

**Transcription:** Grand Canyon Historical Society Oral History

**Interviewee:** Shane Murphy (SM)

**Interviewer:** Tom Martin (TM)

**Subject:** Shane recounts driving the big Canyoners motorboats through Grand Canyon

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TM: Today is February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This is an interview with Shane Murphy. My name is Tom Martin. We are at my house in Flagstaff, Arizona. Shane, can you spell your last name for me, please?

SM: Murphy.

TM: Thank you. And Shane is spelled?

SM: Shane.

TM: Great.

SM: And Robert is spelled Robert.

TM: And your full name is?

SM: Robert Shane Murphy. But I go by Shane.

TM: Cool. Thank you. What year were you born?

SM: I was born in 1947, on February 5<sup>th</sup>.

TM: Where?

SM: West Chester, Pennsylvania, Chester County Hospital.

TM: What were your parents doing there?

SM: Well, my mother was from Kennett Square. She grew up in on a farm in Kennett Square. My father was a falconer and he met her because she had a barn that had pigeons in it and he needed the pigeons for his birds. He was an editor for the *Saturday Evening Post* and they met in Kennett Square.

TM: That's in West Chester?

SM: No. Kennett Square is a few miles west of West Chester. It's another separate town.

TM: Cool, cool. When you were growing up there did you have brothers and sisters?

SM: I have a sister who's seven years younger. I was sort of an only child. We lived in a house that was built in 1780, had a walk-in fireplace and it had an honest to God real brick Dutch oven in it and stuff. We were out in the country. Dad had to take the train into Philadelphia every day to go to work at the *Post*. That's just to say we were out in the country. I was a lot older than she was. I mean, by the time she came along I was me.

TM: Right, right. Did you spend a lot of time out of doors growing up?

SM: Yes, I did. Thank you for asking, Tom. [both laugh]

TM: Well, it sounds pretty rural. When I think of West Chester I think of a town, but it sounds like you were out of town.

SM: Yeah. I was in what's called the Isaac Sharpless house. You can go to West Chester and you can find, outside of town on Birmingham Road, the Isaac Sharpless house. It has a plaque in front of it and it'll tell you all about the house. Dad rented that house from...what was the...it'll come to me later.

TM: Okay, but it wasn't like you guys were a farm family which required you to be out...

SM: It was a dairy farm but we were not farmers. Dad worked at the *Post*. Mom was a housewife, mother, led the Cub Scouts, stuff like that. But, yeah, we spent a lot of time outside.

TM: Did you go through high school there?

SM: Yeah, but there are some odds and ends and left turns here because the *Saturday Evening Post* went out of business in 1961 because *Life Magazine* came up and got to be a big deal and put the *Post* out of business. So we moved out of that house into what you would call a modern house kind of thing. So I went to high school in West Chester, Henderson Senior High.

TM: And what did you excel in in high school?

SM: Nothin'. (laughs) Not a thing.

TM: After high school did you think you'd head to college? What happened then?

SM: I had a little painting company. I painted houses and stuff like that. I mean, it was just a real half-assed operation (laughs). But, so anyway, Mom and Dad moved to Flagstaff. Dad did not have to work at the *Post* anymore. Dad was a widely published author, author of many natural history books, and he didn't have to go to work anymore so he moved. They just, "Hey, we're moving to Flagstaff." Just cause it's in the West. They rented a house from Clay Lockett right up the road here.

TM: Is that right?

SM: Yep. My house painting company really, I mean, let's face it, it was a joke. So mama Murphy called me up one day and she said, "Now, if you want to come out here I'll start you in college."

TM: So was this in 1961?

SM: No, this was in 19... I graduated college a year late, in '66, and I came here in '67.

TM: Would that have been the first time you'd come west?

SM: No. Dad had a peregrine falcon named Mother God Damn because she made such a racket. My mother named her, Mother "That God-damned bird," (laughs). What happened was he put her up one day and [sound effect], like they do, she just went west. The man who actually introduced my mother and father then lived in Colorado Springs, brought her into the lure, she was banded, calls up Dad and said, "Hey, I got Mother God Damn right here." So we got on a plane, Dad and I, we got on a plane and went and said hello to Mother God Damn. We didn't bring her home but we checked in, saw it. His name was Bob Stabler.

TM: Did you let the bird go then?

SM: No, he kept the bird.

TM: Oh, he did. Okay.

SM: Yeah, yeah.

TM: Okay. And you flew back. So that was your first time west then?

SM: Yeah, that would have been.

TM: Okay, okay. Very cool. So your mother calls and says, "Hey, we're getting settled here in Flagstaff, you come out and we'll put you to school here."

SM: "We'll start you."

TM: But then had you already graduated from college?

SM: No, no, I graduated from high school.

TM: Okay. All right. So you were doing the house painting deal, you said, okay, well, I'll try Flagstaff then?

SM: It was definitely better than what I had going back there. I mean, I was out of high school. I was a no account. I wasn't good for much. I was drinking a lot of beer and smoking a lot of pot and, I mean, it's like, okay, I'll just... (laughs) So this was a better idea. I thought this is probably an okay thing to go to college, see what's going on there. So I came out here on a plane.

TM: And what did you study?

SM: I started in business and then I ended up with what they called an extended major in psychology. Then I was walking by the board one day over at the Education building and there was a scholarship for

a Master's degree in childhood and elementary education. Shouldn't I apply? Sure, I'll apply and I got it. The only reason I got it was cause nobody else applied for it, I think. I'm pretty convinced of that.

TM: So now you're on a Master's track then.

SM: I finished my Master's work and I went to Glendale, Arizona. Listen very carefully here, Tom, I worked for almost a year as a teacher. (both laugh)

TM: You made it a whole year?

SM: No, I didn't. (laughs) They were intermediate, emotionally handicapped kids...

TM: That's hard.

SM: ...and it was a self-contained classroom. I was not suited for the job. I washed out of there. I met a girl, moved to Lake Tahoe with her, to see an old friend of mine who I used to know in Flagstaff. A girl by the name of Jan. Sonny, my girl, we went to Lake Tahoe and I started a rafting company up there.

TM: Okay. So in the six years that you were here in Flagstaff working on your undergrad and then on your Master's, did you explore Grand Canyon? Did you do a river trip? I'm just trying to, while you were here or were you pretty much, "Well, this is nice" and then Flagstaff...

SM: No. I spent a lot of time outside. That's where I met Scotty Baxter. That's when he had his store downtown with Lee Dexter. I had a buddy, had a couple buddies, Dale Honeycutt and Gary Conners, and we went and we did a lot of climbing. I knew other people from the neighborhood. One of them was a guy by the name of John Blake. John Blake worked for a company called Canyoneers. It got me real excited about... You always hear about Grand Canyon. No matter where you are, somebody will bring it up, tell you something that's just not believable about it. So, I started thinking about trying to get on the river and in the meantime... I was living with a guy by the name of Kenny New. Kenny New was driving shuttles for ARTA. ARTA at the time... By now we're in 1972. 1972 there was no... When you packed it in you didn't have to pack it out. When you needed to go to the bathroom this trip leader gave you a shovel and a roll of toilet paper kind of thing. There were fire rings and beer cans and all this shit all over the beaches down there. Every company who worked down there had to clean up a certain amount of designated river every fall. Because I drove one shuttle with Kenny New I was qualified to go down the river. (laughs) Nobody actually invited me to do that so what I did was I borrowed one of those big Bill Beer type of waterproof bags, which I still have at home. ARTA's warehouse was out [Highway] 180 here someplace on a farm. I'm not exactly sure where it was.

TM: So ARTA stands for?

SM: American River Touring Association. Now it's called AZRA.

TM: Thank you.

SM: Cause when Lou Elliott died they, it all got pieced out.

TM: Okay. I don't know that story.

SM: Lou Elliott was Rob Elliott's father. They worked in Idaho and all over hell and gone as ARTA.

TM: Okay. So let's hold that thought for a minute. I want to step back just a minute cause you mentioned climbing. Did you do any climbing back in Pennsylvania?

SM: No.

TM: So that's something you picked up here?

SM: Yep.

TM: Where did you learn that?

SM: Well, I learned it up here on the Peaks. I learned it just talking with Scotty Baxter. Scott Baxter and Dexter gave a few workshops. They might even have had a class or two. I remember some formal kind of here's how you belay, and here's how you don't belay, and on belay. There are all these signals and stuff you go through. Gary Conner and Dale Honeycutt and I... Dale Honeycutt, a guy I've known since I was this tall, and I still know him very well. He was in Flagstaff at the time and the three of us used to go up on the Peaks, go climb up there. Gary and I got around a little bit. We did some other climbs around Northern Arizona but I wasn't much on... Once I got on a sheer face about a hundred/two hundred feet up there, I didn't like it much. Then I discovered I could take all that stuff on a boat, so why bother. (laughs)

TM: How do you spell Dale Honeycutt's last name?

SM: H-O-N-E-Y-C-U-T-T.

TM: Thank you. So now let's kind of roll forward. So your roommate was driving shuttle for a river company...

SM: For ARTA.

TM: ...and that got you...

SM: So that put me on the river for that one cleanup trip in the fall of, I believe it was 1972. I was trying to break into the photography business at the time and so, of course, I have my camera and all that stuff with me. Let's see. I don't know what to tell you except to say Wesley Smith was my trip leader. Wesley Smith and I got to be very good friends. I did a photography show and Wesley was doing all of those beautiful sand paintings that he did at the time. So I invited him to share my photography show with me. It was at whatever that little A-frame bank is down there on the corner, right down on the University, on the campus down there. It was upstairs in there. Wesley Smith sold all his sand paintings and I probably sold a photograph or two. I mean, I don't really remember. Wesley and I hung out and we a little bit of this, a little bit of that.

TM: And all this was happening while you were working on your undergrad and your Master's?

SM: Yes. That's right. Then after I went down the river with Wesley, about '73 and '74, or '74/'75, I did do a couple trips for Gaylord. I was just a swamper. I met Dimock. Dimock was driving a motorboat on

one of those trips and John Blake was driving the other boat on the other trip I went on. I talked to Brad about that years ago and he doesn't have my signature on a piece of paper anywhere. He always keeps his manifest, he's done it for years and years. Somehow, I don't know why, he doesn't have that manifest or it's misplaced or whatever.

TM: What do you remember about that 1972 cleanup trip?

SM: I remember everybody got shigella. Everybody on the boat was incredibly ill at one time or another. I remember that the canyon was really a mess. I remember that Mark Dubois, Peter Wynn, all the ARTA heavyweights from all over the world were on that trip. It was really interesting. I look at Mark Dubois now in the press and say, "I used to know that guy." (laughs) He still doesn't have shoes on. (laughs) Bill Center was there. I mean, all the ARTA heavyweights from all over America were there. So it was really good like that. It was a two boat trip. Wesley was driving one boat. The other guy, the other boat, it was his first time. He did okay. He was real rough on himself but he did okay. I forget his... Little skinny, hairy guy with a huge coffee gut. I don't remember his name right now.

TM: Did you take pictures on that trip?

SM: Yeah, I did. One of the pictures I took is in Tom's new book.

TM: On "Flipped Out for Grand Canyon."

SM: It's a picture of a paddle boat in Crystal.

TM: Nice. Very cool. So you've been introduced to Grand Canyon. You've done a couple trips then.

SM: Yep.

TM: But you're gonna head to Phoenix and try to give it a go there a year, then you meet a gal and you head out to Tahoe. Was Grand Canyon still connected to you or were you like done with that, ready to move on and do other things?

SM: I wasn't, how do you say, a canyoneer, I guess. If I was, I would have been at Grand Canyon. I did want to drive boats. I really wanted to drive boats and I also wanted to cook on the river. I don't know why I like to cook, I'm just a line cook. I'm just a flash fry-it kind of guy, but (laughs) I really wanted to do that on the river. I told Gaylord a couple of times I wanted to work there. Gaylord just kind of smiled, yeah, okay. Wesley Smith was kind enough... Rob Elliott, at the time, was based in Williams. I went over to Williams and Wesley and I sat down with Rob Elliott. I was just stiff as a board and I couldn't loosen up. At one point Wesley said, "Well, Shane, you ought to tell him you play guitar." So I say, "Hey, Rob, I play guitar, ha, ha, ha." Rob just kind of gave me this sour thing, like Rob can do (laughs). It's not that I didn't want to be in Grand Canyon. I did do some hikes in the Grand Canyon and did some stuff like that, but I couldn't get a job on the river. So, okay, I'm teaching in Glendale, I meet Sunny and off we go to Tahoe. Then I start my river company in Tahoe on the East Carson, the South Fork of the American, the Main Klamath, and the Middle Fork of the Eel.

TM: Wow! That's a lot of water. That's a lot of rivers.

SM: Well, the only one that was a money maker, which I didn't like at all, was the South Fork of the American, because it was just packed with people. I started out when you didn't even need a permit. Okay, I got \$500 worth of insurance and here's my brochure and here we go down a river. I mean, that kind of thing. So when all the permits and all that stuff came in on the South Fork, on the Carson, and on the Klamath, then that's where I made my money was selling my company (laughs) and my equipment and stuff like that. I could have been a big-time South Fork of the American outfitter. I had a school bus. I had all that stuff. I always say I can do almost anything except simple plumbing jobs and I can't advertise myself either. I'm just no good at that. I don't have a clue, am not interested, just give me the oars and let's go down the river. So that's what happened there. I started on the East Carson in 1979 or '78, I'm a little vague on that. I washed out of that whole thing about 1985 when I met another girl, went to Utah. In the meantime I'd bought a company, bought another guy's company, and paid him a bunch of money for his user days and all his equipment and all that stuff. As soon as I got it all paid off, I just, I bailed on the whole operation.

TM: What was the company that you bought?

SM: A company called Wilderland. It was out of San Francisco.

TM: Oh. And what trips were they running?

SM: They had the Copper River in Alaska, the Usumacinta, and the South Fork of the American. I bought it for the South Fork of the American. I also got another trip in Colorado out of that. But anyway, I bought them for the user days but a bunch of equipment came with it. I figured, well, I can increase my user days. Well, I didn't cause back to the advertising thing. I mean, it's just not me. I even had a radio show on KTHO in South Lake Tahoe, The River Report. I still have the notebook. I used to write out my report every morning and while I was doing a show I had to pull over and find a phone and call this guy up, "Hey, Bobby, how you doing? This is Shane. I'm down at the Carson River today. Oh, she's running about, oh, you know, it's, it's, the river's dropping. You know, Bobby, there's no dam on this river. How many times have I told you that already?" (laughs) That was my big foray into advertising was the radio thing (laughs) and it just... I had posters, I still have a poster hanging on my wall. I have a picture of it right here in the phone.

TM: But I would assume that this gave you a really good view of what it means to market a trip, what it means to advertise, promote, all the stuff you didn't like doing cause you liked basically, it sounds like, getting people on the river and being on the river.

SM: Right.

TM: But the business side of it was a different deal altogether.

SM: Yeah. Well, I have an appreciation which I have a sometimes understanding of. I still don't get all the ins and outs and all that and I'm not interested in getting them. I'm still just, I want to go down the river. That's what I want to do.

TM: So there you are owning Wonderland, this is roughly 1985.

SM: Wilderland.

TM: Sorry. Wilderland, thank you. Wilderland, W-I-L-D-E-R-L-A-N-D.

SM: Right.

TM: And then what happened?

SM: Well, it was 1984, my marriage... In the meantime and I had married Sunny, that fell apart, which was my responsibility entirely. That's what that was. Then I just lost really faith in myself, faith in Sandpiper River trips, which was the company. I just had no energy to advertise this thing and pay for the school bus and buy the tires and the insurance, and on and on and on and on. It wasn't fun anymore. It wasn't rafting. It was paperwork and pencils and checkbooks more than sitting on a boat and talking to people and doing that sort of thing.

TM: So between Sandpiper and Wilderland, how did that timeline work out?

SM: They're the same thing. My company was Sandpiper. Wilderland is what I bought and incorporated into Sandpiper. I have some beautiful brochures at home. I can show you some. I mean, they're killer, but nobody's looking at them. (laughs) The opportunity came for me to... I met another girl. I had an opportunity to go to Utah, work on the Yampa and the Green and Deso-Gray. Do all that and just sit on the boat. So I did that.

TM: For who?

SM: Outdoor, no, not Outdoor Adventures. I'll think of it. I'll tell you.

TM: Okay.

SM: So anyway, I did that. The last hurrah going out of Tahoe was, I don't know if you've seen it, NAU has copies of it cause I gave it to [NAU] special collections, I did a river runners calendar for '85 and '86. That's up there in special collections up there. It's a pretty nice calendar and it has Curt Smith's photo on the cover, the Crystal photo. That monster wave and the Avon Pro skirting past. We had a photo contest for all that stuff and yada, yada, yada. And, I mean, just like...I just want to go sit on a boat is what I'm gonna do. So I went to Utah and did that for a season. Then she cut me loose. Then I called up Gaylord and this is one of those phone conversations that was made in heaven, right? I called up Gaylord and I said something like, "Gaylord, this is Shane Murphy. Remember me?" He goes, "Yeah, of course, I do." I said, "I'm looking for a job." He says, "Come on down." I started in 1986, April Fool's Day (laughs), at Canyoneers, Inc.

TM: How long did you work for Gaylord then, from '86 onward?

SM: To 2008.

TM: 22 years.

SM: Too damn long. (both laugh) It was really good but, but I ended up being... I was full of energy. I did three trips as a swamper before they made me a trip leader.

TM: In 1986?



SM: Yeah.

TM: So you went three trips as a swamper and then became an immediate trip leader?

SM: Yeah.

TM: Having owned your own companies, having run the Yampa and...

SM: Lot of rivers, you know.

TM: But that's a pretty good catapult from going to a swamper to a trip leader.

SM: Yeah, right. I mean (laughs), it was a little bit... My first trip (laughs) was almost my last trip. I was with Brad Bingham. I was running second boat to Brad Bingham and it was a... Canyoners used to run what they called a 2-4 split, which is you drop your people at Phantom and you pick up your other people. Two days to Phantom, it was actually two camps to Phantom, and then you drop them off at Diamond Creek, they get on a bus and go away. Then you run out from Diamond Creek. That's what happened there. Gaylord always used to do this. Whenever he made somebody a trip leader he'd always put them on a 2-4. You put them on a split because if you fucked up completely on the upper half then you could do it again on the lower half. (laughs)

TM: And no one would know.

SM: And no one would know, top secret. (laughs) I'll tell you what, I was so terrified on my first trip. I had, Hal Huber and Marty Borges were my swampers. I was so terrified, I didn't say a word to the passengers until we got past Soap Creek. I said something like, "Hi, everybody." That was about my whole interp for the entire trip. We got to Phantom, we got rid of those people, we put 20 new people on the boat. We went down to Crystal. This is '86 when Crystal looked a way lot different than it looks today. It had all those big feeder waves up top. Brad went first (sound effect), right down the right, right through the feeder waves. Did fine. I came in and that top feeder wave, I hit it with a little bit of an angle and it turned me sideways and (sound effect) there I go, straight into Slate Creek eddy, man. I remember, Tom, it was like when you're gonna have a car accident everything slows down real bad? I remember turning around and flipping up the reverse lock switch and (sound effect), put it in reverse and (sound effect), and nothing happens. I mean it just, (sound effect), straight. If this is the river right here, Slate Creek's like right here, right? (sound effect) We just slid in right, bam.

TM: So hit the wall right above Slate Creek?

SM: Right above, right in the little eddy there. I mean, there's a little eddy right back there, you know.

TM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

SM: We just slid right in there.

TM: Right into the little eddy?

SM: Right.

TM: So you missed the wall, went right into the eddy?

SM: Thundered into the eddy and the whole boat (sound effect). It starts, we're gonna flip...

TM: Tipping up on its side.

SM: ...we're gonna flip right like that. I yelled and I jumped up there on the high side. I said, "Everybody, up here, high side," like that.

TM: So are you hitting the wall now downstream below the eddy, starting to climb up?

SM: No, no, no. No. Like, just like this. Here's the eddy right here. (sound effect).

TM: Yeah. So you are hitting this corner wall, it's starting to tip you up.

SM: Right.

TM: Got it.

SM: So I'm starting to go up like that and I hopped up there and...

TM: And said, "Follow me."

SM: Yeah. If I hadn't a been a boater previous to Canyoneers I would have never known anything about the high side. So I was good like that (laughs). So I stopped that and the boat's (sound effect). I mean, it was unreal. It was finally stable.

TM: Shaking, so the boat's just shaking.

SM: It was shaking real bad. Rheumatism, man. (both laugh) (sound effect)

TM: It's pinned on the rock, the boat's just shaking there, you've got all these people up on the high tube.

SM: We're shaking at 45 degrees. I got everybody up here. We can't stay there all day, so I told them, I said, "Everybody off." (sound effect). I mean, they were gone before I got finished saying it, I think. And the boat was (sound effect). It was still there, it was still shaking real bad. Then I got off the boat and it was still there. I'm thinking we're gonna lose this boat. It's just gonna roll and that's gonna be the end of the trip. The helicopters are gonna come and I'm gonna be out of another job (laughs). I thought, well, okay. So I went back on the boat. I didn't know if I was gonna come back off the boat. I got on the boat and at the time, the strap system on a Canyoneers boat started from the underside and went all the way around and coupled back up top so you could loosen the straps and actually pull them in. When I did that I could pull that downstream tube up out of the water. I did that and that got the boat stabilized. Finally over the next couple/three hours it finally settled down on its keel there.

TM: Wow. Wow. Are we talking about the giant long, what are they 38 foot or 42 foot?

SM: Oh, yeah, we're talking about... But it's a completely different configu-... The interior design's pretty much the same now as it was, but back then, the way you put the exterior tubes on with those straps was completely different system.

TM: Was different?

SM: Yeah.

TM: But Canyoneers is known for running these phenomenally long boats, longer than anybody else runs down there.

SM: Right. Same thing.

TM: Same thing. And that's what you were on?

SM: Yep.

TM: Okay. Thank you.

SM: Rubber Crafters, they were Rubber... They weren't Demaree boats, they were Rubber Crafters. Used all the way around. So anyway, I finally got the thing stabilized and sitting on the ground.

TM: And is it tied up to shore?

SM: Oh, yeah, of course. (laughs)

TM: Bingo. All right. (laughs)

SM: Yeah. Yeah, it is. I'm in the back of the boat and the current's just (sound effect). I have the radio and here's Brad, he did fine coming through. Brad Bingham on the first boat.

TM: So he's waiting, he's down below.

SM: No. He pulled in down below and he...

TM: Walked back up?

SM: ...grabbed his radio and walked back up.

TM: Okay.

SM: He's standing over there like this (gesture), waving his radio and he (sound effect, and both laugh). And I am crying like a baby, man.

TM: Into your radio.

SM: Yeah, yeah. I'd never... That was one of my worst days. Wasn't the worst one but one of them.

TM: Remind me again, this is your first trip?

SM: It was my first trip. It was my fourth trip on the Colorado River in a Canyoneers boat. My first trip as a trip leader. Or sorry, as a pilot, a pilot.

TM: All right, pilot.

SM: Brad was the trip leader.

TM: Great. Got it.

SM: Okay. (sound effect) We're talking all these things about what we're gonna do. How the hell am I gonna get this boat out of here. That happened about 1:00 in the afternoon, when we finally got the boat sitting flat on the water. One of my swampers, I'm not gonna identify him, was not really very much help with this (laughs). The other one, Marty, was terrific. I finally got the boat turned around and pointed upstream. I'm on the radio to Brad, "I'm gonna wait for the river to drop and then I'm gonna drive the hell out of here, I think, I hope, and I might roll this thing trying to get out of here. I don't know." I'm not exactly sure when this was. This would have probably been about early June, I think, so the days are fairly long then. I'm still waiting for the water to drop, cause it always went up and down so much back then. It's not doing anything so we set up a kitchen, we fired up some hot dogs and hamburgers for all the people. Slate Creek's about as big as this table right here and there's not a whole lot of room for any of this, but everybody was real nice. They were real good, they understood, they were very supportive. "Oh, oh, thank you." (laughs) Right in the middle of dinner the river just goes (sound effect), starts to drop. I said "Everybody, here's the deal, we're out of here. Or at least we're gonna try to get out of here. We need to put the kitchen back on, clean up, and go." Everybody, again, was real understanding and they helped put all the stuff back on the boat. (sound effect) I have a thing that I initiated at Canyoneers where I called "in and down," where you were in off the side tubes and you were down on your seat. Canyoneers actually had seats. Their feet were on the ground, or on the floor, and their ass was two feet above. It made a very comfortable boat, really comfortable boat. Nice low center of gravity and all that. So I told them, "Everybody in and down." When I got them all, they're all situated there, I told them, "You know, I really appreciate everything you've done. I'm sorry that we got in this mess and I'm gonna try to get us out of it, but fair warning, we might end up right back here and even worse. So let's do what we can." I fired up the engine and goosed it and nudged it out into the current. As soon as that current caught it, it spun around and (sound effect) down we go. Best left hand run of Crystal I ever had. (laughs) About the only left run I ever had. Right down below there, there's that campground. We pulled in there. It was getting, it started to get dark.

TM: That tiny little camp above Tuna on the left?

SM: The one right in the middle of Tuna on the left.

TM: Oh, at Willie's Necktie just...

SM: Right. That's right, right at Willie's Necktie.

TM: ...around the curve? Okay.

SM: Yep. We pulled in there to camp.

TM: Now, was Brad...

SM: Brad was still leading. He pulled in there and I pulled in there and we tied up and I drank a bottle of whiskey all by myself. (both laugh) And Brad was really pissed off. Looking back on him, of course, I mean, I should have been up there in the kitchen but I didn't have it in me right then. So anyway.

TM: So you lost a half a day and you've got four nights to get these people to Diamond so you boogied on out of there. What happened when you went back to Flagstaff and walked in to talk with Gaylord?

SM: Well, Brad went in first. I think he probably told Gaylord, "This guy has no business, he wasn't ready to drive the boat." I mean, I don't know what he told him. But Gaylord's seen worse. I don't recall the conversation except that the big picture was, "Well, you better get ready for next week's trip," kind of thing.

TM: So tell me more.

SM: So I went out in the yard... Well, what do you want to know?

TM: Well, so you went out in the yard.

SM: Yeah. I went to work on my motors and this and that and putting things together for the next trip. I mean, that was the end of it.

TM: Right. That was the last adventure you ever had with one of those giant Canyoneer boats.

SM: Not really. (laughs) But I've never, I haven't ever flipped one. I've wrecked a couple lower units but I think most people have done that. The thing that stands out in my mind with the Canyoneers is that they bumped me. At the end of that year they bumped me up to manager. "You're gonna be our manager. You need to initiate standards and do all this kind of stuff." It's a bigger job than I was ready for. It puts me back in the paperwork world really. I was happy enough doing that for a couple years and during those couple years Canyoneers flipped two boats.

TM: Talk to me about that.

SM: Well, both of them at Crystal. Marty Borges flipped a boat in '88 and Ben Cannon flipped one on Big Red in 1990.

TM: And Big Red is?

SM: The big hunk of Supai down there in the rock garden in lower Crystal.

TM: Okay, so below the rapid at Crystal there's a big pile of rocks in the middle of the river called the rock garden.

SM: Right, and Big Red's in there.

TM: Okay. And these boats flipped there?

SM: Well, what happened to Marty was... It was high water, he was doing a left run, he came in... I don't really know what happened exactly but he hit the wall, he put a divot in the wall. I mean, he didn't t-bone it, he just kind of sidled up to it and the upstream side of the boat just got sucked and it just rolled right over. Just that fast. A guy, Paul Dahlen, was a swamper for Marty. He was a good man to have when you, he's an excellent person. When you're having trouble he's a good guy to have around you. He was sitting in the back with Marty, he's got this cowboy hat that's bigger than Texas. He's sitting back there and the boat just rolled just right over like that. Paul Dahlen, of course, he's under water and his hat's off. He comes up in front of the boat and his hat's on somebody else's head (both laugh) going downstream. The boat washed up on the gravel bar down there.

TM: On the rock garden?

SM: Yeah, on the rock garden. There were a couple kids stuck under the boat because Canyoneers had foot wells and they had scuppers in them so you could breathe in the foot well. There's not a problem but they're trapped in there. Paul Dahlen puts his life jacket on, goes in there, brings them both out to their father who's a physician and here's the story about this one. Paul went to ASU, he's a hydrology student, now he's an instructor down there. When he went to register for classes the following year, he did all his paperwork and stuff and went to pay his bill and whoever said, "Well, that's already been taken care of." You know, by the doctor.

TM: Wow.

SM: Yeah.

TM: So you mentioned that the seating arrangement on these boats was "in and down." So I'm assuming these kids were "in and down" and the boat went over and they stayed in and down.

SM: Well, they couldn't get out.

TM: Umm hmm. Okay. Sure.

SM. Because, well, you need to go... Next time you're at the Ferry and there's a Canyoneers boat there ask them if you can go on and look at it. The front of the boat used to be the whole, the boat all the way back. You have a box where you have your coolers under the box, that are sitting right on the water. And that's where you sit and your feet go down in the foot well. They're really, really comfortable boats. You actually sit. You're not sprawled on the deck or something, you're actually sitting there.

TM: Sitting. Yeah.

SM: Yeah. So they're real comfy.

TM: So this was Marty flipping there in Crystal, sort of hit the left wall and then the boat just rolled on over. Was he the lead boat or was he the following boat?

SM: He was the only boat.

TM: The only boat?

SM: Well, actually, no. He was on a... Canyoneers always run on two boats. It so happened that John Gray was up scouting, and John Gray saw the whole thing.

TM: John Gray...

SM: Yep.

TM: ...was working for...

SM: Canyoneers.

TM: ...Canyoneers as well. Okay, thank you.

SM: Right. And, you know Tom Ferguson? Tom Ferguson, he was Gray's swamper. They were both up there watching Marty run through. He was on a split trip.

TM: Gray was?

SM: No, Marty was. The way that Spooge/Tom Ferguson, we called him Spooge, we used to call him Spooge. Spooge, the way he described it was Gray jumped up in the air, turned around and came down running back to the boat. They and Diamond were the two boats, Wes Hibbard. He and Wes Hibbard went and they dragged all the, found all the people and they got them out of the river.

TM: Okay.

SM: So that's how that one played out. But here comes... I'm back at Canyoneers. I'm out in the shop doing some welding. Gaylord sent me to welding school so I could weld and do all this stuff. I'm back there welding and he walks up to me and looks at me and gives me this really weird kind of look. He goes, "We're upside down." I'm thinking, no, we're not, we're standing here... Holy shit, we're upside down (laughs). Finally, boom, I just started running around putting stuff on a used boat and I'm gonna go down and dig this boat out. I got pictures of all this, too. I get down there. We got to Lees Ferry late and we just launched right away. Off we go in the middle of the night (laughs). I'm at Crystal like 12 hours, actually, after the accident happens. I got all the lines and all this shit there and everything and the Park Service is there. There was a little tussle with the Park Service about this. I don't want to go into details but Jack Davis was the superintendent. Jack, perfectly nice gentleman, a good man. We had some nasty correspondence, which, just the way that things are.

TM: Was this Dick Marks?

SM: No, this is Jack Davis.

TM: Was he after Marks?

SM: Yeah.

TM: Okay. Thank you. What year was this again, '86, '87?

SM: This is '88.

TM: '88? All right, thank you.

SM: Jack Davis retired after that, I think. He was there till Arnberger showed up, I'm pretty sure. He retired and then Arnberger... When they rededicated the park whenever that was... I got invited to it cause I was president of River Guides then. My date was Sue Cherry. (laughs) We went over there and I dragged Steiger up there, too. Arnberger gave Jack Davis an award of some kind for outstanding merit and service. Just so happens I was sitting right behind him. I tapped him on the shoulder and I said, "Hey, Jack, congratulations." He goes, "Oh, thank you, Shane." You know, I mean, it was just in the heat of the moment where the thing went wrong. So then what happened...

TM: So just for clarification, there's a split trip that's two nights to Phantom and four nights to Diamond.

SM: Yep.

TM: And that trip launches...

SM: That's the old day schedule.

TM: Yeah. So this is, so let's talk about in the '80s when this was all happening.

SM: Yeah. Right.

TM: And also launching on the same day...

SM: Sunday, yep.

TM: ...was a full day trip.

SM: Full week trip. All the Grand.

TM: Was a full week trip with no split. So your options were the full trip or the split trip as a river guide working for Canyoneers.

SM: No, they assigned you.

TM: Yeah. I mean, your options, you were gonna either be assigned to the split or to the non-split trip.

SM: Right.

TM: But you basically were able to run together. I'm coming back around to Crystal where...

SM: No, you, no, no, you weren't camping together, you were not running together. These were two separate trips. It's Tuesday and it's early afternoon and that's where you are. You're at Crystal, Tuesday early afternoon.



TM: So it was just fortuitous, then, that Gray was on the scout when Marty flipped? I'm trying to piece that back together going backwards.

SM: Right. That's right. Yeah, right. That's the one.

TM: All right, okay. So you got down there, the Park Service is there, and...

SM: We finally got the boat turned back over.

TM: How did you do that?

SM: Well, we pulled it over against the shore, I have pictures of it, right against the shore. They were trying to roll it over with the outrigger still on it and I just, "You guys, we gotta take the outriggers off." That was the first fistfight. So finally got the outriggers off and (sound effect), thing pulled right over.

TM: With z-drags or come-alongs?

SM: Well, a little bit of both. And Paul Dahlen, like I said, the good man in a tight corner, he was there and he knows all about all the mechanical advantages and stuff. So he was, again, the perfect guy for the job. Then we get the boat turned over, we change out the motor. I had to take another motor down the river and all that, put all that shit on there. It's just a bunch of twisted metal and wrecked stuff. Then drove it out of there and got back to Flagstaff just like normal on Saturday afternoon for the turn-around.

TM: And the passengers were... This all happened right there at Willie's Necktie on the left, below Tuna, that kind of, at the...

SM: No, they flew out above Tuna. As far as I know. I wasn't really... I had nothing to do with that because I was busy orchestrating the boat retrieval.

TM: Yes, coming downstream. Okay.

SM: Right.

TM: All right. Cause I was just like, well, where did everybody go.

SM: They flew out. So, essentially that's the end of that. We had to rebuild that boat and refashion a bunch of stuff. I had a bunch of welding to do on it and fix these motors and do all that. And then in '90 when Benny flipped, Bob Bingham and... I'm not sure who the other swamper was. Oh, Patrick O'Steen. There's another good story.

TM: (laughs) How do you spell O'Steen?

SM: O-comma-S-T-E-E-N.

TM: Thank you.

SM: He says O'Steen. You know, when he starts at Canyoneers it was Osteen. By the time he's gone a couple years, it's O'Steen. Please. (laughs) So remember the story of Paul Dahlen's hat ending up on somebody else's head, right? Benny's coming into Crystal, the water's high, he gets shuffled to the right, he gets through the rock garden. I think his motor might have quit or he ripped the lower unit off or something. So he's got no umph, can't go anywhere. He drifts right into Big Red, boom. O'Steen's sitting back here. He falls off and he lands on his feet, right on top of Big Red. Okay, you got it? Boom, he's standing on top of Big Red. The boat comes back, boom, and just that fast the water's taking the upstream tube and turning the whole boat over. And Pat Osteen, or O'Steen, is sitting there watching this whole thing and he's like an arm's length from all this happening. (laughs) Here comes Gaylord, "We're upside down again." (laughs) "Okay." So I run around, put all this shit in the boat and off we go to Lees Ferry, down the river we go. Now the boat had drifted all the way down to 104 mile. Park Service was there. We know what happened the last time and it's not gonna happen this time, is it? Nah, that could never happen. So we're all perfect gentlemen the whole time, you know. Then we get the boat turned over and off we go, back on schedule again.

TM: How did all the passengers do on that flip?

SM: There was a broken wrist. Canyoneers learned a lot from the first flip about how to treat passengers. So on the second trip, Gaylord's in his car, he goes up the South Rim and he's there handing out whatever he hands out. I mean, he's glad handing and all that.

TM: And so these people were flown out and he met them at the South Rim at the heli base then?

SM: Yeah. Well, wherever it was. I'm not sure. Probably at the infirmary, I guess. I don't really know. But wherever people go when they flip (both laugh). I don't know. Outside of going away, that's all I know.

TM: Okay.

SM: So, yeah, of course, they were gonna get a free... Next trip's free. I don't think many of them went on it. But there was a broken wrist and there were people... I know the water was higher and there were more people scattered further down the river. I know it took longer to retrieve them and call that rescue complete. But that's really all I remember about it.

TM: And that hasn't happened since, has it, with Canyoneers flipping a boat?

SM: No. Huh uh.

TM: Why do you think that happened? It was a couple years in the running, with different boatmen. I mean, it's just luck of the draw?

SM: Serendipity.

TM: Okay. (laughs) Let's move along then.

SM: Okay.

TM: Because, poor Shane, you're giving me like cut the machine (both laugh), I have some things I want to tell you. So let's...

SM: We're gonna redact that. (laughs)

TM: Yeah. Well, you can either redact it or hold it till later. Go for it and we'll axe that out cause I will send you a transcription. You will remove what you don't want and then the rest of it reels forward. The recording is there, though, so you know, it's...

SM: Okay. Marty was a good pilot. At the time he was drinking heavily and I think he had drunk pretty heavily the evening before. He had a girlfriend with him that he was breaking up with on that trip.

TM: That's hard.

SM: He said that when he came into... Because of the old ... they're still with the old strapping system, some of those straps just broke when he hit the top wave up there at Crystal. I don't know about that. But I know that he ran into the wall and the in-stream tube just got sucked under and the rest of the boat just rolled over right on top of it. I mean, boom, it's just that fast. Benny, he lost his lower unit. He couldn't do anything. He could have, in my world he could have high sided. Now, whether he actually had time or whether he's thinking about these things, I don't know.

TM: Right.

SM: I don't know.

TM: What was it like working for Joy and Gaylord Staveley?

SM: It was the best and the worst. I don't really like to talk about this because I can talk for a long, long time and, you know, the old wounds come up and they fester. Gaylord has really put a lot of work and a lot of love and devotion into what he does. Joy's people came out of the furniture business. I think Joy, you know, is just like another piece of furniture (laughs), take it or leave it kind of thing. She was on medication at the time. At least this is what she told me later. She's on medication that didn't help her attitude much. She would just go off almost instantaneously. I mean, you never knew what was gonna come. Like, for instance, one time Gaylord gave me a couple days off. My mother was in Phoenix and my sister was in Phoenix and I was gonna go visit everybody. So Gaylord says, "Well, now, I have some things I'd like you to pick up in the truck if you could do that." I said, "Yeah, sure. I don't care. You give me a couple of days off, I'll take the truck to Phoenix, perfect." So we went to see Joy about it. This is in the middle of the winter and whatever it is, is gonna cost \$12,000 and she just (sound effect), she launches. She wouldn't let me leave the premises until like noon. It's just her little way of doing things. I liked driving those big boats. I loved being able to drive those big boats. Understanding how to drive those big boats and being able to sneak them into a little tiny place where you couldn't even put a rowboat half the time. I was pretty good there for a while and I was very proud of that. But there was a whole other thing going on in the background. There's a lot of static, a lot of noise, a lot of... You don't want to be carrying the torch at Canyoneers cause you're gonna get shot at by everybody. That happened to me and I didn't react well to that. I acted out. I wasn't grown up at the time. I'm over 40 but I'm still not very grown up at that time. Then the worst thing that happened there was...I don't know if you know about this, but in 1991, I think, right after Gulf One War was over, there's a lady who now runs Phantom Ranch, she and I were trying to have a relationship. She moved out to my house and my house was out by Grand Falls. I had a wonderful 1200 square foot, all glass place. It looked out onto Roden Crater, Grand Falls, the Hopi mesas. I mean, you ask anybody who's been out there they'll say,

“Oh, wow, that was something, that was really special.” It was 25 miles from town, one stop sign between my house and Canyoneers.

TM: Nice.

SM: I mean, it was wonderful. She was out there and it was the first day of the season. I’m pretty sure it’s ’91 and I have all the newspapers and everything related from this. I had a couple dogs, Biscuit and Gravy. The night before they were real nervous and marching around and stuff like this. Sometimes I took them to work and sometimes I didn’t. The next morning, “Hey, you guys, you want to...” (sound effect), they’re in the truck and off we go. Straight up noon she comes busting through the door, “A man, I was in the shower, he broke in and he raped me!” (sighs) “Okay, well, let’s go downtown.” She didn’t want to do that. I said “Look, it’s the only way we’re gonna... We have to go downtown.” So we went downtown. I went into one room, she went in the other room, about two minutes later I’m leading the cops out to my house. She’s in the hospital babbling psychobabble about being raped twice, handcuffed, with a gun to her head. Here’s the thing about Canyoneers, that doesn’t really play in too much except to say nobody at Canyoneers ever said one word to me about that, not a member of the crew. I remember the next day I was in my office and I was just trashed, in my head. I mean, it’s like I got other things to think about here. Joy comes in, “Now, you get back to work!” She just marched in, yelled at me and turned around and marched out. It was like nobody, not the staff, Gaylord, nobody, nobody ever said, “You want to go have a beer? Do you want to talk about it? Is there something we can do? Do you want to take some time off, we’ll watch the dogs. We’ll... (sound effect).” Nothing. Gaylord, finally about six months later, he was out in the yard and I just went out there and let him have it. I should have left Canyoneers then. I should have gone/worked someplace else. Well, because I just don’t have a good frame of mind.

TM: I guess I’m thinking it wasn’t your fault, it was their inadequacy to be able to accommodate the terror that was going down with you.

SM: No, that’s right, that’s right. But, I mean, it’s like I’m not feeling the love, like the saying goes.

TM: Sure. Sure.

SM: I didn’t leave Canyoneers. I stayed and I just acted out and got angrier and angrier. Yelling at Gaylord did not help me. (laughs)

TM: Sure.

SM: Then I got to be president of River Guides and I don’t think that really helped the relationship very much.

TM: Let’s talk about that a little bit because it seems to me that it was a time when the Grand Canyon river guides looked at guide pay.

SM: Actually did stuff. (laughs) That’s right. Well, after we got our 501(c)(3), then we couldn’t lobby anymore, not actively lobby. Lynn has always... Ever four or five years ago, I would write Lynn and say, “You know, I want to come talk to the Board. You guys ought to be doing something about guide pay. You shouldn’t be letting people go down the river for free to earn their place on trips,” and this and that and the other thing. Lynn would always, “Oh, well, we can’t do that, we’re...” I’ll tell you what, my last

meeting as president was the last meeting I ever went to, period. I've never been back in the building, wherever it is now. I know it moved. I don't take the newsletter. It's just like no. (laughs)

TM: It's interesting because this issue right now in Washington, DC...

SM: Yeah.

TM: ...the river concessionaires and their trade association employee were just lobbying to exempt river guides from an Obama executive order that would force them to pay an hourly wage up to eight hours and then time and a half for the rest of the 24 hours of the day when you're out in the field. And they're fighting that.

SM: Well, of course.

TM: Well, the concessionaire owners and their trade association. River Guides is quiet on the issue.

SM: Because according to Lynn they can't do any... Once they got their 501(C)(3), which happened during my time, during my year, that's when that happened. That's why we were so proactive before. After that I think Steiger and then Jerry, I think they tried to do a few things but it was basically put on the back burner.

TM: It's interesting because nonprofits can educate, they cannot lobby. They lobby five percent, but they educate ninety-five percent and so that simply changes semantics and you get right back out in the trenches.

SM: Yeah. Yeah. That's why Kenton founded the thing. That's exactly why Kenton did that. Moody and Brad were just demons, working hard every day, all day long, just trying to make things right. I came in and I did try. I remember Brad calling me on the phone just madder than hell one day about something, I don't know what it was. But I mean, I don't know.

TM: Yeah. It's interesting because I hadn't put the connection together that Kenton Grua, as the founder of Grand Canyon River Guides, was hoping to better the lot of the river guide.

SM: That's exactly right. That's what that was all about. The reason I got to be on the board so early was I went to those first formative meetings down there at Dory's. Tom Moody said, "Well, Shane sat in the front row the whole day." (both laugh)

TM: So that vaulted you to...

SM: Then boom, I've got gold, man. (both laugh)

TM: That gave you street cred.

SM: Yeah, right, exactly. (both laugh) No, but I mean, that really... I mean, Kenton... It got so far before it got to be a nonprofit and then it just was a nonprofit, you know, it seems like.

TM: So it seems as though it would have been a little cross purposes to what Gaylord and the other concession owners may have wanted. How were you reconciling that? Had you left Canyoners by then?

SM: No, I worked for Canyoneers all the way through. Well, I worked for the Park Service for a winter. I patched their boats and I did a couple winter trips for them, and I did this and that. But I was always coming back to Canyoneers. I was only a manager for two or three years. Went out in a flame of glory. (laughs) Yeah, okay. But I was always running boats for Canyoneers. The thing that got me really sick of it was there was some... By this time I'm like 55 or whatever it was and I'd been around for a while. I've got my hundred trips in and here's some kids that are... They're telling me how we're gonna run this trip and it's like, "You know, guys, I'm just really tired of the bullshit here. I gotta go." Well, and I also ended up going to Antarctica. That worked okay. I worked in Antarctica for four years 2008, '09, '10, '11, for four seasons working off of ships. Driving Zodiac's around the ice and lecturing Antarctic history.

TM: Wow.

SM: I got that job because I knew about inflatable boats and motors and because I'm an expert. Published several times on Shackleton's Endurance expedition.

TM: Brilliant.

SM: So, I mean, it fit in well.

TM: Shane, one thing I wanted to touch back on. In the research that I've done, and you brought this back to mind mentioning the new kids coming in, you've got all this experience and new kids are coming in saying, "Well, this is the way we're gonna do it." It seems that in the '60s and '70s into the '80s, as you mentioned, you did three swamping trips and then you had your own boat.

SM: 1986.

TM: Okay. That seemed fairly common that people were in control, if you will, of a large boat with many people riding on it, fairly quickly in their career.

SM: I think that was pretty much fast track, though. Who do you know that gets their own boat after three trips?

TM: Well, where I'm going with this is, for example...

SM: I drove Lava Falls one time, once.

TM: Before you had your own boat?

SM: Yeah.

TM: Yeah. I'm not sure that that was as rare, I don't know, but I'm just thinking about the Walt Blackadar trip of 1970-71 with the first female kayakers. A lot of people on that trip that a huge amount of water skill. You brought to Grand Canyon a huge amount of water skill, but many guides didn't have that skill.

SM: Right. That's right.

TM: Okay. That's my question, was that your understanding as well?

SM: Well, I don't understand your question. A lot of guides who first... Let's look at it then to now. Then, you had people who usually had a lot of experience would find their way into Grand Canyon or they would get their experience in Grand Canyon. And they would be there for most of their lives driving a boat. I was there 22 years doing it. Now you have kids coming in out of college, they're there for a couple years and then they're off to be stockbrokers or something. I think that's the major difference.

TM: Okay. Is less longevity?

SM: Yeah, right.

TM: Okay. Sort that out now, I'll rework my question.

SM: That's okay. What I'm doing here...

TM: Well, you're looking for photographs.

SM: No, I'm looking for my... Here's my Antarctic images.

TM: Arctic images and there's...

SM: Oh, you know what, I also went to the North Pole one time. (laughs)

TM: Wow. Very cool.

SM: That was cool. That was very cool.

TM: So you've been from Pole to Pole.

SM: Yeah. Well, I've never been to the South Pole.

TM: So my question is, again, what I found fascinating about researching the trips in the early '70s was oftentimes the experts in their fields, whether it was kayak or whatever, couldn't get a permit to get access to the river and had to go commercially. There they found their commercial guides had way less knowledge and experience than they did.

SM: Well, okay.

TM: And that was interesting. I just noticed that's interesting. And so, oftentimes you look at this and the people that are on the trip have no skills, they don't know anything. And the guide has knowledge and that's how it's supposed to be. I just found it curious that these world-champion boaters couldn't get their own permits, went commercially, and the second boat was a two or three trip...

SM: Guide.

TM: ...guide that really knew next to nothing compared to the people they were taking down the river.

SM: Uh huh.

TM: So I just found that as a curious...

SM: Juxtaposition.

TM: Juxtaposition there, yes. Yeah. And that's all, just kind of what it is.

SM: Yeah. I never really thought about it much. I had a boat and I was happy. (laughs)

TM: Yeah.

SM: Yeah. I just think it's weird how the times have changed. You used to be in for the long haul. You used to want to be a swamper so you could learn about this and that, what's up there and what kind of rock is that, birds and bees and bugs and all that. Now it's just like I'm a swamper and next trip I'll be a trip leader and next year I'll be a lawyer kind of thing. I mean, it seems like people move through mighty quick these days.

TM: You know what? I'm kind of wondering is that because the pay is poor or the conditions are hard. Do you have any ideas why that might be?

SM: I think it's a great part-time summer job. (laughs) It's something you can tell all your friends about and all that. I think people today, and I could be completely wrong about this, but I think people have maybe a goal in sight and this is just a half step to it.

TM: Hmm. Okay. Yeah, I don't know. I'm just thinking it through.

SM: And I don't either really.

TM: I am curious about guide pay.

SM: Gaylord started me out at \$65 a day leading trips.

TM: And this was in...

SM: '86.

TM: 1986.

SM: And I think I finished...

TM: In 2008.

SM: ...at about \$105. The people I had trained, he was paying them more than he was paying me.

TM: Got it. So today, in 2016, it seems as though, as best as I can find, the top guide pay is still now around \$150 a day. L looking at inflation then...



SM: Yeah.

TM: ...you know, a cup of coffee's gonna run you eight bucks. I kind of wonder if there isn't a change in... As you said, people that got into it that stuck with it, that wanted to learn about the bugs and the rocks and the entire...

SM: They dedicated themselves.

TM: ...soup to nuts about Grand Canyon, even at an introductory pay of a \$100 a day or whatever as a swamper, if you're getting paid.

SM: Right. Which you should be.

TM: "Should", in quotes, be. Yes. But some of the companies don't pay their crew that is not piloting a watercraft of any way, shape or form.

SM: Yeah, I know.

TM: You know, that could be why the turnover is so high.

SM: Well, that's certainly possible. I mean, that wouldn't surprise me at all.

TM: Well, thank you so much for this I think absolutely amazing interview. Is there anything else you'd like to cover before we wrap things up?

SM: Well, maybe we'll think of something some other, to continue with. I don't...

TM: And we'll do this again. That'd be fun.

SM: Yeah. It's not for me to ask the questions. You're the interviewer. (laughs)

TM: Well, I'm looking at this thinking we've been at this now about an hour-30.

SM: Really?

TM: So I'm starting to think it'd be a good time to wrap things up. I definitely would like to learn more about your time on the river, neat things that you saw, people you met, trips that you did. So maybe we can do this again another time for another hour or so.

SM: That'd be fine. I don't really think about it anymore, Tom.

TM: Understood.

SM: If somebody's talking to me about it, it brings back all these memories. Somebody always tells me, "Well, you ought to write a book." Well, unless I'm talking to somebody like you, it's not my frame of reference. I don't have a way to get to those stories.

TM: Well, let's do it. That'd be fun. I'd be interested to know. Yeah.

SM: Okay.

TM: Cool. Thank you.

SM: You're welcome. I appreciate it.