

Vernon Nussbaumer  
March 24 [year, either 2010 or 2011]  
1308 NW Helvetia Rd

~General background information about Veron's ancestors~

1:02: Grandparents came from Switzerland in 1894/1895 and got married in Forest Grove. Grandfather's stepmother's dad wrote saying that if one of the boys wanted to come to America, they could have the farm when he died. When his grandparents got there to the farm they lived in the second floor of the barn for eight or nine years.

2:18: They got in a disagreement with the lady who owned the farm and his grandfather bought a plot of land and built a house and barn in Helvetia.

~More about Vernon's early life in Helvetia, walking to school, adventures in school, etc.~

5:06: Hillsboro started getting crowded when Vernon graduated High School in 1954, so he stayed home working on the farm for a year, milking cows and making hay. After that year, he volunteered for the draft and went to war.

Brothers: Vernon (oldest), Marvin, Butch (Ben), and Don. Then two sisters, Rosemary and Linda.

7:34: Marvin stayed on the farm when Vernon went away to the army, and Don stayed too. When Vernon got back from the army he got a job driving a truck up and down the coast from California to British Columbia. Produce from California to BC, and then Peat Moss from BC / Apples from Washington down to California.

10:37: Vernon's siblings all have families, one of Marvin's sons has taken over the family farm. None of the acreage has been sold, nothing has changed in the way they have changed their farming. Marvin has the only dairy farm in the area. Everyone else realized that it wasn't profitable to have only a few cows so they stopped milking and kept the farms but got other jobs to pay for the land.

"What do you think the future of farming in this area is?"

12:32: We're trying to keep the farming here and the city there and keep the city contained so that this area stays farms. Apparently developers aren't able to go through and systematically buy out all of the failing farms, because the county is putting regulations in to stop it. He doesn't think that the urban growth boundary line will encompass Helvetia in the recent future.

14:32: Vernon says there are very few people in the area that make a living on only farming. A lot of wheat / grain / hay / grass seed farms left, and horse farms as well.

15:42: "No. The farms mostly around here are hobby farms." Vernon says there seems to also be a growth in the number of fruit farms in the area. Strawberry farms and peach tree orchards right around his house. Within the last 20 years this has been going on, so local people can come up and pick all of

the berries and fruits. Agro-tourism again. Or you can go right to the farm and buy boxed fruits / berries so you don't have to pick. The farmers want the feeling of living in the country and it helps the feeling to have some berries or an orchard and maybe some horses. Makes them feel good.

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“What’s Save Helvetia doing [from your point of view?]”

00:15: Involved in working with the government to keep Helvetia a farm area. Vernon went to a few Save Helvetia meetings, but he’s not an active member. He says there are a few people in the community that also aren’t really involved.

What kind of things did you do on the farm before you left for the army?

3:15: lots and lots of work. When Vernon was 5 he learned to drive the tractor. He bucked hay bales into the barn. Then he would work on the combines in the grain in the afternoon, and then milk the cows in the evening, and in the morning after waking up.

11:17: At first they all grew grain out in Verboort, but then the market changed and grass seed was in high demand. So they switched to grass seed because it was more profitable.

“How much of the old culture do you still practice to this day?”

12:44: Swedish concerts that go on in Bethany and elsewhere in the valley. Lots of Swiss wrestling several times a year.

[Video error at 15:38, skip to 15:40]

Vernon shows off many old antiques he has around the house- a gun from Switzerland, Swiss mugs, swiss cowbells. Juliana tries to find out if Vernon collects this old Swiss stuff for any particular sentimental reason, but Vernon doesn’t seem to think he has any deeper motive other than liking these old Swiss things.

22:38: Vernon shows off his deep sea diving helmet from his deep sea diving career of five years in Louisiana. They worked on deep sea oil rigs and pipelines. The company was S&H Subwater Salvage.