

**Interviewee:** Robert “Bob” Cornelius (BC)

**Interviewer:** Tom Martin (TM)

**Subject:** Working as a Park Ranger at Phantom Ranch in the Grand Canyon in the early 1970’s.

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TM: Good Morning. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History Interview. Today is September 26, 2018. This interview is with Robert “Bob” Cornelius. This is Part 7 of our interview with Bob. My name is Tom Martin. Bob, thank you so much for carrying on here with Part 7 of these wonderful interviews with you. Last time, at the end of Part 6, we had talked about a couple of rangers that we wanted to talk about a little more. One was John Sheek, was a seasonal South Rim ranger in 1969, and then Perry Thompson, who in 1969-1970 was a Lees Ferry ranger.

BC: Yes, uh-huh.

TM: I’ll punt back to you. What do you remember about John?

BC: The thing that’s interesting about John Sheek really is that we were both seasonals on the South Rim in the summer of 1969. John, after that summer went... I think he had been in ROTC. He was from Texas, had a Texas drawl, you know. After that he went into the Army and served in Vietnam. When he came back, he ended up at Mesa Verde National Park. He spent the rest of his career at Mesa Verde. He retired about 2000, I’m guessing. He and I were just a... Would swap shifts and stuff at the Canyon and so on and so forth. He became good friends, I remember, with the camp hosts that were there in the campground. A guy named L.A., initials L.A., Board, B-O-A-R-D. He and his wife were the hosts there on the South Rim. Mr. Board had been a Fred Harvey cowboy and had taken lots of trips down. Particularly Plateau Point. I think he probably went to Phantom Ranch occasionally. I remember him talking about going out to Plateau Point with a bunch of riders and a jet went down through the Inner Gorge there. Which was a problem, especially if you were on a horse.

TM: Oh yeah.

BC: He said all these dudes got pitched off out there in the desert. The mules ran in all different directions. They’d usually have five mules to a string or so. Apparently he stayed mounted [chuckle] and he said he started riding his mule in a circle. Pretty soon all the mules came back and got in this circle out there near Plateau Point and he was able to get them all captured, so to speak.

TM: Wow.

BC: Then he got the dudes back on the mules and away they went. I don’t know what types of injuries they had. I’m sure there were some contusions and bruises and those types of things.

TM: Sure.

BC: But he had stories like that he would tell. Since he was from Texas himself, he and John had a lot in common. They maintained their friendship, I think, after John left the Canyon there. One of the guys...let me think...I got to think of the name. Mr. Board really respected one of the other permanent rangers, a guy named Jack Fields. Jack Fields was a little guy, but he was really a wiry, tough-as-nails type of guy. He, too, had been a Fred Harvey cowboy and then he'd become a national park ranger. Mr. Board, whenever he had a problem, that's the guy he always called. There were a number of times in my career at the Canyon where I called Jack on things. I can remember, I'm kind of going far afield here, but I guess it's interesting.

TM: Yes, sir.

BC: One of the things I used to do when I was an Inner Canyon ranger – this was later on – is, I would come out of the Canyon and I would leave my horse at Yaki Point in the corral. If I had my car there then I would drive back to the village or someone would pick me up. Then a day or two later I might get a ride out there with one of the rangers or something and then I would ride the horse back to the village or vice versa, I'd do it the other way around. Because there might be a reason we wanted the horse over at the top of the Bright Angel there at the park service corrals, which are up in the residential area. So you'd ride the horse over there. One day, I recall, I got on the horse and I started to cross the top of the mesa there going west and I ran into this... There was a car out there, way off road, you know.

TM: Wow.

BC: There were these two people, a guy and his wife, and they had a little baby. I was dressed in civilian clothes. I was on a horse, but I was dressed in civilian clothes. I told them that I was a Park Service employee and that they needed to move their car and go back to the main road, go to the campground. I did have a Park radio with me. After I had this contact with them, I went and called the dispatch and Jack Fields was sent out there. The next time I saw him [chuckle] he says, "Boy you really sent me on a mission." I said, "What do you mean?" He was going out to check to be sure that they moved. Well, he got out there and the people had some drugs with them. I guess he tried to throw the drugs over the canyon rim or something and they got into quite a scuffle out there. Jack overpowered the guy and arrested him. I guess the wife and child were tasked with driving the car [chuckle] back to the main road or whatever. There were other little incidents like that over the years. I think I might have mentioned one previously where I got in a fight with a guy down at Phantom Ranch over collecting driftwood.

TM: Yeah! That's right.

BC: Do you recall if I mentioned that?

TM: Yes, you did.

BC: Again that was Jack Fields. He flew down in the helicopter down and hauled this crazy guy out of there. And there again he...

TM: So, Bob, I'm going to ask you. You mentioned, when you first started here that you and John would swap shifts. I was like, okay, does that mean that one of you would've been assigned to work and the other one was off, but you guys could turn that around so that...?

BC: Yeah, it was sort of like that although we would... The way the shift worked in those days, and I'm sure it's much different, much more professional probably nowadays, we would have an early morning shift, like 6:00 to 2:00, or something like that. Then you would have maybe 11:00 to 7:00 or something like that. There was an overlap. They would overlap us right around the dinner hour when they would have the... A little bit before the dinner hour, 4:00 or so, they always had the Hopi Indian dance over in front of the Hopi Indian House, the little platform there. The Indians would do a dance. It was very popular and as a result, there's always a traffic jam in the parking lot between the El Tovar and Verkamp's. People would park down the road, I mean, they would park all over the place. So we had to do traffic control. One person would stay down where the road came up to the El Tovar and when the parking lot was full, they'd turn people away and keep them going down the loop road there. The other person would be up at the rim and would try to keep people from climbing up in the trees and standing on top of the rock wall where they had a 1000' fall if they stepped backwards [chuckle].

TM: Yeah.

BC: Those kind of things. There wasn't a lot of hard core enforcement of stuff. You were more there for the safety of visitors, try to keep them from hurting themselves trying to get a picture of the Indians dancing there and that sort of thing. Those were the types of things I was referring to. Then they would have... In fact, we actually had a 24-hour patrol there for a while until they didn't have enough rangers, and then they cut it back to...I think we'd go till like 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning and then one of us would be in the South Rim District Ranger office, but we had our dispatch. Then you were all by yourself all night. They did have a thing called a "fire phone." It was a big Claxton under the desk. If someone was to call in with a fire to the fire number, that big Claxton would go off and it would scare you to death.

BC & TM: [laughter]

BC: You were instructed to call a certain number of people in a certain order. They kind of had kind of like a phone chain and they would get the fire crew out.

TM: Let's go back for a minute. I'm going to jump in here and go back to Mr. Board for just any other recollections of stories of L.A. Board.

BC: Oh boy. One of the things I remember him talking about is he went in the restroom in the morning and there was a guy in there. This guy had this huge motorhome and he was staying there in the campground. They got to talking and the guy said, "Well," he said, "we decided to rough it this week." Mr. Board thought that was so funny. Roughing it in a big Winnebago.

TM: Yeah.

BC: I guess the irony of all of it is, when I used to work the south entrance, which I did my first summer, we kind of made fun of people in the big Winnebago's because a lot of them didn't know how to drive. A couple of them hit the entrance station and stuff. We thought it was... We were used to laying on the ground or maybe had a tent if you were lucky enough. So we kind of made fun of them and now here I am 50 years later and I have a motorhome and I am just like the rest of them. So things in perspective do change through time.

TM: Come back around, yeah. Any other recollections of John, John Sheek?

BC: Well, John had this Texas accent. He was a very personable guy and he was easy to like. He had lots of stories. I, over the years, infrequently would talk to him when he was down at Mesa Verde more than anything. I might call him for a reference on an employee. I saw him a number of times. He was a crew boss, I think, in fire. I went down to Mesa Verde one time, spent a couple of days. I was being trained on what they call a "fire computer." It was just a computer where you... I learned how to input information of people's fire training and that sort of thing. Issue red cards and all that kind of stuff. So I spent a couple days down there. I didn't see John. He was working there at the time, but I saw John's desk [chuckle]. His desk was piled with papers. I thought, it looks just like mine at Black Canyon! "Whose desk is this?" They said, "Well, this is John Sheek's."

TM: Oh, my gosh.

BC: I said, "Well, he has the same type of disorganized mind that I have." I don't remember any other, like law enforcement incidents or things like that. There was always something going on at the South Rim in particular. There were always medical emergencies. There were always fights in the bar. There were things that went on in the dorms; people stealing from one another and all those things. Automobile accidents, speeders. There was always something going on at the South Rim. There wasn't too much down time there. But I don't remember really any specific incidence. I only worked up there for one summer. Being at Phantom Ranch for most of my career at the Canyon, I was kind of insulated from a lot of the stuff that went on on the South Rim. On my days off, I socialized with people obviously, but I often would go places because you wanted to go see northern Arizona.

TM: Is that how you met Perry Thompson, by going up to Lees Ferry?

BC: No, no. When I was at Phantom, I would always hear, Perry said this and Perry said that. Perry Thompson, I think I talked to him maybe one or two times on the phone. I just called him at Lees Ferry about... A boater might have some kind of issue, pass a message on to so-and-so when they get ready to launch, or something like that. So I did talk to him a couple times on the phone. Perry became the District Ranger at Blue Mesa here at Curecanti. When I moved to Curecanti, I'd go up to Blue Mesa and I met this guy named Perry Thompson. I said, "Your name sounds familiar. Were you at Lees Ferry?" He said "Yeah." I said, "Well, I was at Phantom."

TM: Oh my gosh.

BC: So that's how we met. We met like... I don't know how many years that'd be, about 10 or 15 years after I was at the Canyon. The Grand Canyon is so big and geographically people are scattered that you know a name and you may even have heard stories about things that happened with them, but you never physically meet them.

TM: Yeah.

BC: I did meet John Riffey over at the National Monument cause I went over there to camp out one night. He came through the campground and we chatted for a few minutes, my first summer. I don't remember a lot about him, but I did actually meet him. So that was of interest.

TM: So Perry was over there squeezing lifejackets. Did you ever hear stories about that?

BC: That's right. Yeah, yeah. One of the things that happened with that is... I moved from Grand Canyon to Dinosaur. Glade Ross worked at Lodore. He had moved from the Canyon before I did up to Lodore. He sort of was substitute river ranger between Barry Ashworth, who was the first river ranger at Dinosaur, and myself. Glade was issuing permits. He'd come down from Lodore and spend a week at headquarters and he would handle that. And, of course, I knew him from Grand Canyon.

One of the incidents that happened was that Perry Thompson had rejected a whole bunch of lifejackets down at Lees Ferry. Well, we got information that... One of the boatmen or something probably said something. Perry called up to Curecanti and said that Hatch River Expeditions is taking lifejackets from Grand Canyon and they're just using them up at Dinosaur. The ones we reject down here, they're taking and using up at Dinosaur. The boatman also said they don't check very carefully up there at Dinosaur. Well, that made Glade angry [laughter], if Glade could ever get angry. Such a laid back guy. He really went through the lifejackets up there. It ended up being a Hatch Boat that he rejected a large percentage of the lifejackets. So Ted Hatch [chuckle] got in his airplane and flew up to Dinosaur. Landed on the road up there, there was a dirt road that goes into Lodore...

TM: Yeah!

BC: ...and gave the boatman new lifejackets to use on the trip. Don Hatch called me when I was a river ranger at Dinosaur. Oh, he was really mad about this whole incident about lifejackets. In the interim, there was always a question as to whether lifejackets were any good or not if they had punctured plastic compartments or whatever you want to say. The Mae West's that we used had one, two, three, four, five plastic balloon-like [chuckle] things that had the kapok in them that had integrity if they weren't punctured at all. We had a whole bunch of sinkers in our warehouse there at Dinosaur, so I went down to the Rangely College, it was called at the time. It's now Northwest Colorado Community College. They had a swimming pool, so I took these lifejackets down there and I tried them out, with the sinkers. I'd get in the pool... I found out that if you have one that's all wet and soggy, that you'll go right to the bottom if you [chuckle] have the thing on. So when Don Hatch called me and was all upset about this, I told him about taking them down to the swimming pool and I'd tried them out. "You're going to drown customers if you use those types of lifejackets and something bad happens." That was just kind of an interesting story with Glade. We used to go up to Dinosaur, excuse me, up to Lodore and put on. I might have mentioned this in a previous discussion, but his wife Sharon would make homemade donuts. We would always have homemade donuts in the ranger station/their house before we put on the river.

TM: Wow.

BC: But I kind of lost track of Glade. I know he lives in Blue Mountain near Rangely, I think.

TM: You know, before we hang up today, I think I've got a phone number for him. I can give to you. He would probably love a phone call from you.

BC: Yeah! That'd be great. I haven't talked to him in years.

TM: You mentioned a word...

BC: Another thing that happened with Glade was we went back to an EMT school in Jacksonville, North Carolina at Camp Lejeune. It was the first EMT school that the Park Service put on. They contracted with

the Navy Corpsmen to have this EMT school back there. Glade was my roommate there at the... We lived in what were called the Bachelor Officer Quarters.

TM: Do you remember the year? Do you remember what year that was?

BC: I've got a picture of myself with the class. I'm going to say...let's see, I would have to dig it out. I know I've got the picture.

TM: This is mid-70's-ish? Or early 80's. I'm just trying to figure out when.

BC: I'm trying to remember if I was... I think I was at Glen Canyon. I think I'd moved from Dinosaur and I was now... Yeah. I was at Glen Canyon. So it was around '74, probably, '75. Oh, I know when it was. It was the 100th anniversary of the Marine Corps. Because it was kind of a wild week [chuckle] on the base there. Because we had go over to the emergency room and they kept bringing all these Marines in that were all beat up...

TM: Oh my gosh.

BC: ...and kids that had fallen and broken arms. There was all kinds of stuff going on. I guess that would've been 1776, so 1976.

TM: Okay. That would make sense.

BC: Yeah. I think it was in like November, because it was real wet and cold. We about froze to death in our... The place wasn't heated [laughter].

TM: So when you showed up at Grand Canyon in '79, sorry, 1969...

BC: Right, '69.

TM: I think that was the last... Glade was getting ready to transfer out of Grand Canyon and go back to Dinosaur.

BC: Right, I remember I went to a going away party for him. It seems like it was in the fall of 1969, I believe.

TM: Okay.

BC: I only knew Glade, really, on the South Rim, I guess. No, I take that back. It would've been the following year, because I had already moved to Phantom Ranch. So it would've been probably fall of '70, because I remember Glade used to come in and use the phone at the ranger station there. There was one river trip in particular where... I'm not sure exactly what went on, but somebody took a movie of some [chuckle] misbehavior by some of the people that were on the Park Service boat trip. The next trip that Glade had down through the Canyon, he stopped at the ranger station and he called his wife, Sharon, to say hi. By this time she had either seen this movie or heard of all the shenanigans that had taken place. I think I could've heard her voice all the way up at Phantom Ranch, because she was really mad [laughter]. Glade kind of left the ranger station with his tail between his legs. So I'm thinking it was fall of '70 that he moved to Dinosaur.

TM: Okay. All right, that kind of [chuckle] makes sense. And of course, nowadays with all the work to try to really clean up the River Unit in Grand Canyon, this sort of paints a picture that this was...

BC: Right! I've read all these terrible stories about...

TM: It makes me think, wow, wait a minute, are you telling me that this has a history that goes back to the late 1960's? That would be... Hey, these things happen, I don't know, I'm just asking.

BC: I don't know the details of what went on on this one river trip. I really don't. I don't know as far as the sexual harassment and all the other stuff that's come down. I'm sure there are people that would be able to tell you stories that "yes, it was probably going on at that time." I didn't witness anything being down in the Canyon that I remember.

TM: I hadn't heard of this happening until much later...

BC: I do remember there was kind of a culture on the South Rim my first summer. I think I mentioned that about Nikki Williams.

TM: Yes.

BC: I'm not saying that anything happened with her, but there just weren't a lot of women on the force period. People talked about "Rangerettes" and they kind of joked about the uniforms that the women wore, and all sorts of things like that. It was not a female-friendly organization. The Park Service had to be dragged kicking and screaming into the twentieth century [chuckle]. They really did.

TM: Let's go back to Dinosaur for a minute. You had mentioned a term for maybe a general area at Dinosaur and I hadn't heard that term before. I didn't catch it, I didn't write it down. So there was Lodore and the Lodore Ranger Station and that's where Glade and Sharon were.

BC: Right. The launch ramp.

TM: And where were you?

BC: I was at the park headquarters. Dinosaur's park headquarters were at Dinosaur, Colorado which is about 30 miles east of the Dinosaur quarry.

TM: That's right.

BC: The headquarters is on U.S. 40, right at the base of what's called Harper's Corner Road.

TM: Yes, Right.

BC: Harper's Corner Road goes up to viewpoints that overlook the Yampa Canyon and Whirlpool Canyon. The Echo Park Road goes off of that down to Steamboat Rock and Echo Park. It made a good location. They had a small contact station there and they had a large maintenance area. It's where we had all of our boat operation was out of there. It had a residential area up behind a couple of the

hogbacks. Real nice, some Mission 66 houses up in there that we lived in. But there was just a thin area that the Park Service controlled all the way up, the 25 miles up, to the Park boundary.

TM: Yeah, it was just the width of the road [laughter].

BC: Basically the width of the road, yeah. It was within the fence line. We would patrol that as if it had as much value as if it was any other piece of Park Service property. We would catch poachers and everything else up there.

TM: Oh my gosh.

BC: And there was a lot of poaching going on.

TM: Hey Bob, before we get into Dinosaur, because I have a bunch of questions for you about Dinosaur and, of course, Glen Canyon, let's pull back now to Grand Canyon...

BC: Sure.

TM: ...and keep focusing on there. But clearly, I'm putting down a big star here to ask you about Dinosaur. Tom Doerr was working with Glade as a river ranger early on, one of the first river rangers. What do you remember about Tom?

BC: Another real personable guy. My contact with Tom was almost strictly when he would stop at Phantom Ranch to make his phone call up to the rim, and whatnot. I know one time, we had this snowstorm at Grand Canyon in the winter. This was probably around '73. We had about 4 or 5 inches of snow at Phantom. It was really spectacular. Somewhere, I've got slides of it that I've got to drag out. There's a little rock bench up on the Clear Creek Trail and that was all covered in about ten inches of snow [chuckle]. I have pictures of all the people from Phantom sitting on that bench, the maintenance man and his wife and a couple other people. I remember that day because Roy Starkey, who worked with USGS, he called me up, it's like 4:00 in the morning, "Bob! Bob! Look outside! Look outside!" I thought, "What?" I went and looked out the window and there was all this snow.

TM: Oh, my gosh.

BC: Before the day was over, I made a couple of snowballs and put them in the freezer. One day in the middle of August, Tom Doerr shows up at the little ranger station there. As he's leaving, I got those snowballs out [chuckle] and hit him a couple times with snowballs.

TM: [laughter]

BC: That was just a kind of a funny little thing that happened.

TM: Fun.

BC: Other than that, I don't remember a lot. I know they had a big J-rig that they used for the trips. I think it had three pontoons, I think, but I'm not positive. They took a lot of people down the river. My boss, Ed Carlson, was always going to get me on a river trip. "Well, you ready to go? Next week, they're going on the river. You can go up to Lees Ferry." By the time the trip was ready to leave, he would

always call me and say, "Well, you got bumped by Regional Director so-and-so or Congressman such-and-such, or a different person." So I never did get to go down the river officially other than to go down and collect bodies a couple times. Even then I didn't go all the way down the river. I went to Hermit Rapid one time and I went to Shinumo Rapid one time. I take that back. I guess I flew a helicopter into Hermit, so I didn't actually... I just had the one river trip and that the one that ended up at Shinumo Rapid.

TM: Yeah, I think you mentioned that in a previous interview. Told us that story. Yeah.

BC: One thing I remember about Tom, too, is we had a... I don't think I've ever talked about the Steve Dustin story?

TM: That does not ring a bell.

BC: Okay. Steve Dustin was a 17-year-old kid. He was an SCA, Student Conservation Association, volunteer employee. He and a guy named Bruce...I can't remember Bruce's last name...they helped me at Phantom Ranch one summer about '72 or '73, I guess, probably '73. We were re-doing the sign system along the trails. I had taken one of these wheels they use for traffic investigation and I walked all the way across the canyon with it. I went from South Kaibab down to Phantom and I went from Bright Angel down to Phantom and I went from Phantom to the North Rim. We measured to be sure the signs that we had in place were in the right location.

TM: Oh, nice.

BC: Then we set places up for additional signage. Mostly mileage, how many miles to this point and that. These two kids, that was one of their main projects was to go out and pound posts in the ground and put signs up or replace signs that had been stolen or damaged. So he did all this. Steve was a really intelligent and enthusiastic young man. He was from Indiana. His father, I think, was like president of the Isaac Walton League or something like that. Steve decided to... At the end of his season he was supposed to go back to school. Bruce went back to school and Steve stayed on. He moved from Phantom Ranch up to the South Rim and he lived in the little ranger dorm there that is kind of a rock dormitory. I guess it's kind of south and west of the old visitor center. Kind of in back of what were at the time, I don't know if they are any more, the Fred Harvey general offices. You come off the loop and then as you start up the road through the little valley there across from the Superintendent's house, the ranger dorm is up in that area.

TM: Right, okay.

BC: He lived up there. He had been going on out the rim of the canyon between the Yavapai Museum and the visitor center. He had borrowed some ropes out of the fire cache, I guess, and he was learning how to rappel and stuff off of the cliffs out there and whatnot. My wife and I took him to Flagstaff, he bummed a ride with us. Before we left, he took me into the ranger dorm, he wanted to get his camera repaired in Flag, and he shows me this brand new piece of goldline rope that he's purchased. He was quite proud of that. Then we got in the car, headed to Flagstaff. We dropped him off... He also had to register for the draft. You had to register, in those days, when you turned 18, I guess. So I guess he was turning 18 shortly thereafter. We dropped him there and then took him over to this camera store. I was going to a first-aid class, I think, at the County Health Department off Fort Valley Road, so I was staying

in Flagstaff for a couple of nights. He went back up to the Canyon. We dropped him off out on Fort Valley Road someplace and he hitchhiked back to the Canyon.

Well, he mentioned that he was going to go hiking when he got back to the Canyon. Get a permit and he was going to try to find somebody to go with him. So he goes up to the South Rim, he goes into the Visitor Center, he gets a permit. He's got a route where he's going to go from the Bright Angel down to and across the Tonto, back up the Hermit Trail. Make a big loop. He was going to do it in pretty short order, maybe two days or so. He was working at the time on the South Rim in the river office, river organization, river warehouse, stuff like that. He was working for Tom Doerr. On Monday morning, he doesn't show up for work, which was unusual. They checked the permits, they realized he had gone hiking in the canyon. You know, anything can happen. I think they waited until late morning or early afternoon and then they got really concerned and they started searching. They sent a ranger out the West Rim Drive to talk to people, see if anybody had seen him hitchhiking back to the village. They got a helicopter and flew it down across the Tonto Trail to, I guess, what's called Tonto West now and down to Hermits... Checked down to the river and stuff like that looking for him. They couldn't find him.

When I came back to the South Rim, I always remember, I went to my house and I walked out to the rim from my little house. Dick McLaren, he was no longer the Chief Ranger, he was kind of in charge of Fire and Rescue, I think, probably because of politics. He was kind of old school and Bob Lovegren was new school. They had kind of demoted him but he still had a very responsible job, obviously. I remember going out there and he was standing there. He had on his dress pants and his long-sleeve ranger shirt. Had on his Smokey Bear hat and he had his radio just crammed in his back pocket. There was a helicopter flying around the Battleship. Whenever I see a picture of the Battleship, I always think of this incident. They're flying around the Battleship and so I asked Dick, I said, "What's going on?" Obviously it looked like there was some kind of search or something. He said, "Steve didn't show up for work this morning and we're searching for him." Of course, I had known Steve Dustin really well because he worked for me at Phantom. So I asked Dick, "If you do have a search and rescue, I'd like to go on it." He said he would have someone contact me if that became necessary.

I guess late in the day, almost dark, they thought they saw something up the east arm of Horn Creek, up along the wall there, but they weren't sure. So they had decided they were going to explore this area. In the meantime, they called and talked to this SCA named Bruce. I'm sorry I can't remember his last name. He mentioned that he and Steve had gone out during the summer on a day-hike and they had gone up, maybe they spent the night along the Battleship there, and they explored down into that east arm of Horn Creek up at the top. Bruce remembered him talking about, he thought maybe he could rappel down there and kind of shortcut and have a big adventure.

So that evening, Ernie Kunsell called me and said that we were going to have a search in the morning. Told me what gear I needed and stuff. So myself and Ernie Kunsell, Jim Braggs, Tom Doerr, there might have been one other person, but I don't think so. I think there were just the four of us. We were helicoptered down to a little knoll on the Tonto Plateau, kind of a ways down the dry wash that was this east arm of Horn Creek. We had a Stokes litter and a bunch of ropes and climbing gear and stuff. We hauled that all up the dry drainage up into this kind of amphitheater. I remember going in there and we were all yelling. We could see this rope that came down the cliff face there. We were yelling Steve's name and just getting an echo back. After a while we were wondering what's happened here. There was sort of some dry falls, but they were slick and steep. We had to figure out a way to get up over those to get up to this ledge where this rope appeared to end. I think we made a couple attempts to climb and finally did a one-skid landing with a helicopter and people got off that way. We found Steve Dustin's

body right up against the main cliff face. It was kind of not really a drainage, just more of a dry falls that came down there. It was about 70/80 feet up. There was a rock up there, kind of a big, smooth rock. Steve apparently had looped his... He didn't have any equipment to speak of. He had this rope, but he was a novice climber and he didn't have a lot of money so he hadn't invested in much safety equipment. Of course, he was doing this hellacious rappel by himself.

TM: Yeah.

BC: He'd looped his rope around this smooth rock. It appeared that he was trying to lower his pack down to this ledge below and something happened. He slipped and his pack was pulled up and jammed in against this rock and he had just tumbled off backwards. We were able to get the rope, lower the pack back down. Of course, we put him in a body bag and put him in the Stokes litter and everything. I remember, distinctly, while we were all standing around looking at Steve's body there. Had this terrible grimace on his face. Tom Doerr says, "Damn it, Steve." He said that two or three times. We all just felt so...it just took the wind out of us.

TM: Oh, yeah.

BC: The hard part about this whole incident, too, was this was before they did... I think, we did have a brief meeting after the rescue to discuss it a little bit, but there was nothing really further and people just kind of went their own way. This always bothered me, that incident, because I knew this kid so well.

TM: So there was no sort of stress counseling? Debrief?

BC: Right. They had nothing like that. Then another thing happened. I happened to go in to the South Rim District Ranger Office one day and Bruce Shaw, who was the Chief of Operations, was in there. We got to talking and he said he had just gotten off the phone with Steve Dustin's father.

TM: Oh wow.

BC: He was telling him that his son was dead and trying to explain what had happened. Right in the middle of the phone conversation they had gotten disconnected. So he was really kind of upset about this. The dad didn't get to answer all of his questions and stuff. I said, "How about if I call him? Because I know everything that went on with the incident. I worked with Steve." So I called his father, back in Indiana, after a few minutes and talked to him for quite a while. He was very distraught, he finally said, "Why don't you right me a letter and explain everything?" Which I did, I still have a copy of the letter, and explained what had happened with his son. It was really a terrible thing, but it wasn't the only... Grand Canyon and the National Park Service in general, had a real problem with safety issues during my tenure there. Steve was one that died recreating on his own off-duty and stuff, but there were a number of employees who died on duty while I was there. I don't think there's anything more shocking than to have somebody you work with... You find out they've been killed on duty. For example, there's a guy, he was a foreman for...I guess he was a building and utilities foreman. I don't remember his name now. He went into a building there on the South Rim and got gassed with chlorine gas that they used in... They used chlorine to purify water.

TM: Yeah.

BC: He got gassed. He got out of the enclosure that he was in. He went home and later that day had a heart attack and died from this exposure.

They had a fellow at the sewage treatment plant that got a cut or something. Somehow he got a bacterial infection and he died.

Then they had this young man out...this was really bad. They were out resurfacing the road on the East Rim Drive. They had a dump truck and behind that dump truck they were pulling this massive kind of roller type thing. I think it had a series of four wheels. I think there were probably at least twelve wheels on this, maybe 16. On top of that they had this gigantic slab of Kaibab limestone that was anchored down on the thing. They used that as a roller. Then they had jerry-rigged a water...it was like a tank with a sprayer on the back, but to activate it they had to have somebody in the back of the dump truck that would turn this spigot on and off when they wanted to spray the road. So they had this young guy there and the operator of the dump truck... They went into a viewpoint area, maybe it was Duck on the Rock or something like that. They pulled in there and back out onto the main road and that kid fell off of that dump truck. It was so slick, he had on tennis shoes or something, so slick he fell off and was run over by that big monstrous deal in back and just crushed flat, basically.

They had a safety officer. I remember there was a guy named Jim, [chuckle] he's from the Regional Office. Jim Dempsey. Jim Dempsey came to the South Rim and was doing a safety inspection. They were trying to figure out how to prevent employee accidents, particularly deaths, obviously. I had a complaint. I remember I went and talked to him and I said... There's hardly anything I never did in my career. If somebody asked me to do it, I would try to do it to the best of my ability. This one job I finally decided I didn't want to do anymore and that was up at Roaring Springs. What I would do is get on my horse or walk, and I would go the ten miles up to Roaring Springs from Phantom Ranch. Then I would have to climb up to the spring where they have a little dam there at the top of the pipe, the Trans-Canyon Waterline. Up above that they had set up a little platform for where they kept chlorine bottles. What you had to do was climb up to that platform. It was made out of three railroad ties. Then there were 2 metal boxes. Instead of turning it perpendicular to the cliff, it was parallel to the cliff. So you had three railroad ties and a cliff, and [chuckle] you had to muscle these great big chlorine bottles. They're about five-foot high.

TM: Oh, these are 150 pound/200 pound bottles.

BC: Yeah, they're huge!

TM: The huge size. Wow!

BC: Yeah. You would have to muscle/take the old one. Disconnect it, turn the valve off on the bottle, disconnect it, roll it down into one of the boxes that was for the empties. Then you'd take a full one, which they brought over by helicopter, and you'd roll it along this and hook that up. Well, sometimes I'd go up there and there'd be ice on the thing and stuff like that. I'm all by myself. I would always call by radio and say, "I'm going up to the spring. I'm going up to the chlorine bottles." But that was about it. It must've been 300 or 400 feet straight down, if you fell off of there. I told Jim Dempsey about this. I said, "I don't mind doing this job, but they need to perfect the area where you work so it's not hazardous." So I refused after a while. They did nothing about it for a long time, for maybe a year. Finally one day I called the guy who was... Let's see, what is his name? Matt something, I think... I don't know if I got his... These aren't alphabetical. Anyway, I called the guy who was the chief of the waterline operations and I

told him, "I'm not going to change those chlorine bottles anymore unless you guys change the way that platform and stuff is up there. It's just too dangerous." He said, "Well, okay." He was unhappy about it, but he went ahead and started flying helicopters in there. They started doing it that way and I didn't go to Roaring Springs anymore to change chlorine bottles. There weren't any repercussions. It was just one of those things where the culture was such that employees were expected to do dangerous things. There were other deaths, too. The Halvorson...I can't think of his name...

TM: Elling.

BC: He was the owner of the construction company that put in the original Trans-Canyon Waterline.

TM: That's right.

BC: They had a crash right at Phantom. Right near the old ranger station where the trail that leads to the Silver Bridge and the trail that comes off of the Kaibab Suspension Bridge meet, that little junction right there. The helicopter crashed right there and he was killed.

Then there was another helicopter where they had a drum, I think a fuel drum. They were going to sling it down to Phantom Ranch on a helicopter. They were up at Yaki Point. They lifted up and started to go across the parking lot. They didn't get far enough up and the drum caught on the curbing in the parking lot and pendulumed the helicopter right down onto the cliff and killed both of the guys that were on board.

There was another one where... It was not Park Service, I don't think. They had this big Sikorsky helicopter, something like from the Korean War. They were slinging pre-fabricated parts for houses into Supai and the guy ran out of gas and crashed. But he wasn't killed, he was just badly, really badly injured.

And then, of course, they had several, I think at least two, crashes of non-Park Service tourist planes. Both helicopter and fixed-wing crashes. I think the one fixed wing, they lost 4 or 5 tourists on it. It crashed in the forest. They hit a pine tree leaving the airport.

TM: It's interesting how, as you say, you basically wanted to do what you were told even if that was dangerous and if you refused, because of the danger, there could be repercussions. Not necessarily that there would be, but there could be. It was something that as an employee you were thinking about.

BC: Always in the back of your mind. Inherently there's dangers there, obviously. Everybody knows that. River runners know it or even riding a horse down in the canyon or something like that. Even just hiking in mid-summer in the heat.

TM: Yeah, yeah.

BC: There's all kinds of things. But there wasn't a lot of training. There wasn't a lot of awareness of safety issues in those days. It was just expected that you'd have good common sense and you'd do things safely. But it wasn't always that way.

TM: Right. What do you remember then about Bob Lovegren? He wasn't there very long but made some key decisions.

BC: Right. He was there a couple of years. One of the things I remember, and it helped me in my career as far as knowing how decisions are made and things like that, is my supervisor, Ed Carlson, had me attend a staff meeting. Bob Lovegren was there and all of the division chiefs at the time. I think Keith Trexler was there. He was the Chief of Interpretation. I think Gary Howe was probably there. Anyway, it was interesting to attend because there were a lot of different perspectives. Superintendent Lovegren would ask a question, "What are we going to do about this?" The Chief of Maintenance would chime in with his ideas, and the Chief Ranger with his, and so on and so forth. You found out that some of the decisions that are made are not as cut and dried as one might think. There's always things to think about that in your little portion of the Park Service [chuckle] you don't think about. If we do this it's great, but it's going to cost maintenance a lot of money and manpower and time to do something to make things work. I do remember there was some real tension in the room, too. There was one guy, he was head of like Resource Management, I think. I don't remember his name anymore. During the middle of the meeting, he asks this kind of open-ended question, "What have we done for the tourists this year?" Because one of the things that Bob Lovegren did is he set up like a call center there. They called it "Word Processing" or something. Of course, we know what that is on a computer now, but the way it worked there is you would get on the phone. I could call from Phantom Ranch and I could make a recording, like a Dictaphone-type thing, over the telephone. Then the next day, one of the secretaries could then type up the report up there and they could put it in your mailbox. Then when you came up out of the canyon you could approve the report. That sort of thing. It cost a lot of money. I forget, it was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Division Chief with Resource Management was pretty upset about it because he thought it was a waste of money, I guess. I remember there was a lot of tension when he made that kind of open-ended statement there.

TM: So his point was the money was being spent on operations or funding to help certain groups flow well, but it didn't have a direct benefit to the tourist. Is that right?

BC: That's right, to the visitors, the park visitors. That was his feeling anyway.

TM: Okay. Yep.

BC: But whether that was true or not, it's hard to say. Because you do use information to make decisions at some point and you get information from reports and those types of things that come along. One of the funny things that happened with the Superintendent is they decided to come down to Phantom Ranch, kind of do an inspection. The North Kaibab Trail had just re-opened, so everybody wanted to go up the North Kaibab and see that. A whole large group of people came down from the South Rim, including the Superintendent and his wife. They decided that they wanted to use my ranger station for the Superintendent and his wife to spend the night. So I had to go up and stay at the USGS house. I think I might have talked about this before. But anyway, I was a little bit perturbed about this so when I left the ranger station, I cranked the radio up full blast and then left. The next morning, I saw the Superintendent at breakfast. He looked like he hadn't got a whole lot of sleep. He said, "Do you always leave the radio up that loud?" I said, "Oh yeah, of course I do. I want to know what's going on on the South Rim or if they call me, I want to be able to hear it." Of course, I was lying, because they could always call me on the phone. [laughter] But anyway...

TM: He didn't turn it down?

BC: ...it was sort of a get-even type thing on my part.

TM: Oh, my gosh.

BC: They did all head up the North Kaibab Trail. I remember one of the things that they complained about. I went along with them. When you get up to just downstream from Ribbon Falls you can shortcut across Bright Angel Creek and then go up and look at Ribbon Falls or you can bypass it and come back around and go back across the creek on the north side and you avoid this huge hill...

TM: The hill, up and over. Yep.

BC: ...you have to hike over. We called it "Asinine Hill," I think, or something like that. The guy that was leading the trip up toward the...I guess they were going to Roaring Springs or something, they ended up going up over that hill. Of course, I wasn't with them. I short-cutted around and I was waiting for them [chuckle] when they showed up at Cottonwood Camp or something. They all wondered how the guy that had left after them was now in front of them and why they had had to go over that big hill. It was just kind of a funny little sideline. Other than that... The Canyon always had like social circles or a caste system or something like that. I didn't run in the same social circles as Bob Lovegren, so I don't know a lot more about him than that. I got to know Merle Stitt a little bit. He was the Superintendent that followed Lovegren.

TM: Yes.

BC: One way I met him is after I had been at Phantom for about four years, I finally decided I needed to get out of there. I was actually what's called a Park Technician and I wanted to become a... Of course, I wanted to become a Park Ranger but I figured I needed to move on in my career. I went up into the visitor center one night to chat with the dispatchers and I noticed that Superintendent Stitt's office light was on. So I went down and I knocked on the doorframe and I said, "Can I come in and talk to you?" He said, "Sure." So I went in and we had this conversation about moving from the Grand Canyon. He had my supervisor come by a day or two later and talk to me about whether I'd like to go someplace else. In the meantime, they'd made a call, so he offered for me to go to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. I actually got interviewed for down there, but they chose someone else for the position. I'm glad I didn't end up at Organ Pipe. I later moved to Dinosaur.

TM: Let's talk about how that happened that you ended up going to Dinosaur. How did that all come about?

BC: Well, they'd had a job that had been... There was a woman by the name of E.C. Fields, who was married to Jack Fields. She was the secretary for Bruce Shaw who was the Chief of Operations at the South Rim. When vacancies would become available they would be posted on a clipboard, basically, in the South Rim Ranger Office. I never got to see them because I was at Phantom Ranch so she would watch for these and when something came along that she thought I might be interested in, she would call me down at Phantom Ranch and tell me about it. Then I could come up and if I was interested, I'd apply for the job. So that's what happened with the Dinosaur job. The first job was actually a split position located at the Dinosaur quarry near Jenson, Utah, there. It was supposed to be 50 percent law enforcement, 50 percent interpretation. This was right at a time, too, when a lot of the veterans were coming back from Vietnam, and they got preference.

TM: Yep.

BC: So I didn't get that job. A guy named Tom Hanson ended up getting the job at the quarry. I was a little bummed out, but they kept my application on file up at Dinosaur. When Barry Ashworth left as the river ranger, I think he was river ranger about two years, a year and a half/two years, when he left, he went to work for the Bureau of Land Management, the Chief Ranger, Jim Jones, called me at Phantom, I guess it was at Phantom Ranch, and asked me if I might be interested in that job. Later the superintendent called me, Dick Townsley...Townsley, yeah. I remember the conversation. They liked the idea that I had had a lot of contact with river runners and that might be beneficial. He says, "Have you ever done any river running?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, can you learn?" I said, "Sure." So that was how I got to go to Dinosaur. I just was sort of second-hand.

TM: Do you think that...because you knew Glade?

BC: Glade knew me, too. But I don't know... I'm sure he had some influence on it, also. So, I moved to Dinosaur to a brand new world. [laughing] Much different.

TM: So Bob, we've been yik-yakking now about an hour and a quarter. This is a good point then to transition to Dinosaur, but...

BC: Sure.

TM: ...before we do, what else would you like to include about Grand Canyon that we haven't talked about. I mean there's a lot of details here. We can go for a long time. I'm like, oh, what am I really going to regret that I didn't ask you about, later.

BC: [laughter] I think one of the interesting things that I found in my Park Service career is that things change, but they stay the same, too. I think a lot of the things that were going on at the Canyon when I was working there are still happening today. I'm sure they have the same types of law enforcement issues that I had back then. I know a number of times... I don't know if I ever talked about arresting people down there and how you get them out of the Canyon? Did I ever talk about that?

TM: I think you mentioned, certainly, the one fellow...

BC: I think I did.

TM: ...who was doing the driftwood burning...

BC: Yeah, yeah.

TM: ...or had collected the driftwood.

BC: He went out in a helicopter. But if you arrested somebody down there, that was always a big question. What do I do with the person? How do I get him out of here? Do I really want to arrest somebody in the first place because you're leaving all of the campers and anybody else that might come down here that needs help, because there was only myself at Phantom Ranch. I think probably the biggest change now is they have a little bit more help down there. Whether it's through volunteers, PSAR people on the trails and maybe additional seasonal staff and whatnot. But in those days, you were basically by yourself. So if you left, there was nobody down there.

TM: Right.

BC: There were a couple of times that I did cuff people up. What you're supposed to do with somebody that you've arrested...and you see it all the time on "Cops" or something...is you cuff them in the back, behind their back, so they can't use their hands to get a hold of you or get a hold of a weapon or something like that. But in my case, I was going to take them out of the Canyon so I would cuff them in the front because they had to hang onto the pommel on the saddle [chuckle] while you're hiking out of the canyon when they're on the horse. I always felt pretty safe. What I would do is put a harness on the horse, no bridle at all, so they had no control over the horse other than if they kicked it with their feet or something. You would just tell them to get up in the saddle and you'd have them hang onto the saddle horn and away you'd go. There were several people...

TM: Who did you have there? Who were you taking out?

BC: It was mostly drugs, pretty much drugs. There were always people that were on LSD or marijuana or that type of thing. The way I started dealing with marijuana, finally, was rather than arrest people, was to take it and say, "Come here." We'd go over to the creek and I'd dump it in the creek and say, "Okay." You might write them a ticket for it, but you'd basically would get rid of the problem. That was the way I would deal with that. Of course, the guy with the driftwood, I would have probably had to put him on a horse. I did have one guy that stole beer from Phantom Ranch. I called up to the South Rim. I talked to Lloyd Hoener who was the Law Enforcement Specialist. I said, "I got this guy down here, he's stolen some beer from the Ranch and he's really drunk." It's really late in the day, it was evening actually, and I said, "I've had a long, hard day I don't feel like hauling him out of the canyon, I don't know if he can even stay in the saddle."

TM: Yeah, yeah.

BC: I said, "I'm thinking of chaining him to a cottonwood tree." Lloyd said, "Well, that sounds like a good idea." I said, "Okay." So I got a little pad and I put it down in front of this big cottonwood tree that was just outside the front door of the ranger station. I had this big logging chain, I wrapped it around that tree and I hooked one of the handcuff clasps to his wrist and the other I put on the chain. I made him a little place to lay down there and I said, "You can spend the night." [chuckle] And that's what happened. I remember years later, Ernie Kunsell, we were in a training session in Rocky Mountain National Park, we were all standing around and he says, "This is Bob Cornelius and he's famous in the Park Service."

TM: [laughter]

BC: I said, "How am I famous?" He said, "Because you chained a guy to a cottonwood tree." [laughter]

TM: Oh my gosh!

BC: One of those stories people probably still tell to this day.

TM: Yep. But that makes perfect sense. You were nearby, you had no lockup facility. What else are you going to do? That's great.

BC: Yeah, that's right.

TM: And, you checked with your boss, you checked with Lloyd and he's like, "Yeah, makes sense."

BC: Yeah. I guess the other thing was just the difficulty of getting in and out of the canyon during everything from torrential rain... I remember during the monsoons sometimes you'd have water cascading down the trails. Then in the winter, of course, you had snow. The upper part... I usually went down the Kaibab Trail and the upper part there in the Chimney really gets icy and slick. I might have talked about this in a previous discussion, I'm not sure, but they would put little caulks, little spikes, on the back edges of the horseshoes. It's sort of like a woman's high heel, all the pressure is in that one point. So you get on the horse and go down. The first storm of the season, I asked one of the old-timers, I said, "What do you do? The horses haven't been caulked up." He said, "You go into the tack room, you get the longest lead rope... [Beep] ...you can find and then you hook it onto the horse and you get out in front, and you just stay out of his way."

TM: Wow!

BC: They slide... [BEEP] ...down there and then usually as the winter progressed they caulked them up. The horse had a remarkable amount of traction with those little caulks because you've got the 1200 pounds of horse on 8 little points, so they have a lot of traction. One time I was going down and it was just almost solid ice. It was just really scary. This one place about halfway down the Chimney where it's real steep... I don't know what the percent of the grade it is there. It must be 10% plus cause it goes very steeply and it ends in a cliff as it makes the switchback there. I got above that point about 20-30 feet and I decided...

TM: You were going up?

BC: ...the horse was... What was that?

TM: You were going up?

BC: I was going down. The horse is just going very deliberate in his moving his feet. I thought, boy, he's not very confident of what's going on here, so I decided to get off of the horse. I had on a pair of Redwing boots with Vibram soles. I figured they had plenty of traction. As my foot hit the ground, I just went airborne. Just bang right on my back on the ice. I still had a hold of the reins and I'm sliding down the trail and the horse is just watching me go by.

TM: Good luck, dude.

BC: To this day, I can see that as he watches me go by. I finally was able to stop, probably because I had a hold of the reins. Then I crawled on all fours back up the horse. I grabbed the stirrup and then kind of just pulled myself up with the fender there to get back in the saddle. I never got out of the horse again when it was snowy and icy down there.

TM: Wow.

BC: I would go up and you'd see people fall and slide. I'm surprised there haven't been deaths right there. I had another incident one time where I went down the Chimney, got below the Chimney. All of sudden there was something hit right on the trail, right in front of the horse. It was a wine bottle and it

shattered. I looked up and there were two guys up on the cliff up there. They'd thrown that wine bottle at me, it's about probably 500 feet and they didn't miss but by about 2 feet. They almost hit the horse, would have hit the horse in the head.

TM: Wow.

BC: I got the horse turned around, started up the trail. I made a radio call to the South Rim. They never did catch the guys. I had a couple other cases where... [chuckle] I had a guy with a dog one time. He was coming down and he was about halfway down the Chimney. I saw him up there and he saw me. He turned around and he started running, trying to run back up the trail. I chased him up the trail on my horse and I caught him, actually caught him in the trees on the other side of the parking lot when I got up there. He obviously knew he wasn't supposed to have a dog in the canyon. I'm sure they still deal with those same types of issues down there that I dealt with. Hopefully they have a better track record. In those days we didn't have instant communications like through NCIC or something like that where you could find out if someone was wanted or those types of things. It was all pretty crude at the time. I just had a lot of things that happened with horses. Some of them were almost foolish. One time I went up to Phantom Ranch. I decided I was going to go up the North Kaibab Trail. Horses kind of get what's called "barn sour." If you don't ride them, they decide they want to stay in the corral. They've got food and water and they can rest. So I went up to Phantom, I got right in front of where they used to have a little window where they would serve people. It was kind of on the back, be on the east side of the building there.

TM: That's right.

BC: I went in and I talked to them in the building for a few minutes. Then I went back out and untied my horse from the horse rail there and got up in the saddle and he started going in a circle. He didn't want to go. We had this big, like fight [chuckle]. He finally fell down. He fell clear over on his side in the dirt. There was this huge cloud of dust. He didn't land on my foot or leg or anything. I just kind of spread my legs and when he came back up, I just sat right back down in the saddle. Then when he got on all fours I kicked him and away we went up the North Kaibab Trail, up to wherever I wanted to go. I came back and John Baucus, who was the cook there, went over to the window when I got back and he says, "Well, I guess he didn't want to go, did he?" I said, "No, I don't think so." [chuckle] The worst thing that happened to me is I got kicked and had to go out. I think I might have mentioned that earlier on. Another time I decided foolishly...

TM: I don't remember you getting kicked. Hey, Bob, hang on.

BC: What's that?

TM: I don't remember you telling the kicked story. Maybe you did. Run that past me.

BC: I hadn't been down there very long at Phantom Ranch. There was a guy down there that was a seasonal ranger named Ron Lucas. Ron was going to go ride up the North Kaibab Trail. It wasn't open to the public yet, I don't believe. It was still closed for reconstruction of the pipeline. He decided he was going to catch Duke, who was this big Tennessee Walker horse that we had down there.

TM: How was Duke loose?

BC: Well, he was in the corral.

TM: Oh, okay. Got it

BC: The Park Service corral is like a big wheel. In the middle is the hub and that's where the feed trough is. Off on one side was the water trough, on the north side. Then there are two buildings: a tack room and feed room. So the horse, since it's round, there's no barriers, if you're trying to catch him, he can just go in a circle there ad infinitum. You have to get him trapped in a corner. It's the old story of getting somebody trapped in a round room in a corner. It doesn't work. Duke didn't want to be caught that day. Ron had been kind of, I don't know, almost harassing the horse, I think. So I went down to help him. I had my arms out trying to get him to go in one corner. He was really worked up and on one of my attempts to approach him, he whirled. He just whirled around and kicked me right in my right knee. On the inside of my knee. It made a small cut, but it made a huge bruise. After a few minutes I could hardly walk. So, I got my first helicopter ride. They hauled me out to the South Rim. I went to the hospital up there. They actually had a surgeon at the time. His wife kind of ran the place. He did some surgery on me. I still have a big old scar there because... They did an x-ray and they found a little spot on the x-ray. He thought maybe that was a piece of the hoof or something like that, not the hoof, well it could've been the hoof or the horseshoe, was in there. They took two x-rays. One showed something, one didn't so it probably was nothing. But, he opened that up and cleaned it all out, sewed me back up. Of course, I'm thinking the whole time it's my knee, here goes the end of my career at this early stage. I was in the hospital about 6 days. Finally was released and recuperated for a couple more days and then went ahead and hiked back down the South Kaibab Trail to Phantom Ranch [chuckle].

TM: Wow.

BC: That was the end of that. But I learned which end of a horse was which. There was no question about that.

TM: And today, I mean, talk about some things stay the same and some things don't, the Park has no horses, they have mules.

BC: Right.

TM: I'm wondering when that... When did the Tennessee Walkers get retired and the mules...

BC: They went through a couple of different stages there. They had their horses that we used in the canyon. There were only three of them: Hammer, Chuck, and Duke. Then later in the, still been the mid-70's, they got some horses for the South Rim for patrol. Because you could see off horse a lot of stuff.

TM: I'm sorry, I should clarify, they still have horses for South Rim patrol. But you just don't see them in the lower canyon.

BC: You don't use them in the Inner Canyon. A horse requires...well I used to have horses. I used to spend about \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year on the two I had here just feeding and veterinary care. I didn't even... We live out here in the adobes and I never even shoed the horses. That costs even more money. It was probably an economics thing. Horses are great, but they limit you in some ways. But they also provide a benefit. The limitation is, you go on patrol and you get up to say Phantom Canyon or Ribbon Falls or something, you want to do some extensive hiking or foot patrol. You take a chance leaving your

horse tied up there. Somebody'd let him go, the horse get loose and walk back home on his own. There's a lot of places horses can't go, that type of thing. The benefit is if someone's injured, maybe they're just dehydrated, you can give them a ride on the horse and maybe save a life or at least let somebody have a more enjoyable trip because they can get to camp and rehydrate and all that type of thing. I also used them for maintenance. I would haul dirt up into the campground using dirt boxes and stuff like that. Pulling things. They're valuable animals but they do limit the patrol rangers somewhat in just routine patrol like that. They're great on the trails, but off-trail, if you're going to do any off-trail stuff, they limit you that way. And they're dangerous! I mean, obviously I got kicked. The number of people that are trained in horsemanship is probably more limited in this day and age.

TM: Sure. Oh yeah, today. You bet.

BC: They had, like I say, limitations and positive things, but they were expensive to maintain. In fact at one time there was one mule they had that I wanted to ride down into the canyon instead of a horse, because she was very fast and the horse I rode generally was very slow. I asked the chief ranger if I could ride the mule and he said, "No. It's not dignified."

TM: Oh my gosh.

BC: [laughter] I said, "Okay." There was a guy named...let's see, Ted... No, not Ted Nichols. I can't think of his first name. He was my supervisor and I've forgotten his name. I had a Ted Nichols as supervisor at Dinosaur. But there was another...

TM: Not Ken Hulick?

BC: No, no, no. His name Nichols. He's the one that got the horse program on the South Rim.

TM: Nick Nicholson?

BC: No, no. Let me look at my list here again and see if he's on it.

TM: Yeah, I'm going to look through mine, too. Oh, wait a minute let me see, who would that be?

BC: Anyway, he was the one that brought the horses to the South Rim and started that program. He was, I think, hired because he was a horseman. Let me look at this list real quick to see if I can remember the name. I think he came after this list was made that I've got here. Yeah, I don't see his name on there. He was not the best supervisor because he was not interested in the Inner Canyon. I was down at Phantom for, I think, a year before he ever came down to Phantom Ranch, other than in a helicopter, I think he'd come down. He was mostly just more of an armchair ranger than I preferred [chuckle]. Maybe this is a good point to stop, I guess. I've got lots of horse stories. I told you a few of them...

TM: Maybe we want to think about horse stories for the next discussion.

BC: Sure that'd be great.

TM: Yeah! Let's wrap up this Part 7 interview with Robert "Bob" Cornelius. Today is September 26, 2018. My name is Tom Martin. Bob, please hold the line.