

Transcription: Grand Canyon Oral History

Interviewee: Guy Williams (GW)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Growing up in Flagstaff, early hikes, Zion, and 1959 river expedition in Glen Canyon

Date of Interview: February 1, 2018

Method of Interview: In-person at Guy's home

Transcriber: Amy Bayer

Date of Transcription: April 2-7, 2018

Transcription Reviewers: Sue Priest

KEYS: Frank Zanzucchi, Zion National Park, Dr. Emmett Guy Williams, Glen Canyon, Catherine Bartlett,

TM: Today is February 1, 2018. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History. We're at the home of Guy Williams. Regular spelling, G-U-Y W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S. And my name is Tom Martin here in Flagstaff, Arizona. Guy was on a Glen Canyon river trip in the late 1950s/early 1960s with Catherine Bartlett, B-A-R-T-L-E-T-T, and Gene Foster, G-E-N-E F-O-S-T-E-R. Guy, where were you born?

GW: I was born in Phoenix.

TM: What year?

GW: 1946.

TM: And what were your folks...were they living here in Flagstaff at the time?

GW: Yes, they were.

TM: What were they doing here?

GW: My dad was the music department for Flagstaff Public Schools. Primarily the high school band, high school choir, all girls drum and bugle corp. He basically had the music department under him.

TM: You mentioned the other day...we were talking about your earliest recollections of Flagstaff, and one of those was the Zanzucchi cream wagon.

GW: The milk wagon, yeah.

TM: The milk wagon. Can you tell me about that?

GW: Well, we lived on Humphrey's, Humphrey's and Sullivan, and Frank Zanzucchi had the dairy at that time. He had a horse-drawn milk wagon. I used to run up to the corner of Fort Valley and Humphrey's and catch the milk wagon in the morning when he was out delivering milk. I was probably about 3, maybe 4. I would ride down, basically it was like 2 blocks, cause it was just through the neighborhood that we lived in. That was the big thrill. I didn't do it every day, but I did it quite often.

TM: What are some of your other earlier memories of Flagstaff as a child?

GW: Well, probably the most impressional memory that I have was kindergarten. I had Mrs. Tinsley, as did a lot of people. T-I-N-S-L-E-Y. Mrs. Tinsley was a very definite, southern lady. She and my mother got along very well because my mother was from Alabama. So, they would get together and Mrs. Tinsley still had her very severe accent. Mrs. Tinsley actually taught us more of what would be, at that time, which would have been considered like first and second grade stuff. So she really got us advanced. Her husband was...he was a professor over at the University. So, it was a very educational family. The nice thing about Mrs. Tinsley was the fact that any time anybody would come back to Flagstaff to visit or anything like that, we always ended up in Mrs. Tinsley's backyard with lemonade and cookies. It didn't matter how old you were, it was always Mrs. Tinsley. She was just very, very highly thought of.

TM: Nice. So, I'm trying to think about Flagstaff in 1950, 1951, '52. Today Highway 180 runs up toward the Grand Canyon over to Valle. Back then was there a dirt road connecting over to Valle?

GW: Yes.

TM: Okay. So if you wanted to go to the Grand Canyon you could just head out of town right here out Fort Valley Road and go that way.

GW: Right.

TM: What else do you remember about...I know someone talked about the train the other day, coming through town. Do you remember the steam trains coming through?

GW: Oh yeah. Yeah. You know that was the nice thing, you could hear them, well, all over what was town at that time [laughter]. You could hear them when the whistle would blow. It was really kind of a nice sound. It just got...it was kind of a freedom was there. Also during those years, we also had the noon whistle from downtown. Every noon it whistled that it was 12 o'clock. I don't know why we had it or anything like that, but...

TM: Do you think that was the lumber mill?

GW: No, no. It was downtown.

TM: Really?

GW: It was on top of the old police station which was at Beaver and Birch. It was the southeast corner of Beaver and Birch. That was the police station. That was the city jail. It was all in that building. It kind of surprised me that when they did move it, when they moved it over on Sawmill, that just, I kind of, "Woah, wait a minute!" Because of the size of the building, of course, they had to do that. I also remember it was in 1964, because the college was growing and the 60s were upon us, the police department invited somebody from the, I'm not sure it was the DEA at that time, but it was a drug enforcement individual, to come in and talk to the city police. As he was leaving the building one day, he

looked into the garden right in front of the police station and there were several nice plants of marijuana growing right in front of the police station. Nobody knew what they were, but they were pretty plants [laughter]. Those of course were taken out right away. [laughter]

TM: Did you camp out much as a child? Did your parents travel much? Did they camp much?

GW: They didn't camp. I did a lot of camping. My dad, being a teacher, during the summer he worked as a seasonal ranger at Zion.

TM: Wow.

GW: I started out, we actually had a cabin in the Grotto Campground. It had been a small museum and they had changed it into a ranger's quarters. So, I started out camping right across the street from the house and then each summer that we were there I'd get farther and farther away. When I was, I guess I was 11 or 12, I started... At the far end of the Grotto Campground was a group campsite and there would always be troops of Boy Scouts coming through there, so I would go over there. When I was a Boy Scout, most of the merit badges that I earned were signed by council's other than my own council, because I would work with them on merit badges. So I'd get a merit badge counselor from Minnesota or a merit badge counselor from Washington State or wherever. So my merit badges were from all over the place.

I did that and then probably when I was I guess probably 14-15, I started probably 2 or 3 times a summer, I would go up to Lava Point, which was in Zion Monument, which is now Zion backcountry and I would work with the fire lookouts. We'd watch out for any fires in the backcountry back there. When I was 16 I actually spent a month there at Lava Point as the secondary lookout. Oftentimes the main lookout, the paid lookout, would have to run an errand or would have to check something and so I was in the observing area for 2-3 hours by myself watching for fire. I never saw any, that's a good thing. When I would get through at Lava Point... I would ride up with the crew. They would generally come down on Saturday or Sunday, pick up food and so forth to take back up. So I would ride up with them, but then when I was through, I would actually hike down to the Grotto which was right off of the Angel Landing trail. So, I would hike down from there. It was probably about a 15-mile, 10-15-mile hike. Of course, I'd have to carry my sleeping bag and so forth on my back. I really got to go around Zion quite a bit, know Zion pretty much like the back of my hand.

Much like here in Flagstaff. I would work with my granddad in his saddle shop. Then I would also, with friends around here, we'd do a lot of hiking and camping right here in the Flagstaff area. We did Humphrey's I don't know how many times. The ruins over on Mount Elden. We did that a bunch. We did a lot of hiking and a lot of camping. Of course, at that time there were no real restrictions on where you camped. Because once you got out of the city you were in national forest. So we just camped wherever.

TM: Can you tell me a little bit more about your time in Zion? Any recollections of interesting stories there?

GW: Well, I used to go to the naturalists' presentations every night. I don't know when it was, but it wasn't too long when it got to the point where I could've given the presentations as well as the naturalists because I knew what they were going to say. I also knew that I knew the territory as well as any of them and better than some of the newer ones because I had hiked all over there. One of the guys that I really had a lot of respect for was the chief naturalist. I don't remember his name, but he kind of took Phil Brueck, that's B-R-U-E-C-K, who was the son of the assistant superintendent at Zion. Phil and I were about the same age, but he took Phil and I kind of under his arm and would take us in places that weren't open to the public. To where we could actually get in and see some of the previous civilizations that actually had lived in Zion. So he really, I think he really started my real interest in archeology, well not so much archeology as much as anthropology, because I was more into how did they live, where did they come from, where did they go? I think that's really where I got my first real interest in anthropology and ended up with an anthropology minor in college [laughter].

TM: Nice. Did you hike The Narrows?

GW: Oh yeah. Actually Phil had a problem with one of his feet, so he didn't hike as much as I did. There were twins, Dan and Don Dennett. D-E-N-N-E-T-T. They were the sons of the...I think he was the supervisor of maintenance for the Park. Dan and Don and I actually hiked all the way through The Narrows up to the headwaters of the Virgin River. That took us about a week to make that hike. Of course, there was no place to camp in The Narrows because it was kind of wet [laughter]. But that was really kind of a neat trip. We got picked up by, I can't remember whether it was my folks or it was Wes Dennett that picked us up. But we did get picked up to come back. We didn't have to hike back down The Narrows or we didn't have to hike around, because it was a good, long trip. The thing that was really enjoyable about that trip was just the fact that we were doing something that very few people ever did. Most people would get to the point in The Narrows where it was at its narrowest point and they would turn around and go back. We'd done that I don't know how many times, so we decided to go ahead and go on through and just see how far it was. It got pretty tough. Probably the last two days, the hiking got a little tough because we had some pretty steep inclines that we had to go up.

TM: Had you seen signs that other people had done that? Were there cairns, little piles of stones? Were there trails?

GW: No. None. No. Nothing like that. As a matter of fact, a lot of times a lot of the rangers and the naturalists would tell us if we saw anything like that in the Park to take it down. Because basically the whole concept of 'take nothing but pictures; leave nothing but footprints' was something that was just really impressed upon us. Because of that, have carried that into my adult life. It just galls me when I see anything where, I don't care whether it's in a national park, I don't care if its in public lands, where a rock face has been defaced or names have been carved in a tree or something like that. That just, that bugs me. I consider myself a lover of nature and a conservationist and to me that is just not acceptable.

Getting back to the conservationist part of it, Flagstaff used to be full of true conservationists. We were mostly hunters. What really gets me is some of the organizations like the Sierra Club and some of those, who, "Oh, you've got to...you can't kill the deer. You can't kill the elk." The herds have to be thinned. Probably the most conservation-conscious people that I know are hunters. The whole thing is, we're not

going to go out there and kill off the herd because we want to go out next season. But the thing about it is, in parts of Arizona, especially in places like the White Mountains, the elk have gotten to the point to where they have just, they've overgrown. It's very sad to go out, even around here in Flagstaff you'll see it, too, but in most of the mountain area in Arizona, to go out and see elk and deer who have died obviously of starvation because the forest just will not handle the numbers that we have. We need to really look at it and Game and Fish needs to be increasing some of the tags so that we can actually do a better job of managing the herds rather than...

TM: So, I wanted to go back for a minute to as a child interested in anthropology, did you collect arrowheads and pottery and those types of things?

GW: Not really. Because, I mean, in Zion? No [laughter]. Around here mostly what we did we went camping basically just to get away. We weren't going to look for arrowheads or anything like that.

TM: The reason I'm asking is because I'm thinking you're going to do this river trip in Glen Canyon, which is sort of an archeological survey trip and there's going to be a lot of looking at ancestral Puebloan ruins.

GW: Yeah.

TM: So, I'm thinking, any other trips that you might have done before that Glen trip that sort of, just like Zion, fueled your interest in the Native American times here before European contact.

GW: Well, being raised in Flagstaff we've got the Navajos and the Hopis. With my granddad's saddle shop we did business, also, with the Supai, with some of the Apache tribes, not many, but we did business with a lot of the Indian tribes. So I was very familiar with those. Working for my granddad were Rueben and Louise Lomayesva and don't ask me how to spell that one. I believe it's L-O-M-I-A-S-F-A.

TM: Or T-W-A?

GW: It could be T-W-A. I'm not sure how to spell that one at all.

TM: They worked for your grandfather?

GW: They worked for my granddad and they had a son, Rueben Jr., who was a year or two older than I was. I guess I was probably 10 or 12, and I actually got to spend a week out at Second Mesa with Louise's folks. Rueben was cruel. The Kachinas were coming in. I believe it was the Corn Dance that they were coming in for and Rueben says, "Oh, you've gotta go out and see this, you gotta go out and see this." Well, ahead of the Kachinas were the Kachinas that were whipping the kids that weren't inside. [laughter] So I did get a couple of lashes from a Kachina.

TM: He set you up for that!

GW: Oh yeah! Louise's family lived very traditionally there on Second Mesa. So I was really...that probably started, more of anything, of my interest in anthropology because I actually got to live it.

Whereas before, I was just observing. At that time I did get to actually...ate the food, followed their customs and like I say, was there for at least one Kachina entrance into the village which was very impressive [laughter], especially getting whipped. My dad was very interested in, of course, the education of the Hopi Indian child. He actually wrote his master's thesis on the education of the Hopi Indian child.

TM: What's your father's name and your grandfather's name?

GW: My grandfather's name was Doc Williams, actually it was Emmett...Emmett Guy. My dad's name was James Randolph. So I've got my granddad's middle name and my dad's middle name.

TM: And your mother's name?

GW: My mother's name was Renee.

TM: So, I get the idea. Zion, hiking a lot, interested in Puebloan culture. Certainly spending time at Hopi helped that. How was it that this Glen Canyon trip...how did you hear about it, how did you end up getting on it?

GW: I'm not real sure, but I do know that my granddad used to make a lot of stuff for the river runners because they did use a lot of leather things. That was before nylon and everything was real popular. Some stuff was not even available in nylon. I think possibly there or possibly the Museum of Northern Arizona. My granddad was also a rock hound. He worked a lot with the geologists out at the museum. Of course, he and my dad had collected Kachinas. So he was very familiar with the curator of the Hopi collection. He had his fingers in a lot of pots. So, I'm not sure exactly how I came to meet Gene. Whether it was in the shop or whether it was at the museum, but she asked if I would like to go on the river trip. A friend of mine, Clifford, he and I, we did a lot of camping and hiking and so forth together around here.

TM: Do you remember Clifford's last name?

GW: I have no...no, I don't.

TM: Okay. And also, was that the first time you'd met Gene Foster?

GW: Yes, it was.

TM: Okay, any first impressions? Any thoughts?

GW: She was a very interesting woman. Before we actually went on the trip, she had us to her house and was showing us pictures and artifacts that she had collected. Her house was like a museum. It really was, it was just phenomenal. She actually kind of got us started on what we were to look for, what we were going to see, and so forth. We kind of thought that well now we've got this responsibility, we've got to look for this or look for that. But I don't think that was her full purpose. I think her intent was to

get us to just make sure that when we were on the trip we were looking. But we felt like, "Oh, we're really important here. We've gotta make sure we see this or we see that." With the trip we actually started at Lees Ferry.

TM: This was 1960-'59-ish?

GW: '59-'60.

TM: What do you remember about Lees Ferry at that time?

GW: It was a jumping off place for any river trip. It was almost commercial in the way it looked because all of the commercial river runners and so forth, that's where they started. They started the trips there and so it was very well developed for putting the boats in the water and putting the rafts in the water. I assume that it had gotten that way because of the popularity of the river trips. The river trips were actually starting to get very popular probably around the mid- to late-50s. People really started doing it especially when they started talking about Glen Canyon Dam and putting in the dam, because then there was the interest in Powell. What he had done in terms of going down the river and running the rapids and so forth. So I think that really spurred a lot of the interest. Prior to them starting to even talk about the dam, nobody ever heard Powell. Some guy that was around Arizona, don't know what he did. But then all of a sudden now they're talking about the dam and they're talking about, well, now what is this going to do to the river? How was it going to affect the river? It has had, as I see it, it's had both positive and negative effect. From a positive standpoint, it tends to be more controlled. From a negative standpoint, it has basically warmed up some of the areas in the river. Especially around Jackass Canyon where now it's kind of a hike to get down there, but there's a lot of freshwater shrimp and the trout get to be huge in that particular area. That's kind of a negative because it's not natural. Trout generally are not much more than, oh a huge trout, 18 inches. But people are pulling out 5, 6, 7, 8-pound trout out of there and they're running 24-36 inches. So that, it's kind of affecting the ecology to a certain extent. Like I say, it's positive and negative.

TM: So, in 1960, 1959/1960, the trip started at Lees Ferry. Where did you go from there? How did it work?

GW: Well, we went down the Colorado and the first place that I really remember impressing me was at the convergence of the Colorado and the San Juan.

TM: Okay, so hang on a second. I'm going to back up because I'm kind of confused. Lees Ferry is downstream of Glen Canyon Dam. Were you thinking of Hite and Hite Ferry or Hall's Crossing? Dandy Crossing? Back up there? Did I goof this up?

GW: No, no, no. No, Lees Ferry was the jumping off spot. Even before the dam.

TM: So, are you motoring up river?

GW: Yep.

TM: Okay, yeah, I goofed that. I thought you'd be floating down. So, in '59 the dam was under construction and they were going to turn off all river traffic and people were going to come in and out at Cane Creek and that must have been pretty close to when that was going to happen.

GW: Actually, the commercial trips at that time were coming out of Cane Creek.

TM: Okay.

GW: But this was a trip that was sanctioned by the Park Service. So, we were able to do a little bit different trip than what the commercial trips were doing.

TM: Thank you.

GW: The Park Service actually had and I'm not sure whether they partially funded or...

TM: Do you think it was Bureau of Reclamation?

GW: It could've been.

TM: Because I'm not sure that Glen Canyon National Recreation Area had even been established yet.

GW: No, it hadn't. It hadn't.

TM: If it was Reclamation, then they would've given you the green light past the dam, upriver and wherever you wanted to go.

GW: Well, the thing was... Something that kept popping up was... What was that, I can't remember it now. It was the 66. What was the Utah Parks, which was North Rim, Zion, Bryce, Cedar Breaks. Project 66? What was the name of that project? But it was all to be completed, a bunch of stuff to be completed by '66.

TM: Could've been Mission 66.

GW: Mission 66. That's right. Was that what it was?

TM: Yep.

GW: Mission 66? Okay. So, it could very well have been the Park Service under the auspices of Mission 66, because of the fact that they were looking at expanding and they did know that because of the dam and because of the lake that was going to be there that there were certain areas which had been pretty difficult to get to. Like Rainbow Bridge would now be readily accessible. So I think that was part of this whole project. I mean, that wasn't the focus of the mission, but I think that was one of the things that they were really looking at is how do we save this? If we make it so accessible, which it is now, well not

so much now because the lake's down a little bit. When the lake was up it was nothing to go to Rainbow Bridge. It was an easy hike. But before the lake, it took some effort to get to Rainbow Bridge. So, I think...that's why I think it was more the Park Service than the Bureau of Reclamation.

TM: What do you remember, then, about the dam as you're down on the river going upstream? Did it...?

GW: Well, we could see the catwalk going across. We could see the construction on either side. They really hadn't started down in the water yet.

TM: To build the diversion tunnels and make the coffer dam.

GW: Right. Yeah, they were basically at that time, I believe they were still working on the diversion tunnels. I wasn't paying too much attention to that really because I was looking forward to what we were going to see later on. And like I say, the dam wasn't really an impression, or the skeletal start of the dam wasn't really an impression because I was really looking forward to getting to some of the ruins and some of the hieroglyphics and so forth farther down the trip.

TM: How many boats? What kind of boats? How many people?

GW: We had...there were 5, 5 boats. There were probably 15 maybe 20 people.

TM: Wow.

GW: Actually, 1 boat was nothing but gear. All it had was a pilot in it and that was it. But the other 4 boats, I think we had like 3 or 4 people in each of the boats.

TM: Were they rubber? Were they metal? How big were the motors? Do you remember any of that?

GW: I don't remember how big the motors were, but the boat with the gear in it was metal. They were almost like pontoons that we were riding in. Primarily, I think, because of the fact that there were some of the rapids we had to carry the things over.

TM: Did you? Okay. Because they weren't powerful enough to motor up them?

GW: No. It wasn't so much that as much as the fact that this wasn't a whitewater trip. It was more of an educational trip and consequently we weren't trying to run Class 5 and Class 6 rapids. Instead of even going through those or even attempting those, we just carried the boats around them. I think that was more for safety than anything else because we didn't have the whitewater crews with us.

TM: A lot of boats in Glen Canyon at the time were the little ten man rubber boats with a little transom in the back. So, it was sort of...had little rubber thwarts connecting the sides. You'd pile your stuff in there. You could just throw that stuff out and four people/five people would pick that thing up and just carry it.

GW: Yeah, they weren't the big boats. Yeah, they were by no means the boats that you see now that are going on the rafting trips where they're running rapids and so forth where the things are huge. No, these were small enough that 2 or 3 people could carry them.

TM: Got it. Do you remember the month that you were there?

GW: It was probably May or June. Late May or early June.

TM: That's kind of right at the peak run-off time.

GW: Yup.

TM: Did you see driftwood going by?

GW: Oh yeah. Yeah, and it was very definite the statement of 'the Colorado River is too thick to drink and too thin to plow.' I mean, it was dirty.

TM: Do you remember who else was on that trip?

GW: No, I really don't remember names. Most of the time it was just Clifford, Gene and I. We kind of stayed together. There were some students on the trip and I don't know how they were selected or what, but they were kind of in their own group. Gene was really good with Clifford and I because when we'd see something, we'd say, "Oh, what's that?" She'd take the time to explain what it was and what it meant. Especially when we got to the San Juan and went up the San Juan where we're seeing actual evidence of habitation. We're seeing petroglyphs, we're seeing hydroglyphics, all of these things. Now, I probably couldn't tell you the difference between a petroglyph and a hydroglyphic, but at that time Gene would explain to us, "Oh, well this is...because..." Also the civilizations, there were I guess 2 or 3 different civilizations that actually inhabited at one time or another the canyon. So she would tell us, "This was such and such and they were here from such and such to such and such. And these were here from such and such to such and such." Just to look at the ruins of the dwellings, unless you had knowledge that she had, you wouldn't see any real difference. There wasn't a whole lot of difference, but when she would point out, "Okay, because of this, you can tell this." "Oh, okay," so you could really see it. The most impressive part of that trip was the San Juan. Being able to see the evidence of life in the canyon and being able to actually be where people had not really been in a long, long time. I find it unfortunate now that people are actually starting to hike into the San Juan because there's always that danger of somebody wanting to put their name on the wall or something like that. Those are hieroglyphics I would rather not see [laughter].

TM: As you guys were going upstream, were there river trips coming downstream? I guess that would've been above Cane Creek that you would've run into those trips coming down if you saw them. Did you guys hike up to Rainbow Bridge?

GW: Not that particular time, but I have hiked up to Rainbow Bridge several times.

TM: From the river or coming in from...?

GW: From the river.

TM: So that means there's more river trips than one.

GW: Oh yeah, yeah.

TM: Great. I want to hear about those, too.

GW: Well, those were just fishing trips really.

TM: Did you start those at Lees then and go up or did you come down from up above?

GW: No, no, those we came up from above.

TM: Did you come down the San Juan arm or did you come the main arm?

GW: No, come down the main arm.

TM: Out to Hite and come in there. Was that the same time period, '59-'60?

GW: No, it was later.

TM: Later.

GW: It was later and actually, it was even after the dam, too. I did get to go up to Rainbow Bridge twice before the lake. And then I've been up to Rainbow Bridge just one time since the lake.

TM: There was a register at the bottom of the bridge. A big book. Did you sign that?

GW: No.

TM: Okay. I was just wondering. It's all been digitized so I could look. If you had been there in '59, we could pull up '59 and look to see in there, but yeah...

GW: No, no that wasn't important. We were kids! It was just the fact that we actually went up to go fishing. Both times, before the dam, we actually just went up to go fishing and then decided to hike up to Rainbow Bridge. So, it wasn't something that... We went up there primarily because we knew it was there and we wanted to see it the first time. The second time that I went there, there was somebody else that was with us in the group that hadn't been there so we went up to show them. Yeah, it was really kind of sad that they made Rainbow Bridge so accessible because of the lake. A lot of stuff that is accessible now that wasn't readily accessible before.

TM: So, let's go back to the trip. I find it brilliant. It's excellent thinking, if you're based out of Flagstaff, you drive to Lees Ferry and you go up the river. Instead of having to run a shuttle, you end up where you started and you load up the boats and you go home. So that's a brilliant bit of thinking. And, with motor boats there, the access across the river, upstream, downstream would have been far greater than with a muscle-powered oar boat.

GW: Yeah.

TM: By 1959-'60, I would assume that this was Gene's, I don't know, 15-20th trip down there, some rather large number, but she had figured out where she needed to go that she hadn't looked at enough or that was richer than some of the other areas, archeologically speaking, that she wanted to go to. So where did you go and what did you see?

GW: Well, like I say, the most impressive part, the thing I remember the most, is San Juan.

TM: Did you go to a place called Zahn's Camp?

GW: Yeah. All the way, all the way up as far as we could actually get the boats to go.

TM: How far was that, do you remember? Did you get to Paiute Farms?

GW: Yeah, just about Paiute Farms was about it.

TM: Wow, that's quite a ways. Neat.

GW: Yeah, oh yeah. That's why that part of the trip was so impressive. The rest of the trip there was a little here, a little there, but nothing that I really remember that sticks out in my mind. But all the way up to Paiute Farms, it's just one thing after another. It's just, oh, there's this and then there's this and then there's this. The rock formations, just the grandeur of that canyon is just...it's unbelievable. I actually, I think, going up the San Juan, that canyon is more impressive than the Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

TM: Wow.

GW: You know, it's a little tighter, but the difference in the rock formations, the strata. You can actually see the carving of this beautiful structure much better in San Juan Canyon/San Juan than you can in the Grand Canyon. Okay, it's nice to go down to Phantom Ranch and across the river and see what's over there, but nothing like the San Juan. I've done a couple of trans-canyons north to south. I've never been brave enough to go south to north. Why go up higher when you can just go up? [laughter]

TM: Smart people, yeah, the smart people go down.

GW: Nothing to the point of what that trip was up the San Juan.

TM: What were some of the neatest things that you found or that you saw on that trip?

GW: I think probably the neatest things were some of the petroglyphs. Gene would tell us what they said, the various hunts. I don't know how she knew, but she'd say, "Okay, well this hunt came first and this hunt came after that. And this was another season." She could distinguish between a spring hunt, a fall hunt.

TM: Were they big panels or were they small or all types?

GW: Most of them were pretty small. Most of them were pretty small. The hieroglyphs that were in the larger panels, they were much more modern than some of the petroglyphs. I kind of zeroed in on the petroglyphs more than I did the hieroglyphics.

TM: Nice. Camping out, I'm assuming driftwood fires. The water was up so you guys might have been up in the tamarisks there.

GW: Mm hmm.

TM: Did you hike up out on the slickrock top land?

GW: Quite a bit. Several times we went up probably an elevation gain of 5-, 6-, 700 feet.

TM: So right up on the top then?

GW: Yeah.

TM: Yeah, nice.

GW: That, too, as you're going up to get so close to where you're seeing the carving and the striations, and how that little river created this huge area. Just phenomenal to realize just what that took.

TM: Did you spend a lot of time on the right side of the San Juan? There's a triangular wedge of land that gets ever smaller that's between the main stem of the Colorado and the San Juan around the great bend there down to Zahn's Camp. That was hard to access and I'm curious to know if there was lots of habitation on both sides of the river or was it more on the south side than the north side?

GW: More on the south side. That was almost a delta so you couldn't depend on it from, according to Gene, you couldn't depend on it from time to time that you went down as to whether you could have a good camp on it or if the camp had to be really small. She was saying that that particular area was one that... When we were there, like I say, the water was up and so it was tight. It really was small.

TM: How did you work out your drinking water?

GW: We did a lot of drinking right out of the river. We'd take it out and let it settle and then we'd boil it.

TM: You did? Okay.

GW: Yeah, this was before we had the water purification systems that backpackers have now.

TM: There were a number of springs that would have had just regular drinking water.

GW: Oh yeah, we had those, too, but a lot of the times we just had to drink river water. And, like I say, because we didn't have the water purification systems that are available now, we did boil.

TM: And that was common practice for many decades to do that. Course it was tough because it was hot in the summer time and your water's there ready to drink except it's boiling and you need it to cool down.

GW: We'd take the military canteens, we'd actually tie those, fill those up with water after it was boiled and we'd actually throw those into the river to cool them off.

TM: Great, great. Did you go swimming in the river?

GW: Oh, yeah.

TM: Were you a good swimmer? Did you have a life jacket? Or...

GW: No, no, no.

TM: ...just jump in?

GW: Life jacket? Come on!

TM: [Laughter]

GW: Look when we're talking. We're talking '59-'60 [laughter].

TM: They were around, nobody wore them.

GW: Well, they weren't required.

TM: Well, there's that. That's true.

GW: We did have life jackets on the boats as I recall. But I don't think we ever wore them.

TM: What else do you remember about that trip?

GW: The food. Food was great. We fished so we did have a lot of fish. We, unfortunately...

TM: Guy, hang on right there. What kind of fish were you fishing for? It wasn't trout.

GW: No.

TM: What were you getting?

GW: I don't know.

TM: Chub, Humpback Chub?

GW: Probably.

TM: Suckers? I mean, the Colorado Squaw Fish? I'm just curious to know, cause there would have been some big fish in there.

GW: We did get quite a few suckers. But then we had fish I'd never seen before.

TM: Carp and catfish would've been in there as well.

GW: We didn't catch any catfish. We caught some carp. But then, besides the suckers and the carp, there were a couple other species of fish that I had no idea what they were. They were, oh, probably 16-18 inches and they weren't as bony as the carp. They tasted kind of...well, all of them tasted kind of muddy. We had a lot of fish. We had, of course, jerky. I think one night we had a... Clifford and I were cooking that night so we took probably 2 pounds/3 pounds of jerky, rehydrated it and we made a soup. We actually used greens that we collected from around there.

TM: Mustard greens, kind of thing?

GW: Some mustard greens, some clover, watercress.

TM: Wow, all right.

GW: All I have to say is, "Thank God for my time in Zion with the naturalists" because I knew which plants that we should eat and which ones we shouldn't.

TM: Nice.

GW: So we made this soup out of jerky and we had a dandelion salad. What else? I can't remember. When we cooked, we generally did the same thing and we cooked about every, oh, probably every 4 or 5 nights.

TM: So, this was in teams and different teams would cook?

GW: Yeah.

TM: Okay. I'm assuming lots of canned goods?

GW: Yeah. Most of the vegetables that we had were canned goods. We did have some canned meats. We had, of course, spam. That was kind of a staple. The unfortunate thing was we didn't have the freeze-dried foods that we have now that are so good. The first night we did the jerky soup, people were just...they couldn't believe it. That we'd taken this jerky and actually made soup with it and the jerky was actually easy to chew. You didn't have to tear it apart, it actually was chewable.

TM: And with the greens it would have made good eating.

GW: Mm hmm.

TM: How many days was the trip out total?

GW: It was about 3 weeks. We were out quite a while.

TM: Did you go back to resupply or were you self-contained, you had all your food for 3 weeks?

GW: Somebody went back to get more food. I do know that. That was the pilot that was running the supply boat.

TM: So, that wouldn't have been a fella named Frank Wright?

GW: I have no idea. He never was really around us much.

TM: Okay.

GW: He pretty much kept to himself.

TM: Wore a cowboy hat?

GW: Yep.

TM: Older gentleman, in his maybe 50s or so?

GW: Keep in mind, now, I was just a teenager so older was...

TM: Everybody was older!

GW: Everybody was older!

TM: Maybe Gene's age-ish, around there?

GW: No, he wasn't quite as old as Gene.

TM: Okay. Well, it could've been a number of people.

GW: I really don't know. He was... It was kind of funny because most of us were wearing like hiking boots and so forth. He was wearing cowboy boots. Why he was doing that? I don't know. That's what he wanted to wear. Of course, he never went... When we'd go up on the ledges and so forth he wouldn't go. He'd just stick by camp.

TM: So, you've seen Glen Canyon before Lake Powell and after Lake Powell. You've already mentioned there are pros and cons of the whole system. Are you glad the dam is there?

GW: I can't say that I am. I think the reason I say that is probably because the accessibility at some of the sites that should not be so easily accessed. Like Rainbow Bridge. I just think that unfortunately in our society today there are people who don't appreciate the grandeur that God gave us. They think, "Oh, well, this is my country. This is mine." Rather than realizing that it is everybody's. That's the one thing that I do object to the dam being there.

TM: Was it scenery, scenic? You know most people I ask that question they're like, "Oh my gosh, it was incredibly scenic. It was paradise." That sort of stuff. And the reservoir is a completely different type of experience/journey. You're not sort of saying that. You're saying no, the reservoir has brought a level of accessibility that the rivers didn't.

GW: Right. The whole thing is, the majesty is gone. Being so accessible, it's not a big deal to get to some of those places. Where if it was tougher to get to, it would be something that, I think, the people who did make it there would appreciate considerably more. I think that from my growing up basically in the Park Service, I have that feeling of "leave it alone, don't mess with it." There's nothing that man can produce that comes anywhere near what God has given us. When you look at the Great White Throne in Zion, when you look at Thumb Mountain in Prescott, you look at El Capitan in Yosemite, you look at the Minarets, you look at the Tetons, you look at Devil's Post Pile, all of these beautiful things. Man could never create anything like that. Those are things that... God has given us this gift and my feeling is let's preserve it, let's leave it so that future generations can enjoy it as much as we have. Since I've retired, the one thing that I intend to do is I'm going to revisit all of these National Parks that I visited as a kid/as a teenager, because I know that looking through adult eyes I'm going to see these things considerably differently. One of the reasons I've got my pop-up out there is I intend to do that. Next summer, I've got a friend in Calgary, I intend to go up to the Stampede. He's very active in the Rotary which does a lot of work with the Stampede, so I'm going to up to the Stampede. But on my way up, I'm going to be stopping in Yellowstone, in Glacier, I'm going to go over to Banff in Canada, and actually now see these things and see just how much more appreciation I have.

TM: It's interesting, thinking about your life here in Flagstaff, when you were here in 1946 the population of the town would've been about 2000...

GW: About 2000.

TM: ...folks and that's the description of the population of the west: going from 2000 to 70,000-80,000 that we are today. Huge growth of population and that's put a lot of stress on the Parks and the landscape. So, I'll be interested to know your thoughts when you...

GW: Yeah. Let's see, when was it? Dale was 12 so that's 30 years ago...yeah, he was 12. It was 30 years ago I took him over to Philmont. At that time I was living in Southern California. On the way back we went through Zion and it was a little depressing. There were things that were now closed to the public that had been open. The museum was okay, but it really didn't look at the Park, the old Park. The lodge in the Canyon was so much more commercial than it had been. The Grotto had been changed from a campground to a picnic ground. The Temple of Sinawava was unchanged except for the fact that there were so many cars. I could remember when you'd go up there and there was no problem finding a parking place. We got up there and we actually couldn't find a parking place so we couldn't stop.

TM: And, of course, Zion has since implemented the shuttle bus system.

GW: The shuttle bus, which I think is a good idea, as the Grand Canyon has done as well. I think that's a good idea. But for me, I would like to be able to get up there and take my time and not have to rely on some shuttle bus. I'd like to be able to take my truck up there and be able to park and actually go up into The Narrows, because that's a day hike. The Narrows is a simple day hike, it's not that tough. But with the shuttle bus, "Oh, what time is it going to be here?" Everything's on a clock. I just think that's a very poor way to have a National Park. The problem is you've got so many people that are looking at it. I'm kind of wondering, because of some of the changes, the fires and the introduction of the wolves, and so forth into Yellowstone, that's going to be very interesting. Because I have not seen Yellowstone since I was, probably 13-14 years old. That's almost 60 years, so I know that that's going to be a huge change. I'm not so interested in going into California parks like Sequoia or King's Canyon or Yosemite, because when my youngest boy was a Boy Scout we did a lot of camping and backpacking in the Sierras, so I have seen that as an adult. I'm more interested in seeing the things I didn't see as an adult. Mesa Verde, for instance. When I went down to Tuzigoot... I'd seen that as a kid, "Okay, yeah, big deal." That's what really got me going on this "I've got to see these National Parks," was going down there and seeing now that I appreciated it, what it really was. I was like, "Woah, hey, I gotta get back to the backcountry in Zion." Yeah, I've been to the Canyon, but I want to get back to the backcountry and see how that is. Hopefully it hasn't, and from what I understand, it hasn't really developed.

TM: That's right. It hasn't.

GW: And so, I'm really looking forward to getting over to Lava Point, to spending a week in Zion and especially in the backcountry. And then getting over to Mesa Verde and seeing that. Arches, when I first saw Arches, it was a National Monument. So now, to be able to see it as an adult I think I'll be able to appreciate it a lot more.

TM: It's interesting, the reason I was asking you about Glen Canyon...it seems the people who saw Glen Canyon before the completion of the dam and the impoundment behind the dam, you've seen it both ways. Very few people have seen what you've seen, have seen that both ways. So, I don't want to miss a

chance of asking you about that. And it seems like the majority of the people I talk with, they're in your camp. They're saying the same thing. And of course, population pressures on the land like in Zion, which has done a good job with their preservation efforts and crowd control, which is what it's coming down to.

GW: I think that's kind of like... Yosemite Valley has gotten so crowded, so commercial, the only reason I would go to Yosemite Valley would be because it's on the way to Tuolumne Meadows. At least up top it's not nearly as commercial. I would probably rather go up 395 to get to Yosemite than go up on the other side [laughter]. Like I say, I've seen Yosemite as an adult. I've gone out to Cloud's Rest from Tuolumne. My youngest boy and I actually did that in a 1-day hike. That's a long 1-day hike because it's somewhere between 15-18 miles round trip. Once you get out there, it's absolutely phenomenal, but it's a grueling trip.

TM: This kind of goes back to what you were talking about at Rainbow Bridge, is if you've got to go six miles up from the river or you've got to come overland from the Wilson Ranch or Rainbow Bridge side, I'm sorry, Navajo Mountain side, there's an investment in foot-power to get there.

GW: I think that the people who are willing to make that investment are also the people who appreciate it. Going up from the lake, eh, it's a short little hike. Not even a tough hike.

TM: Yeah, it's right there.

GW: That's the way so much of it is. We used to hike up Rio de Flag. Now there's the bike path and just boom, boom, boom, no problem. I enjoy the bike path. I ride my bike up there but I'm not doing it because of being able to see something, I'm doing it for exercise. I remember we used to hike up, especially during some of the special weeks up at the museum, we used to hike up Rio de Flag up to the museum. It wasn't an easy-going hike. It was a relatively tough hike. We'd go up and we'd have the piki bread that the Hopis were making and look at some of the basket makers and the pottery makers that were working up there during the Hopi Festival. Watching the basket-making and so forth. I've got Kachinas, I've got baskets, I've got pots. I've had those around me all my life. So it was kind of fun to watch how they were made. And during the Navajo time, watching how the weavers were making the rugs and the saddle blankets, and so forth. Basically, there were, well, let's see, Paul Thurd, Clifford, Ronnie Phinnel, we'd make those journeys up there. Then, of course, when they had the Pow-Wow here over at City Park we'd go over to... Of course, the carnival was a big draw for kids, but it was a lot of fun to go into the encampments there on Mars Hill where there were various different tribes that had their artisans actually working on jewelry or working on baskets. Not so much pottery because they had no kilns to do any firing. Stuff that didn't require extra equipment to do that. It was really kind of fun to watch the Indians when they'd come in to town, here they're in a covered wagon with tires on [laughter]. We'd get up on top of the building the saddle shop was in and watch the parade. The parade used to come down Santa Fe, cross over San Francisco and then back up Aspen back up to City Park. So we'd get up there and we'd watch it. All of the dancers would perform there at Santa Fe and San Francisco. At each of the corners they would do their thing. So, we're sitting up there watching the things when it wasn't raining. Of course, at that time if it was Pow-Wow time, it was rain. If it was

county fair time, it was rain. We didn't know what it was like to have a dry Fourth of July or a dry Labor Day [laughter] because that's when we had the rain!

TM: So, Guy we've been at this wonderful journey here for about an hour and a half. Good time to wrap this up. Anything else you remember about that river trip in Glen Canyon that you didn't get a chance to talk about that you want to?

GW: Not really. Like I say, the most impressive part of that trip was San Juan. Having someone with Gene's background and knowledge and communication skills. She was able to, without talking down to us, she was able to really help us see and appreciate what was going on. I wish there was some way that my kids could've done something like that. But, it's basically been out of reach primarily because of the fact to plan a river trip now, you have to reserve that years in advance in order to do it. It's like riding the mules down the... You can't just go out and say, "We're here, I want to go," and go, like it used to be. Now it's... Even to get a backcountry hiking pass it's tough, depending on where you want to go. I wish that wasn't the case but I can understand, because of the fact that you've got to limit the number of people that are in there.

It's like with Flagstaff. We do not have the infrastructure for the population that we've got. It is sickening to see when it takes, in the morning between 7 and 8, 45 minutes to get from here to Home Depot. That's 2 miles, it's like LA freeways.

To see the disregard that the college has for the town. Flagstaff used to be a conservative city and now it rivals Berkeley. I see that as a real shame because it doesn't take into consideration true conservation, it doesn't take into consideration the need to limit the population, it doesn't take into consideration what is good for Flagstaff. It's too much of the me, me, me. We've got to be able to allow growth for the individual, not for the city. When the school is going from... Let's see, when my dad graduated from the college, I think it was like 800 students [laughter] and it was a great school because it specialized. They specialized in education, performing arts, forestry. Then they decided that they wanted to be big time and be a university. Well, they almost destroyed the education department. They did destroy the forestry department. The only thing that really has survived is performing arts. I think a lot of that has to do with the fact that Eldon Ardrey, pure and simple, made it tough to go in and do anything about performing arts. That's the one saving grace that I see. The community orchestra that has grown out of the university, phenomenal orchestra. I kind of wish, like we had in the 90s, where during Christmas they'd do the Nutcracker. They'd bring over a ballet from somewhere, generally from Las Vegas, but who did the music? It was the community orchestra. Doing the Messiah we had the chorale and the community orchestra. I mean, beautiful, cultural events. That's the one saving grace of that part of the college. The rest of it they can throw it away!

I call NAU: Not A University. I don't have a whole lot of love for those people over there. When I moved back in '88 from southern California, I decided to look into getting an MBA. I went over to talk to them because my problem is math is not my friend. I knew that from talking to MBAs that a big part of the MBA program was the math. So I went over and I talked to the people in the business school. I said, "What kind of preparation do I have to make to get up to speed on the math?" "Oh, don't worry about the math. No big deal about the math. The big thing you've gotta worry about is business law." I said,

“You got my transcripts there, right?” “Yeah.” “Do you understand what a JD is?” “Well, yeah, but you need business law.” I said, “You know, in law school we call business law ‘malpractice.’” I just got up and walked out. There was not a way in the world I was going to go to that school for an MBA. I finally did get my MBA, but I got it through my law school. Yeah, got an MBA in Firm Practice. The only thing I’ve got’s an MBA. I’ve never used the darn thing. Of course, I haven’t used my JD either or my LLM.

TM: What was your career? What did you do?

GW: Pension attorney. I never really used the degrees because I did more of the design and implementation. I didn’t do much else other than... I did... For a while, for my mentor, I wrote legal opinions. He’s the senior ERISA [Employee Retirement Income Security Act] partner with Jones Day. He had asked me to write legal opinions. He’s now finally retired. But that’s basically as close to the practice of law as I’ve ever been.

TM: Well, Guy Williams, thank you so very, very much for wonderful recollections of Glen Canyon and the San Juan arm up there.

GW: I enjoyed that walk down memory lane. Probably if we hadn’t started talking about it yesterday and I hadn’t seen the book here, I probably wouldn’t have remembered as much as I finally did. Some of the memory joggers and also some of your questions helped me remember other things, as well.

TM: Well, good. Today is the first of February, 2018. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History interview. My name is Tom Martin. And Guy thank you very much.

GW: Thank you, Tom.