little Anna had just celebrated her first birthday party. No. 54—Bob Snow, Supervisor for the State Game and Fish Commission. No. 55—County Judge John R. Leavell. No. 56—Kerrville Chief of Police Walter Moss—about a thousand pounds of genial efficiency. No. 57—Patrolmen J. W. Walker (left) and Jack Hyde of the Kerrville PD. No. 58—Capt. E. A. Schreiber (left) and Patrolman Louie Wootton of the Kerrville Police. No. 59—Kerrville Patrolman Robert Zumwalt. No. 60—Kerrville Patrolman T. G. Seegers. (Photos by Gardner.)