

**Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society**

**Interviewee:** Doug Rickard (DR)

**Interviewer:** Tom Martin (TM)

**Subject:** Doug recounts early Grand Canyon climbing and river running

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TM: So, today is June 27, 2015. My name is Tom Martin. We're at my home in Flagstaff, Arizona and today we're speaking with Doug Rickard. Doug, could you spell your last name for me please?

DR: Yeah, that's R-I-C-K-A-R-D.

TM: Thank you. What year were you born and where were you born?

DR: I was born in Denver, Colorado. Saint Luke's Hospital, delivered by doctor Faust in 1952, March 31<sup>st</sup>.

TM: What were your folks doing in Denver?

DR: My father had just been transferred there two months previously. He worked for DuPont. He was in their Petrochemicals Division. He was selling tetraethyl lead to people like Texaco and other big oil companies.

TM: Okay, did you have any brothers and sisters?

DR: I have an older sister who is 4 years older than I am. I have an older brother who is 3 years older and I have a younger sister who is 4 years younger.

TM: Okay. Did you guys do a lot of camping when you were kids?

DR: Yeah, I grew up after Denver moved to California. Stayed there for a very short time, then North Carolina for a very short time, and then to Long Island, New York. We would spend summers as I was growing up in the Adirondacks camping at different lakes. I had a great uncle who had a cabin tent on Saranac Lake. That was a cooperative deal with the state. Because I had another great uncle who was chief of staff for Governor Rockefeller, he found out about this special program where you could get the land and if you put a cabin tent on it, you maintained it, you could keep that for so many years. That was a nice connection. Great memories from the Adirondacks.

TM: And you were swimming?

DR: Swimming? Yes.

TM: Canoeing?

DR: Canoeing? Yes. The first canoe trip... I went to summer camp, Camp Lanakila in Fairlee, Vermont. In 1964 we canoed across Lake Morey through Spider Tunnel, which is full of spiders, and on to the Connecticut River. We canoed...I think it was down the Connecticut River to Cuckoo Cove. Camped at Cuckoo Cove.

TM: How far?

DR: Well, you know I was like 11 or 12 so it couldn't have been a huge distance, but maybe I'm guessing less than 10—more than 5 miles?

TM: Okay.

DR: Yeah, that was with Pete Gardner who was a legendary crew coach at Dartmouth for years and years. French, Canadian, Indian descent. On another trip that year they broke a canoe paddle, I wasn't on that trip. They broke a canoe paddle and they were one canoe paddle short, so he stayed up late into the night with an axe and a pine log and by morning they had a new canoe paddle. That still stands over the door to the canoeing cabin at Lanakila with his inscription in it.

[Door bell]

TM: Can you excuse me for a minute?

DR: Sure.

TM: I'm gonna pause this.

TM: Okay, so canoeing, camping, Adirondacks. How did you start getting west?

DR: How'd I start getting west? Well, in 1967 tetraethyl lead was on the way out. They realized that they were finding lead samples in the Arctic and it was coming from gasoline. They had to go to unleaded fuels which pretty much shut down DuPont's Tetraethyl Lead Division. So, my father was transferred to the Freon Products Division. [laughing] They went from killing the planet with lead to destroying the ozone. That transfer put us in Saint Louis for my high school years. I had been hiking in New York a little bit with the Boy Scouts. Up Slide Mountain. Some with camp Lanakila. A little more in Missouri but there really wasn't many destinations. No place you could go that was not like any other place, its hardwood trees and clearcut forest. In 1971 when I graduated from high school, we moved. He was transferred to Phoenix, Arizona. That was pretty exciting because Arizona is the Grand Canyon state so I looked forward to doing some stuff in the Grand Canyon.

Got out here and was able to start rock climbing. I had been interested in rock climbing. Had a couple of cousins in New York: Peter and John Fish. John now calls himself John McPherson. I'd done a quite a bit of hiking with them. They have been doing this rock climbing stuff and some ice climbing in the winter. I had always been interested in that *Life* magazine article on the first ascent of the Dawn Wall by...you know, that derelict climber guy [Warren Harding]. Also, did the first ascent of the nose on El Cap. That also piqued my interest. So getting out to Phoenix was an opportunity to start doing more rock climbing. I had done just a little bit in St. Louis with a friend who'd been through an Outward Bound school. We're probably lucky we didn't kill ourselves. Coming to Phoenix, went up to the nose of Camelback, which is all private land now. Dropping out of the sky was a rope and then Art Pundt came down on the end of the rope. You might know Art, I don't know. P-U-N-D-T, he was a teacher, art teacher, for years in

Flagstaff. Has been around for quite a while. Art came down rappelling off the Bolus. Introduced me to the Arizona Mountaineering Club and getting into rock climbing by taking their course.

TM: Did Dave Ganci teach you that course or who was your teacher for that? Do you remember?

DR: Dave was out of it by that time, he had kind of retired. Bob Box and Phil Martineau, Watts. Bob Watts? Yeah, I think it's Bob Watts and others who were teaching that class then.

TM: Okay.

DR: Yeah. Got involved with the Arizona Mountain Rescue team/Arizona Mountaineering Club Rescue team. At that time they had jurisdiction over...well not jurisdiction...they were called by the Park Service if there were technical rescues that needed to be done in Grand Canyon, although I think most of those were probably recoveries rather than rescues 'cause by the time anybody was able to get up there, good grief it'd be 8 hours? The backcountry office then was headed, I think, by a guy called Ernie Kuncl—K-U-N-S-T-L-E, K-U-N-T-S-L-E. Some interesting stuff on him I'm sure that we'll bring up again later. For the first couple of years in Phoenix, I spent a lot of time rock climbing. We'd go to southern California, Tahquitz Rock, Suicide. Spent quite a bit of time really pushing trying to climb hard stuff.

TM: Was that granite?

DR: Yeah, yeah. Tahquitz is a beautiful granite dome and across the valley is Suicide Rock, which at the time was known for incredibly hard routes and really nice granite. There was some granite here. Pinnacle Peak, but not nearly the quality, and Granite Mountain before the falcons. But those routes had... I don't know, I just enjoyed Tahquitz more.

I knew that Grand Canyon was a place that I wanted to go and finally I got Larry Treiber. By this time I was working or was I just about to start working at Desert Mountain Sports, which was a specialty backpacking-climbing shop in Phoenix at the time. It was owned by Bill Sewrey and Larry Treiber. Larry and I had been climbing partners for quite a bit. We decided that we would hike down the Boucher Trail across the Tonto and hike up the Hermit Trail. Larry had previous experience with Grand Canyon hiking and I think it's that experience that got us the hiking permit with a ranger named Brian Swift. I got to know him pretty well. He was great. I could call him up on the phone and he's, "Oh hi Doug, what do you want to do now?"

The deal was that I would drive up to Hermits Rest. I'd meet Larry there and we would hike the next day. This was a spring break trip around 1973, I think. Well, hopped in my Volkswagen and drove up to Flagstaff. Drove out 180, it was dark by then and it was snowing. Out 180 was a little ominous because there was a jack-knifed tractor-trailer. It had overturned on a Volkswagen Bug just like mine except mine was a convertible. The back end, just the engine compartment, was sticking out from underneath this overturned semi and the rest of it was squashed flat. Thought boy that's something of an auspicious start to this trip. Drove around that though, after the wait for the traffic, and up and out to Hermits Rest. It was still snowing. It was accumulating on the ground. Must have been about midnight. Got out of the car and found the head of the trail without any problem. Larry wasn't there, so I hopped back in my car and slept in my car until first light. At first light you couldn't see 20 feet, it was a white-out. Just snow blowing sideways. Walked around the parking lot to make sure that Larry wasn't there and Larry wasn't there. I said, "Well, if he sees my car he'll start down. If he doesn't show up, he doesn't show up. I don't know where the trail goes, but I'll know where the trail went. I can always turn around and go back to my car." I started down the Boucher Trail from Hermits Rest and it was just pretty cool. Just

white out. As you keep walking, more stuff comes into view and less stuff is viewable behind you but the trail was pretty clear so there wasn't any problem there. I got down to Dripping Springs. There were some people camped at Dripping Springs who didn't seem particularly friendly. I just remember knowing that I wanted to move on pretty quick because having grown up just outside New York City and spent a lot of time in New York City, it didn't appear to me to be a good situation, least not by myself. So went down, continued on down the Boucher Trail, which as I recall at the time, precedes along a ledge on the top of the Supai. I think you're down below the Coconino at that point. The trail wasn't nearly as clear, but there was no place you could go. You either stayed on that ledge or not [laughing]. You had to stay on the ledge. There was tread, I was able to follow the tread because the tread in spots was full of water, so it must've been starting to thaw or, you know, wet rain. Somewhere along that stretch started getting some lightning, no thunder. So we had...

TM: What month was this?

DR: This was spring break, so it was March.

TM: Okay, thank you.

DR: Yeah. So we have thunder-snow. That was pretty awesome because you couldn't see anything—it is still a white-out. I could see farther than 15 feet any more than 20 feet. Could see maybe as far as 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a mile, but I don't think even that far. Few hundred feet, maybe. But the echoes from the thunder, up and down the canyon. "Wow, there's something here but I can't tell what it is." Kept hiking. Got down through the Supai with lots of thunder and lightning. I was told that finding the top of the Redwall was key and it might be a little difficult. But I found it without any problem. Continued down through the Redwall. As I recall you're kinda blocked. There's a cliff on your right side and it's open to the left. Still echoes up and down the canyon, just awesome. I get down to the bottom of the Redwall and I guess a little bit onto the Tonto Plateau. Within 15 minutes the entire storm cleared. It was just spotty clouds and warm sunshine and here's the Grand Canyon. The first time I've seen it in my life, from the Tonto Plateau. Just incredible and it's just wow! So, I hike around down into Boucher's camp. Could've camped at the mine I suppose, but I didn't. Not sure I knew that was there so I set up my tarp in Boucher Creek.

The next day I hike down to the river. It was clear and cloudy and kind of chances of rain. I think maybe it sprinkled off and on but it was sunny, too. Spent some time doing handstands in the beach/on the beach at Boucher and watching the river. I don't think any river trips went through then. The next day I hiked up onto the Tonto. Was hiking across to Hermit. There's a little ravine or a canyon in there where you can see the river. It was sunny and nice, a gorgeous day. So I sat down there and watched the river and had lunch. This river trip pulled up, I think it was Hatch as I recall. They had lunch down below me and I had lunch up above them. I said, "Hmm, that's probably something I should do some time, too," and proceeded on over to Hermit. At Hermit, I found Hermit's camp, of course. I looked for the 32 Ford that Chuck Graf told me would be there, but couldn't find it. I think it had been removed by then, 'cause somebody took it out. It might be the one that's in the museum, the Park museum. I've heard that there's a 32 Ford there. If not, somebody else has a pretty nice 32 T-Bucket. But in Hermit's camp, could see the lower end of the cable car. That was pretty impressive. There's also a little dugout place in a hillside that had a stone front and a door on it and earth over the roof. You could open that up and go inside. You can't do that anymore, they keep it locked up. I spread my tarp, 10' x 10' tarp, over the roof of that 'cause the weather was threatening again. I slept inside that little dugout, which was very comfortable.

Next night, I hiked down to the river at Hermit and saw the first real Grand Canyon rapid. Said, "Wow, that's pretty impressive." More hand stands on sandy beaches as I recall. Hiked back up to camp. Seems like I'm forgetting something but... Spent the night in the camp and then next day I start hiking out Hermit Trail. Don't know how long it's gonna take me so I got an early start. Didn't find too much difficulty with finding that trail through the Redwall where it's all broken up. There were muddy footprints on top of the rocks, so following a tread wasn't any problem. I got up to the Coconino and it really started clouding over. Got up into the Kaibab. 'Course I didn't know these formations at the time, I've learned those since then. But I realized that there were breaks in the geology. Got up toward the Kaibab, got toward the top, and got completely socked in. For the last 1½ mile/2 miles snow, whiteout, you couldn't see 50 feet. Got back to my car and I said, "That's amazing. I wonder if they do this for everybody." You leave the canyon rim and the place opens up. You go back and its whiteout. That was my first trip in the Grand Canyon. Drove back to Phoenix. Think I had to buy a pair of tire chains in Flagstaff at the Texaco station that used to be next to the Denny's right off of I-40 and drove down the hill.

TM: So, Larry didn't show up?

DR: Larry didn't show up.

TM: Okay, now was that common for Larry to sorta get things going but then not show up?

DR: I found out later that it was, yes.

TM: Let's talk about Ernie for a little bit. Did you have a permit? Did you get a permit for that trip or did you just go?

DR: I got a permit for that trip from Brian Swift.

TM: Okay.

DR: And following those trips, I got permits from Brian Swift. But then Brian left and another ranger kind of took over the permitting office. Her name was Kathy Green. I have a letter at home, I should've brought it. I have a letter at home that I framed from her. Because when I showed up at the office to get a permit, I was never successful as far as I remember. I was always turned down. Kinda irked me quite a bit because I had friends who were hiking in the Canyon not as frequently as I, but they could get permits for anything, anywhere. They had carte blanche get a permit, you know. Harvey Butchart, of course, got carte blanche. Other friends of mine who hiked there quite a bit, but less than I did, had carte blanche. But I...there's no way I could get a permit. Jim Haggert had the same problem.

We showed up one time to try and hike down the Old Hance Trail. "No, can't go." Which one was it at first? "It's too hot in the summer. Too hot." "Oh, well, we're from Phoenix, we're familiar with the heat." "Doesn't matter, it's too hot." We went anyway. Hiked up onto Grandview and in the mine at Grandview there must've been a ranger because there was a ranger's radio left just outside the mine. We saw that and said, "Hmm, should we change stations? No, let's just get out of here," Phew [speed], out the Grandview Trail. Didn't get caught. That's the closest that I think I've ever been to getting caught at anything without a permit. We went back the following winter. We were gonna do something else but I convinced Jim, "Hey, let's see if we can get a permit for the Old Hance Trail." "No, we've already done that." "Yeah, but they said it was too hot. Let's see what they—" "Oh, oh—oh yeah—okay." So we tried to get... It's Kathy Green again. "Can we get a permit for the Old Hance Trail?" "No, it's too cold. You

cannot hike the Old Hance Trail.” “Okay, well, how about if we get a permit for...” whatever it is that we wanted to do. I think it was South Bass. “No, the road is complete quagmire. We have 2 Caterpillar D-9A’s stuck out there and you’d never get through.” Well, it turned out that the D-9A story was... It came up quite a bit. I can’t remember what we did, but we did something else without a permit off of the South Rim. We must’ve done a Grandview to Bright Angel trip or Grandview to Kaibab trip, which was pretty nervy because without a permit on that central corridor. I don’t think they had the backcountry rangers then that they do now. I figured we could always claim that we were day hiking and, you know, they would have to prove that we weren’t. But yeah, anyway. ‘Cause on that trip, Jim and I hiked down to the river at that Old Grandview Trail site that drops off at the Tonto, which is kinda different kinda place to get down to the river cause the river’s quiet through that section. All the other places you come to rapids, like we did at Grapevine. Like I did at Grapevine.

TM: Doug, how did you meet Jim? Jim Haggart. H-A-G-G-A-R-T, is that right?

DR: I think it’s E-R-T.

TM: Haggert, okay, E-R-T.

DR: Yeah, but I always messed that up. That was through the Arizona Mountaineering Club and his rock climbing. He, myself and Chris Beal made an epic trip to Yosemite Valley. Jeez, on that trip there was a guy singing at a campfire. He was pretty good. This is kinda off topic. But got closer and closer to the campfire and this girl stands up with a guitar, shoves it in my face and says, “Here, you play. I gotta pee.” So I sit down with this guitar, am fumbling around with it. The guy across the campfire looks a lot like Neil Young, but everybody looked like Neil Young that was playing a guitar in those days. It wasn’t until the next day at the commissary where I’m buying orange juice or something, these two girls ahead of me are saying, “Yeah, wasn’t it incredible? He was here, he was playing.” I said, “Oh, who’s that?” and they said, “It was Neil Young was in the camp ground last night playing guitar.” All I could remember was when I sat down, he said, “What do you wanna play?” I said, “Well let’s play something that’s not so damn depressing,” [laughing]

Then on the way home my generator went out. We’d all rebuilt Volkswagen engines, but this had me stumped. Chris Beal says, “I know what’s the matter. Pull in here. Give me a dollar.” Gave him a dollar. He runs in... The car’s going ‘rararaarar’. I gotta really rev it to keep it going. He comes running out with this ice cream bar on a stick. He says, “Eat this, eat this. Take a bite, take a bite, take a bite.” We finished it and we get the stick. He takes the stick and he pushes the brushes into the generator. The car roars to life, the lights come on. So every 125 miles we had to stop and push the brushes into the generator. [laughing]

TM: Okay. So you met Jim and Jim was doing some pretty impressive climbing in the Canyon at the time. Did you get that wrapped up into that with him?

DR: No, not so much. I had an opportunity to do the first ascent on Buddha, but turned it down for a winter mountaineering trip. Larry Treiber was doing more climbing at that time, maybe, than Jim. Later on Jim tried to get me, as I remembered, to go do the Dome with him. We were just about to do it when I heard that it’d been done. Maybe Glenn Rink bagged that. I’ve known Glenn since he was maybe 16.

TM: How did you meet him?

DR: When I worked at Desert Mountain Sports. I think he might have been in one of the climbing classes that I taught for Arizona Mountaineering Club, not sure. But he was always really gangbusters, "Let's go do it." Really enthusiastic guy.

TM: So, did you get on any of the Arizona Mountaineering Club rescues?

DR: Yeah, uh-huh. None at the Grand Canyon, but there were a couple of rescues around town that I was involved in. One was at Pinnacle Peak. A guy had fallen and broken his back. We were able to extricate him. He came through it perfectly fine, no paralysis. I was climbing right next to where he was so I was right there with a couple of my climbing friends who weren't on the team. A guy named Dick Webster was climbing around the corner. Dick did a lot of first ascents at Joshua Tree and was also really involved with the Riverside Mountain Rescue. Chuck Graff once said that Dick could probably take his first aid kit and remove your lung and put it back. Had the experience to be able to do that. So the guy picked the right place to fall. We had his head stabilized and he was immobile in place. We're able to get a backboard up to him after a long period of time, strap him in and get him to a hospital. A student of mine ran into him hiking around Pinnacle Peak one day and he told the student the story. The student came in and told me the story. I said, "Well, yeah, I'm the guy. I was the first one there." "No way," "Yeah way."

TM: Okay. So after that Boucher-Hermit Hike, then what were your next journeys in Grand Canyon?

DR: Next one I think was a 9-day trip from New Hance to South Kaibab. That was a pretty cool trip. Hiked and climbed to the river every place we could. Hiked up into the upper reaches of most of those canyons as well. Although I missed the inscriptions in Grapevine. Never saw those. Yeah, the inscriptions at Hance. Those were pretty interesting. That was in June, very early June, and all the side canyons were running. Cremation was even running, so there was water everywhere. The temperatures... We lucked out, the temperatures weren't real high until after we got out.

TM: Great. That was the same—that was also in '73?

DR: Yes, I think so.

TM: Spring break for the snow trip and then...

DR: Yeah, had to be because I got that permit from Brian Swift, too.

TM: Okay.

DR: And then at '74, I think was when Kathy Green came in. That was the trip, oh my gosh. At the Tipoff. The last night we camped off just off the South Kaibab Trail. I think it was legal then, but I don't think it's legal now. So we were at the Tipoff. The Tipoff's right at the South Kaibab, right? Yeah, okay. I'm remembering this correctly. We found a lady with her two kids and her two kids were just having the times of their lives. "Mommy, look at this! Mommy, look at that!" It was just incredible and mommy's going, "Oh man, ugh." We said, "Do you need help? Can we be of any assistance?" Mom pointed to the fact that she was wearing these red, three-inch-high heels and she didn't know what to do. She said, "I don't know how to get to the rim." One of the kids said, "Oh, mom, just click your heels three times." [laughing] She took off one of those shoes and they were like straps with closed toe, pointy. Everywhere there was shoe on her foot, there was blister. I mean blister. Big, thick things most of which hadn't popped yet. She said, "Thank god you're here. I just don't know what I'm gonna do. I don't know how

I'm gonna get out of this place." Her kids, you know, had not really egged her on but she had gone on with their enthusiasm not wanting to squelch any of the kiddy amazement that was going on there. So I pointed out that there are different possibilities. We could go to Phantom Ranch and let them know and they could phone for a helicopter. That would probably take until tomorrow and it would probably be her most expensive option. If she could make it to Phantom Ranch, then she could probably stay the night. Because at that time they were keeping cabins for rescue. If she was the first rescue then... Otherwise may have to double-bunk or something, I don't know what they do. She said, "Well, where's Phantom Ranch?" I pointed down. "Oh, I can make it that far." "Do you need any help getting there?" Said, "Oh, no, I think I can make it." So she and her two kids went down to Phantom Ranch. When we were hiking up the next day, we saw them on mules getting a ride to the rim. Oh my gosh, I just... The image of those blisters under those high heels. I don't think she could ever wear those high heels anywhere again either. I think they were just ruined. [laughing]

TM: So, this was 1973?

DR: Yeah.

TM: And how did you get to the river then in '74?

DR: How'd I get to the river in '74? '76 was the first river trip.

TM: '76, I'm sorry. Okay.

DR: There were two friends of mine. Ross Clements and Mark Brown. They were kind of running surreptitiously kinda semi-private/semi-commercial trips. They would get permits and they would supply the gear. You paid them a sum of money, which was more than just cost sharing, and then you had a trip. It seemed worthwhile to me. I had put in for 1975 and I was supposed to go on the 1975 trip, but as it came up, Bill Sewrey, owner of Desert Mountain Sports, said, "You're not going, you're working here. I'm going. If you go, you're fired." It was a time I needed the money to pay for tuition. It was pretty cheap back then as I recall. '73 was like 125 bucks. Yeah, I had been saving up for that. So in '75 I didn't go which is probably a good thing because the people that went on that trip I didn't get along as well with as the people that went the next year in 1976. The next year in '76, did the same thing. Mark and Ross got another permit. If you got the permit and kinda turned it over to them, then you got to go for free and they would charge everybody else. You had to pay for your own food, of course. '76, got back on a trip. Again, Bill came to me and said, "If you go, you're fired. I'm going on this one, too." I said, "No, Bill. I quit." I went down the river and just had a great time with Dave Hanson, who I'd been climbing with quite a bit. He's done a lot of inner canyon hiking.

Last winter... Oh, maybe I should say something about Dave. Dave is a phenomenal, physical specimen. When I first moved to Phoenix in '72/'73 and I was in phenomenal shape, I could get to the top of Camelback in 15 minutes and so could Dave. Well now... That was when I was 21. Now that I'm 63, it takes me like an hour. Dave can still do it in 15 minutes. Dave's been doing it this entire time either Camelback or Squaw Peak. Most of the time he does it twice. All through these years, the very last weekend that the south rim is open he has hiked from the south rim to the north rim, stayed at the lodge, next day he hikes back. No rest days, Dave doesn't take rest days. At first there was a whole entourage that went with Dave. Now, I think most of them drive around to the north rim and meet him as we age. [laughing]

TM: And Dave was on that trip in '76?



DR: Yep. Dave was on that trip with a girlfriend named Sylvia. Ross Clements was on the trip. A guy named Doc Toogood who had a yellow inflatable banana boat. Who makes those...it's real common brand, Sevylor. Doc tried to paddle. Got to Hance and was thrown out of his boat and almost had to swim Soc. Yeah, Ross didn't pick him up 'cause Ross was waiting for the boat. The Doc was kind of wet by the time we got to him. Bill and Leslie Fisher were on that trip and so was Steve Atwood. There were some other people, too. Baby Bear. Some other nicknames, I'd be hard pressed to remember their given names. That was just an amazing trip. Had a 16-foot Udisco, had two of those. The Fishers had their own 17-foot Avon. Ross had like a 17-foot Zodiac. It was kind of weird, open stern, but he had oars on it and liked it. So hey... Yeah, I think that's all the boats we had. Nobody flipped, had a great time. Jim says, Jim Haggert says he met us on that trip and rode with us to Crystal or Tuna. Met us somewhere around South Canyon. I was thinking that... Well no, that has to be true. That's gotta be the way, because that picture of him and I in that Miwok, which was 1978, he wouldn't have been at Dubendorf in '78 if we'd let him out at Tuna. So yeah, there you go.

TM: Okay. And in 1976 were you packing out your solid waste at that time?

DR: No. No.

TM: Were you still building fires on the beach?

DR: Yes and no. Seems like there were fire pans and you had to deposit the ashes in the main current of the Colorado, so the big black chunks just washed up on the beach anyway. It just scattered them all over. Solid waste was... Human waste was deposited in a pit toilet and blue goo was poured into the pit toilet. Yeah, that was becoming a mess. I'd taken another half-trip in '76 down. I took a Geology of the Grand Canyon trip/coarse with Troy Pewe. Hatch brought us from Lees Ferry to Phantom Ranch and I hiked out at Phantom Ranch.

TM: What do you remember of that trip?

DR: Yeah. Fell out of the boat at Hance and held on to the side while the boatman watched me and drove the river. He said as long as he could see me he knew I wasn't in the propeller. He had known...

TM: Shorty?

DR: Shorty Burton. He had known Shorty Burton, had trained under Shorty and was able to tell a lot of stories about Shorty Burton.

TM: Who was that boatman?

DR: I don't remember.

TM: And what stories did he say about Shorty, do you remember those?

DR: Cooking incredible pies and cobblers and stuff. Just almost being prepared for about any emergency, you know, always having a cool head. Seemed like there was a story about how they pulled something on him, but I can't remember what it is. Some kind of practical joke or something. Boatman kind of stuff.

TM: What do you remember about Pewe?

DR: Troy Pewe? Wow. Older guy, fairly interesting. Some of the graduate students in the class didn't particularly agree with some of his stuff, some of the things he put out. But my impression was that he was kind of an older-school geologist towards the end of his career and these younger guys had newer information or were up on..., you know. Dr. Pewe just hadn't quite come around yet to the new ways of thinking. To a point you get that in just about every class.

TM: So, Pewe had written a Grand Canyon river guide, is that right? From...

DR: Yes.

TM: ...Lees Ferry to Phantom.

DR: Yeah. I've got a copy of it.

TM: And he never did one from Phantom down?

DR: No, his geology trips always ended at Phantom Ranch.

TM: Okay.

DR: So, yeah, he wanted his students to be familiar with that section of the canyon.

TM: Okay, okay. That makes sense. And that was also in '76, yes?

DR: Yes. Yeah, so I went twice in '76, the once-and-done rule. I don't know if they had it then or if I was clearly in violation.

TM: They did not. They did not. You were good.

DR: Oh good, whew.

TM: Yeah. So, now you've experienced hiking in the Canyon and boating in the Canyon.

DR: Uh huh.

TM: How did that impact your vision of the Canyon? Were you still like, wanting to boat a lot, more than hiking? Or sorry, not still, but did you then wanna boat more than hike or did you want to hike more than boat, or did you wanna keep doing both?

DR: Oh, keep doing both. Yeah, boating is such an incredibly large logistical problem and it's not really something you can do all the time. Where going up with Dave Hanson, for instance, and doing a day hike, finding the Enfilade Point route, or something like that is something you can do every weekend. So, yeah, the combination of both.

TM: And the Enfilade Point route you did from the rim down with Hanson?

DR: Yeah.

TM: With beta from Harvey or not?

DR: Yeah. Oh yeah. He was a great source of information. Always willing to give ya/tell ya stuff. Always enthusiastic about, "Oh, you going to the Canyon, great! Where are you going?" "The village." "Oh yeah, okay." Yeah, that's the impression that I had. "Hey, you'll really like it." [laughing] Then Jim Haggert turned me on to his trail notes which were available through NAU? So at first, I could go to the NAU library—yeah, that's right—go to the NAU library and I could check them out through their special collections. They'd ask me who I was and why I wanted to see these. Without too much resistance, I could get all of Harvey's notes for all of his trips. Now, of course, it's so easy to get them online. But they're not organized in any kind of approachable way. You have to pretty much download and print them all out and organize them by geographical area yourself, I think, to I have a serious resource. But they're there. You can get them.

TM: What do you remember of Harvey, besides his enthusiasm?

DR: Oh gosh. I went to one talk of his about hiking in the Grand Canyon. I can't remember where it was, but I got there a little bit late and sat in the back. This group right in front of me, after he went through just incredible explanation of different things that he was working on during the question/answer session, raised their hands and said, "You know we tried to do your route that goes down behind the Cardenas and Escalante Buttes and it's not there and you're a liar." Harvey at first was very patient. He said, "Oh it's there. If you look for it, you'll find it." I had just been flown off of that route by a rescue helicopter and I knew it was there. They insisted that it wasn't and Harvey explained that maybe they needed to hike along the top of the Redwall a little further and they would've found a break. They, "No, we hiked the entire..."

When I hiked it with Bruce Grubbs, again without a permit, the Kathy Green/Ernie Kuncl era, we got down. We had to hike a fairly long ways along the top of the Redwall. Harvey writes in a very concise style, something like, "After you reach the top of the Redwall, the break can be found." Well, in between Redwall and the break, can be 3 or 4 miles. [laughing] Which is kind of cool, I like it. You have to kind of find stuff for yourself a lot more than other guidebooks. We'd hiked along the top of the Redwall, finally found the beautiful break in the Redwall, big gulley that goes straight down. Gorgeous route. We stopped for lunch and I sat on top of these 2 big boulders. Bruce sat maybe 10 yards away. We started to have a lunch. These 2 boulders I was sitting on were propped up against each other but they weren't touching. There was a little bitty rock holding these boulders apart. I said, "Geology doesn't play baseball, how does this happen? You can't—how does that rock get stuck there to hold this boulder apart?" So yeah, I was kind of curious. I took my heel and I just touched that rock. It fell away and bam. I said, "Oh, that's one of the stupidest things I've ever done." [laughing] My foot was trapped there and I couldn't get it out. So finally, Bruce and I after working on it for a while... We wedged/he wedged a rock in there and we were able to chip out those 2 blocks of Supai. We wedged a block of Redwall in there. Chipped out the Supai enough so I could get my foot out and immediately it swells to the size of a basketball. He said, "Uh, I don't think you're going anywhere." I just said, "Yeah, I don't think I can walk on this." He said, "Well, what do we do? We're not registered." Said, "Okay, well I've got a gallon of water. Why don't you hike out and register and then go up to the point up there and signal me with a mirror that you've registered. Then I'll start signaling with a mirror from here for a rescue." He said, "Okay, we should be good. By about 2:00 tomorrow we should be able to get this all done."

So he hikes out, goes in and registers for the route. Ernie Kuncl says, "Oh, woah, you're going on that route? Let me have them." Ernie happened by. Said, "Let me show you where it is." He brought Bruce into his office and showed him where the route was. He had Bruce walking off the Redwall at one of the 200-foot waterfalls that we'd already checked out and the lower part of the route wasn't right either. He

just, "Go right here." And Bruce can't say anything, "Oh, mhmm. Mhmm. Okay. Alright, yeah, I see." [laughing] What's he... "No, that's not it, 'cause I've got a friend down there. We're trying to register for..." But he got the permit.

All day they were filming an advertisement for Western Savings, the one that went under with Fife Symington and all that. So there was a helicopter circling around Desert View for most of that morning. I don't know if you remember that advertisement where he's talking about Western Bank and all the good things they do and at the end they say, "Isn't that grand?" and they pan back and it's Escalante and Cardenas Butte that part of the Grand Canyon. I always wondered how they didn't get a little mirror flash in there. [laughing] It's kind of weird, a car came and parked at the point at just the right angle so I got a mirror flash off its windshield at the same time that the helicopter took off for the village to refuel at the airport. So, I'm flashing the helicopter all the way in. Bruce says that he had gotten out, he'd registered and gotten out and was by a ranger with a radio. The helicopter had radioed in, "We got a mirror flash off...", you know. Bruce says, "Oh, that's probably Doug or maybe this is the day for rescues." The helicopter goes into the village, refuels, starts coming back out. I start flashing it again, it turns, you know, flies straight down. We have taken the little saddle and put a huge triangle on it dug it in the dirt. They pull up. I throw some dust in the air to give them an indication of wind speed, but they didn't need it. They just hovered there for a while, figured it out, landed. Guy came, put me in the left seat actually. He was flying from the right seat. Threw my pack in, took off up to the rim. The way this guy flew... He flew right into the wall knowing that there's an uplift on the wall that'll carry him up and over, rather than putting more juice to it. Just as you're going, "Oh, my god. Oh, okay, I see what you're doing." That was my helicopter tour of the Grand Canyon.

TM: Where did he fly you to?

DR: He flew me to the... I think they asked where my car was. I told them and they flew me right to there. 'Cause I said, "You know, I can get myself. I don't need a ground ambulance. I can get myself to the clinic from there." So they let me out and insurance picked up the tab for the helicopter rescue, for the emergency transportation. So it was a fairly cheap air tour of the Grand Canyon.

TM: Did you break your—did you break your leg? Was it just superficial damage?

DR: A lot of soft tissue damage, a little bone chip. Boy it took a long time to heal. Maybe 6 weeks or more. Then it hurt for quite a while when it got tired, hiking on it.

TM: Okay, that makes sense.

DR: Yeah. It was pretty good nail.

TM: Yeah. Good. Good.

DR: Same leg as my knee. My new knee. Matter of fact I think I still have... Yeah. Right here.

TM: Yeah, there's a little bump right there, huh.

DR: Yeah.

TM: Okay. So it really caught your foot, not your fibula and tibia up above.

DR: Right.

TM: Right. Yeah, just smashed your foot.

DR: Yeah.

TM: Wow. That was lucky.

DR: Above where my foot is wider, so there's a perfect jam crack. Might've been able to get it out if I'd really pulled on it, but with a lot more damage.

TM: Yeah, yeah. Okay, so as our time is cruising along here, what were probably the one or two most amazing things you've seen in the Grand Canyon in your time there?

DR: Oh my gosh, well, the Canyon of course. Hate to say the F-4 Phantoms that used to fly through. They used to fly through below the Tapeats. They used to fly through below/in the inner gorge. Are you familiar with that? Yeah. I used to throw rocks at them. One pilot saw me and took evasive action, of course. I'm throwing, you know, 100 feet and he's a mile over there. There was one, as well, that came... I had just started down Tanner and one came over the rim with his engines pretty much out, just coasting. Making a whistle sound that I'd heard once before when a Golden eagle had flown past me in New York off the Escarpment Trail. Sounded just like that. I'm looking around, except this ones get louder and louder and louder. Getting really loud and here's this F-4 just above the tree tops, falling into the Canyon. He got down to as low as I guess he wanted to go and fired in the afterburners. They can't go vertical like fighters can do today, but he was as steep a climb out of there as he could possibly. Like blam, blam, that echoed up and down the canyon. I remember thinking, "You know, wow, that's the same echo that I got on the first trip with the thunder." Working at Desert Mountain Sports, we used to have fighter pilots who would come in and I asked one of them, "What are you guys doing when you're flying through the inner gorge?" He said, "Well, we have the recon cameras on and we take pictures of the entire length of the Grand Canyon. We're not supposed to do that, but we take them to the photo guys and they develop them for us and we put them up all around our living quarters."

TM: Wow.

DR: So, there have to be copies out there of four recon photos of the entire length of the Grand Canyon.

TM: Wow.

DR: I said, "Well, how can you do that?" He said, "Well," and this is like 1973/'74, right? There's Detente, but the Cold War is still pretty serious. He says, "Well, we're not supposed to, but they can't keep track of everybody." I said, "What do you mean you can't keep track of everybody?" Can they keep track of the Soviets? I'm hoping. [laughing] The Grand Canyon is just so amazing that it's that kind of human thing that makes you realize what the scale of the canyon is. For it to be so large that a fighter jet can just fall into it for the amount of time that he did. I'm sure glad his afterburners worked or he'd have a smoking hole off of the Tanner Trail that would still be there today.

The natural thing that amazes me, I think I kind of agree with Powell. Down by Lava where the cinder cones put all that magma into the Canyon. Just thinking about that blocking it up and creating what must've been a pretty sizeable lake. Just all of those natural forces at work at the same time. It's just—it's really mind-boggling. I drove out to Swamp Point. Took me a couple of days trying to figure out the

roads back there 'cause was before the days of GPS. You'd get so far and a tree would be down. I didn't have a winch on my vehicle and I didn't have a chainsaw, so I'd have to back up, turn around, and try to figure out some other route. I finally get out to Swamp Point. That was a real disappointment because about every 15 seconds there was a plane flying through Swamp Point. I hiked down to the bottom, out of the saddle, and there's this little CCC cabin there that's full of tools, or was at the time. That was kind of cool, but I hiked back up to the top of Powell Plateau and the trees there were just incredible. Not like Ponderosa pine you find anywhere else. Just bigger than you can reach around and maybe 6-7 of them per acre. Just monstrous things. That was pretty amazing experience. I'm thinking that, gosh, the entire Mogollon Rim could be that, prior to cattle or whatever it was that started the current fire succession. Most of the trees on the Mogollon Rim are from 1919 as I understand it. Well, that's almost a hundred years. They still mostly have black bark, where mature trees have that more yellower or golden color. These were all old growth trees. Pretty impressive.

TM: Cool. So, last question. 75 years from now, someone's gonna listen to this recording.

DR: Hmm, I'm sorry. [laughing]

TM: What would you like to tell them about Grand Canyon?

DR: Wow. Well, I hope it's a place that still exists. That it hasn't been sold off by the more conservative members of our political structure and turned into a profit-making short-term enterprise. 'Cause if that's happened, boy, you sure missed out on something that was really wonderful. It's a place that always seemed like home. I go up to the Grand Canyon and look over the rim and it's just... John Muir's words about go to the wilderness and get its good tidings, your cares will fall-off like autumn leaves. I don't remember the quote but it always feels that way. It's always a place that's neat to know despite what's happening in my job when I was still working or with other relationships or all the other stuff that goes on in life. You go to the Grand Canyon and just take a breath. Have a break. Enjoy nature. See something you've never seen before and come back refreshed. Renew your attitude. Come back to the problems that exist in your world with new vitality.

TM: Cool. Well Doug Rickard, thank you so very, very much for this interview today. It's been a real pleasure.

DR: Well, thank you! Thank you. It's been fun.