

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society Interview

Interviewee: Jean Kindig (JK)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Jean Matthews Kindig recounts working at the El Tovar in 1952 and at the Lookout Studio in 1953. She is assisted by her daughter Susan Sheldon (SS) and son-in-law Ken Sheldon (KS).

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Transcriber: Nancy Brian

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TM: Today is Monday, February 25, 2019. We are in Room 402 in the Monte Vista Hotel in downtown Flagstaff, Arizona. In the room today are Jean Kindig, K-I-N-D-I-G. Jean's daughter Susan Sheldon, S-H-E-L-D-O-N, is here along with Susan's husband, Ken Sheldon. My name is Tom Martin. So Jean, thank you so much for being willing to chitchat about your recollections of Grand Canyon. What year were you born?

JK: 1935.

TM: Where were you born?

JK: Chicago, Illinois.

TM: What were your parents doing there?

JK: We lived in Evanston, Illinois. There was no hospital in Evanston and so my mother had to go to Chicago hospital. Evanston is a suburb and it's on Lake Michigan and that's where I was brought up.

TM: What were your mom and your dad doing back in 1935?

JK: Well, my mother was from Wales, my father from England. As I understand it, my father escaped his father and came to the United States. When he got a job with Western Union in Chicago and had a salary, he, I guess, wrote letters cause there was no internet to propose to my mother. She said yes and she took the Queen Mary, I believe it was, from England to New York. He met her in New York. They had, I don't know if it was a relative or a close friend, I think was a distant relative who was a minister. They married right there [chuckles] when she got off the boat.

TM: Nice. What year was that, roughly?

JK: Well, I was born in 1935 and my brother was born in 1932, so it was 1930, is my guess.

TM: Nice, and so did you grow up in Evanston then?

JK: Yes, it's on Lake Michigan. We lived in an apartment and there were just two bedrooms so my brother and I shared a bedroom. Poor dear. He's two and half years older, so when he went to college, I got the bedroom to myself. [chuckles]

TM: Did you swim, did you get in sailboats, did you get out and around into the forested land nearby at all?

JK: We were just a couple of blocks from Lake Michigan and in the summer they had sandy beach, you know. The water wasn't that warm, but being young it didn't matter, we swam anyway and then we could dry off in the soft sand.

TM: Nice.

JK: Lake Michigan was our playground area. There was a community playground on the shore of Lake Michigan and a beach that we'd would go to. At that time, unfortunately, it was a segregated town. So, the neighbor population lived...trying to think, what direction would that be? That would be, I can't see my map right now. But they lived on one side and then the white population lived on the other side. And now when I went back to visit, it was all one population/one community.

TM: Was your school segregated?

JK: Sort of, but not completely. In other words, the black population was not invited to some of the activities that the rest of the school was automatically included in.

TM: And then, when you were 10/11 or so, WWII got going. What do you remember, you would have been heading off into high school soon, in grade school. What do you remember about the war years?

JK: Ration, we had rations. There were coffee rations, sugar rations, that's all I remember. Butter perhaps. I remember my Mother had ration cards/coupons so they were very careful about shopping.

SS: Did you end up selling your tires and your car so they could take the rubber from the tires?

JK: My parents had a car that when it was time to change the tires, they either couldn't afford it, so we gave up the car. So I was really brought up without a car. Now as far as transportation, we had a very good bus route. When I was in high school, I could ride the bus to high school. Otherwise I walked, which I enjoy doing today.

TM: Nice. In high school, what were your favorite subjects to study?

JK: You're testing my memory!

TM: I am ma'am, and if you don't remember, that's OK.

JK: At least I graduated and I think it was a general education. I do remember biology. I was fascinated with biology. The teacher must have been very good anyway, so that was my major in college.

TM: Where did you go to college?

JK: Well, we have to backtrack a bit, because I went to the Grand Canyon.

TM: OK, then let's backtrack, quickly.

JK: I was signed up for a small college in Illinois. My parents signed me up for a small college and they accepted me. When I came to the Grand Canyon at 17, I was fascinated with the West and the warm weather.

TM: Was that your first time west of Illinois at 17 or had you traveled west a little bit?

JK: Not really, because we did not have a car.

TM: So, typically, one would graduate from high school and then go to the small college. How was it that you veered off at age of 17, this would have been 1951 or '52.

JK: '52.

TM: How was it that you were like, "Yea, I'm going to go to college, but I am going to take this thousands of mile of diversion?"

JK: OK. I had a friend named Carol Young and our mothers were friends. Carol had an aunt living in Williams, Arizona who invited us young girls to come visit and work at the Grand Canyon for the summer.

TM: OK, so let's talk about what you were thinking before you got on the train.

JK: [chuckles] Do I have to remember? Adventure.

TM: Where you excited to go, do you think?

JK: Yes. I didn't know much about Grand Canyon, but it sounded intriguing. We had some photographs, so I wasn't too excluded from my image. Well, to continue, Carol's aunt met us at the train station in Williams.

TM: I'm going to back up just a little bit here. Do you remember anything about the train trip across the country?

JK: Yes. I remember wearing 3 inch high-heel shoes. [laughs] We must have poked holes in the train as we went. At that period of time, girls and women wore skirts so I had stockings and heels and skirt.

TM: Knee high skirts? A little below the knee?

JK: Below the knee.

SS: And you took the Super Chief, right?

JK: From Chicago we did take the Super Chief.

TM: The Super Chief goes to L.A. from Chicago and goes right through Williams. So as you were seeing the open deserts in New Mexico before it got dark, trying to work the train schedule out, what were you thinking?

JK: Wow, it was so different from Evanston or Chicago, you know, and very little water. It was an adventure that I embraced.

TM: Do you remember Carol's aunt's name?

JK: No I don't remember her name but I do remember that she met us at the station at...what did I say, Williams, and took us to the Grand Canyon. Then I never saw her again.

TM: Did she drive you up there or did you go up on a train?

JK: No, there was a train.

KS: This first visit, you were still in high school, you had to return to high school after this.

TM: That was Ken speaking there. So you're 17, you're going for the summer. Are you planning to work, you knew this was going to be a work trip?

JK: As I remember, we were promised jobs but when we got to the employment office there were no jobs or no record that we applied for jobs. But since we were hot bodies and reasonably fit and could speak English, we were given jobs. So we went to the employment office and there was an opening at the El Tovar Hotel behind the candy counter. And I, at 17, was allowed to sell cigarettes and candy, gum, newspapers. And that, if you have ever been to the El Tovar Hotel, you walk in and the counter was kind of at a diagonal on the right-hand side of the door.

TM: And did you sell film as well?

JK: There was a little room within the lobby, I should say, which had more goods in it and that's where they sold the film.

TM: OK. What else do you remember about the lobby of the El Tovar? Today it's very dark. Was it dark then or was it lighter?

JK: Well, I was young so maybe I had better eyesight. It was lighted, but dim light. It was a high ceiling. What I do remember about it is the Hopi bellhops in the lobby. They had really brightly colored velvet shirts with probably concho belts or tied at the waist with black pants and headbands. When visitors came into the lobby they would pick up their luggage without being asked [chuckles] and take them to their room.

TM: Did you make friends with them?

JK: Well, of course, I was behind the candy counter as I call it. People had traveled around the West and had come in from Las Vegas with silver dollars. My till was full of silver dollars at the end of the day. The Hopi would come to my till at the end of the day and trade dollar bills, because they had just come from Las Vegas with gambling money, or whatever, money to spend let's say, and would trade their dollar bills for silver dollars from my till. They could use those silver dollars for making concho belts. The interesting part at that time, 1952, was that they just put a ring on the back of the silver dollar and then they would attach the sides, make concho belts. So the first belts were silver dollars!

TM: Nice, yea, and if you needed some money you could whoop the belt out.

JK: Sell your belt or lose weight and take off a dollar bill.

TM: One of the bellmen was named Sam and his nickname was Hopi Sammy.

JK: You remember this?

TM: I'm asking you, do you remember Hopi Sammy?

JK: No, I don't remember names that well. I don't remember. I could probably visualize them, but I couldn't bring up a name.

TM: Alright. Well that's tough because then I have another name for you which would be Paul Schnur.

JK: Oh yes, bingo, but what did he do?

TM: I think he was a bellhop as well, a bellman.

JK: Really, so you remember this, or you...?

TM: I just interviewed him yesterday.

JK: Oh. He was in the lobby?

TM: He was there at the symposium.

KS and SS: We got to meet him in the parking lot.

JK: Well, maybe that's why I recollect the name, because we were just at the symposium.

TM: Yea. What else do you remember about the people coming and going at the El Tovar?

JK: The general public are you asking about?

TM: Yea.

JK: Well, they had, as I said, just come in from Las Vegas so they had money spend or they didn't come. [chuckles] And they tipped well I think, so the bellhops were reasonably pleased with their daily income or their tips. I'm not sure they were paid, do you remember? A little bit and the rest of it came from tips.

TM: And it was one of the better jobs.

JK: There was no elevator so they walked up the steps and people coming in to rent a room were pleased to tip them or to have someone to handle their luggage.

TM: What were your thoughts of the Grand Canyon as a place when you first walked up to the edge and looked around?

JK: Awesome. I think it was in the evening and the sunset was setting. It was glorious. A visual feast.

TM: Do you remember your lodging, where you stayed?

JK: Yes, it was the women's dorm and it was right next to the men's. No, the Indian dorm which included men and women. There was a women's dorm, a men's dorm, and an Indian dorm. That was of interest to me. Sometimes the Indians would drum all night. It would happen to be a death on the reservation, or a birth, or some event that happened, or just because they wanted to drum. But they would drum.

TM: Some people might think that was annoying, some people think it was amazing.

JK: I thought it was fascinating to hear it. The rhythms that they used. Couldn't see them, but could hear them. And then during the daytime, they would entertain like they do now on a platform, as you know, right outside what is it? The curio house.

SS: Hopi House?

JK: The Hopi House. They lived there, that was their home.

TM: So the train would come in and there would be a wave of people headed right toward the rim or they come right in with their luggage. Did you go through waves of people that way off the train as the train came in different times of the day?

JK: Yes.

TM: Were you working 6 days a week or 7 days a week?

JK: 6 days a week.

TM: What did you do on your day off?

JK: I walked down to the Phantom Ranch. I don't quite remember how many times, but I have a fond memory of going down to the Phantom Ranch and staying overnight and coming back up the trail in time to go to work the next morning. I don't remember whether it was 8:00 or 9:00. I assume it was about 9:00 that I went to work. At the Phantom Ranch the swimming pool was drinkable. It's fresh water from a spring! [chuckles] It was absolute treasure. I'm from Evanston, Illinois right on Lake Michigan, so I grew up swimming. So it was a pleasure for me to have a pool.

TM: Was the water in the pool as cold as Lake Michigan?

JK: I think it came from a hot spring, no it did not. Ok, but it was a spring.

TM: The spring was way up, Roaring Springs, so the river spent quite a while going down Bright Angel Canyon there. Then they diverted the water off into the pool. So yes, it was coming from a spring but...

JK: It probably was not hot.

TM: Well, if it was summer, it would have been warming up just from the intense heat. It came out cool but it was on its way up.

JK: It apparently didn't bother me because I don't recall.

TM: If you were used to the cold Lake Michigan water, this would have been great.

JK: Oh it was.

TM: What did Carol do, Carol Young, your friend?

JK: Yes, she met a man who was a son of a cook and got married at the age of 18, I think. I was the only attendant. The ceremony was in a little to me a little garden near the rim but not on the rim. So it was not on the Rim Trail, but in a secluded garden that was there. And it was lovely. I don't know what her married name was, can't recall, and I don't know if they stayed at the canyon or not.

TM: OK, so that meant that you would have come back alone then.

JK: Yes, I came back alone.

KS: So that was the first summer that she got married that you worked there?

TM: So, Hopi Sammy and Paul Schnur, there was another woman that was working at the El Tovar, named Rosie Acosta.

JK: I don't remember that.

TM: She was German and she would have talked with a good German accent. Right? And Mary Hoover might have moved off to the laundry, but she spent a lot of time working at the Bright Angel.

JK: And I don't remember her name.

TM: Do you remember there was a permanent resident at the El Tovar that had married multiple times and had married an Arabian sheik.

JK: Are you talking about a woman?

TM: Yes. She just moved in and lived in one of the rooms there in the El Tovar. Francis...trying to remember her last name. That's not ringing a bell, so that's alright.

JK: At the El Tovar we had an employee dining room so I did meet the rest of the employees as they came in. There was no set time, I don't think, for a meal. It was just set aside for people to come in who had a break or had a lunch break. A mid-morning break I think we had. I don't recall. Or a lunch break or an afternoon break.

TM: Did you meet any of the mule wranglers? Did you hang out with any of those?

JK: I hung out at the mule barn because I was fascinated with the way they handled them. I don't remember any names, but it was really interesting to me to watch them saddle the mules. Particularly trying to educate the people that were riding the mules how to get on, how to handle the mules, what to expect going down the Grand Canyon trail.

TM: So growing up at Evanston, had you been exposed to large animals at all?

JK: We didn't have a dog or a cat. We lived in an apartment and so we weren't allowed to have animals.

TM: OK, because it's interesting, we assume through the years that more and more people have a hard time with the mules because they weren't raised and didn't grow up around large animals. But it's interesting to hear that this instruction was happening in 1952 because a lot of people weren't raised around large animals that were taking those mule rides.

JK: You know how it is, the dirt floor and the ring around it. People could stand around and watch the visitors get on the mules. The mule handlers were so patient [chuckles] handling dudes and telling them how to handle the reins from A to Z. Then the mule train would start off and there would be a place, still doing it, where the mules were allowed to defecate. And it was messy. So the visitors going down had to sidestep, which was really hard because you had the canyon on one side and the wall on the other side. [chuckles]

TM: Some things never change.

JK: That was entertaining you might say.

TM: Would you hang out at the rim when the dudes showed back up and tried to get off their mules after riding out?

JK: Not always because I was working.

TM: OK. Did you just have that one job or did you take other work when you were there?

JK: No, just the one job. I was there two summers.

TM: Let's just focus on that first summer of '52.

JK: In El Tovar Hotel.

KS: Did you know the person or persons that managed Phantom Ranch?

JK: Well, I met them because I only had one day off a week, but I could walk down and spend the night there, and then I would have to... They gave me a very nice breakfast. It was lovely. I could swim in the pool, well the night before I swam in the pool. Gave me breakfast and then I could walk up the trail in time to go to work the next day.

TM: Was that Slim and Dottie Patrick?

JK: Oh that sounds so familiar, I don't remember them.

TM: Chances are...

KS: I think you said it was a couple.

JK: It was, well Slim and Dottie.

TM: Slim and Dottie, yea. Then Shirley Patrick would have shown up right about that time, '52/'53.

JK: Where? In the Phantom Ranch?

TM: She was down at Phantom there.

JK: I don't recall that name either.

TM: But the food was good and the people were friendly.

JK: Oh very friendly. And the pool was lovely. You know I grew up swimming, so it was a pleasure for me.

TM: Did you see any river runners go by with their boats at all? That would have been a rare occasion but they would have been there.

JK: Well, you can't see the river from the Phantom Ranch.

TM: But they would have all come up in a rush and jumped in the pool. [chuckling]

JK: And it was good it circulated with fresh water, right?

TM: But if you were just down there once every other week even, your chances of actually connecting with those people would have been fairly rare.

JK: That's right.

TM: Did you get a thought to hike anywhere else or was it just "Wow, there's a pool down there and I love pools and that's where I'm going."

JK: You mean hiking in the canyon? Yes, I went down to the Havasu. The Havasupai people lived in a canyon and they had a little shop, really. You could buy a few things anyway and throw your sleeping bag in a designated space, I think it was. I remember meeting a school teacher. I think they sent them down, at that time, to the Havasupai. Perhaps you remember this or vaguely remember that instead of sending them... Well, their education was from their family and from the tribe so I can't call them uneducated but the United States government decided they had to go to school. So they could send their children up and live with other families or... But I don't think they escaped going to school instead of staying in the canyon. Do you remember that?

TM: I don't know that history well enough to want it on tape, because I don't know that I have the story right yet.

JK: It was very difficult for them to go up and leave their families, or go to school and go back down, and repeat during the week. So, I think they were housed with other families.

TM: Yes. There was a school away from the reservation, away from their families. It was very difficult.

JK: Very difficult and their English was not... Either they didn't know the language or it was very poor. Then they were taught in English.

TM: So that would have been doubly hard for them.

JK: Yes. Well it was on the other reservations, too. So the Havasupai, I don't know if they'd send people down to take them by the neck, literally, and bring them up to the rim for education. I don't recall the details of that.

TM: Do you remember how you got from Grand Canyon to Supai? I'm assuming you would have taken the train back to Williams and then west to Seligman and then somehow overland to Hilltop, the top of the trail where the road ended.

JK: The road ends yes and then you have to walk. There were mules. We didn't take the mules.

TM: Did the mules carry your stuff or did you carry your stuff?

JK: I carried my stuff.

TM: So, now you are backpacking in 1952. How did you strap all that stuff to yourself? Because it wasn't like you walked out and bought a Kelty pack.

JK: No, but it was pretty warm down there so you don't need very much. I don't recall if I had a pad or not.

TM: Did you have a little rucksack?

JK: Rucksack.

TM: Ok, did you borrow that from somebody or did you make your own?

JK: That I don't recall cause in Evanston, Illinois, I didn't need one or use one. I never saw one. [chuckles]

TM: So, what were your thoughts? This blue, blue water and big waterfalls? Did you go...

JK: The waterfall was just so dramatic and you could walk behind it. The pool was gorgeous. That's in my memory.

TM: How many people were there when you were there?

JK: At Havasupai? How would I be able to count that?

TM: Well were there 2 or 10 or 100? Was it crowded or was there very few...

JK: No, it was not crowded but there were people. They had a little shop. They were scattered homes...

TM: I guess I was thinking, how many other tourists were hiking down the trail with their stuff and spending the night?

JK: There were, but I don't recall how many. But I do remember that there were other people there, too.

TM: Did you spend a couple nights there? Again, you're still on the 6 day schedule so you've got to scurry out there and run back.

JK: That's right. But I did have a week off. Was it a week vacation time for the year? I don't recall. But, anyway.

TM: You were able to work out the schedule then and head out there. Did Carol go with you or did you go by yourself?

JK: Well that time I did go by myself, but there were other people that I knew that were going, but I was not attached to anybody else's schedule.

TM: I'm assuming it was summer and it was hot.

JK: It was. The further down you go, yes it gets warmer, and that's quite a stretch. I don't remember the altitude difference. Do you?

TM: It is a couple thousand feet. You start at the top at the Redwall, no it isn't, it's higher than that. You're up in the Coconino, sorry, Kaibab at the top.

JK: I remember most people took the mules down. So that was an employment for people that were living there.

TM: Yes. So Supai and Phantom Ranch, did you hike anywhere else?

JK: Well, along the rim east and west.

TM: Past the normal hiking places?

JK: Well, there's...when you... east, west...I think west, there's a limit.

TM: Out toward Hermit. Hermit Rest was out there.

JK: And then you have to go on a trail going down.

TM: Then you go down into Hermit..., yes.

JK: Well, if I had to work, I'd go back and wash my clothes, do other things. Oh, I think I did go down Hermit's. Hermit's Rest they called it, the zig zag trail that goes down to the Colorado River. Yea, I did it.

TM: Nice, what do you remember about that hike?

JK: Well, that there were switchbacks. Sandy. Walls, you know. And then you get to the river. Was there a waterfall down there? Or...

TM: There's a little water in the creek when you get down to Hermit Creek first, and then you walk the creek bed down to the river down the Hermit Trail.

JK: So you start out, there is no water until about halfway or further. So you had to pack your own water and food. So that was a day trip because I don't recall spending the night there.

TM: OK. And then the summer is going to end and you're in college and looking to go to biology as...

JK: Well, my first summer I had to go back and finish high school. Evanston Township High School.

TM: And then the second summer, 1953.

JK: I had graduated from high school and my parents had signed me up for a small college in Illinois. I was so infatuated with the West and the weather, the people, the scenery, that I asked them if I could go to the University of Arizona. It was out of state tuition and today I feel guilty that they [chuckles] had to spend... Because I didn't have residency until, what two years later, something like that. So I did graduate from the University of Arizona.

TM: Let's back up a little bit. So after you graduated from high school in the spring of 1953 and you've negotiating with your parents about maybe going to the U of A, did you go back to the South Rim for that second summer and work there?

JK: I did have two summers there.

TM: Were you trying to save money for college?

JK: For college, yes.

TM: Did they give you the same job again?

JK: Well, the first... [pause] I worked at the Lookout Studio on the Rim.

TM: With Virgil Gibson?

JK: You remember his name! [chuckles] I don't remember what he looked like, isn't that interesting, but I remember his name. How can you forget the name Virgil for a man? It was a very pleasant experience because people would go in to the Lookout Studio to go to the deck to look out over the canyon and then they would come back in and buy some curio or some little snack or a photograph.

TM: I was going to say, 'cause Virgil had some large photographs, black and whites or colored there.

JK: He also had a darkroom and at that time the cameras could jam. So they would hand me the camera—I mean, I was 18—hand me the camera and I would go into a darkroom, it was only a closet

with a black curtain, and open the back of it and rethread... I learned how to rethread the camera and shut the camera before I got out of the little darkroom and hand it back to them.

TM: Nice. So, Virgil, he was a nice guy. He seemed to always have a camera around. Do remember anything else about him?

JK: I don't.

TM: Do you remember any one else you might have worked with there?

JK: I don't remember the names, but I did work with other people in the Lookout Studio.

TM: And were you back at the woman's dorm then?

JK: Women's dorm.

TM: And again working a six day a week schedule?

JK: That's right.

TM: So did you then run down to Phantom Ranch again?

JK: I did.

TM: And Slim and Dottie would have still been there in '53 I think.

JK: Yes, but I don't remember them. That was interesting that you remember them. What was their last name?

TM: Patrick.

JK: OK.

TM: Slim had a son named Ken and he was a wrangler at the time.

JK: Patrick, OK. And Slim named, son named...

TM: Slim's son was named Ken, but he wasn't the son of Dottie. It's complicated and I can't help you any more than that.

JK: OK. But they were very pleasant at the Phantom Ranch. I don't recall if I carried a pad with me or not.

TM: Well, they had some employee housing down there. They had like a dorm kind of thing.

JK: For some reason I remember sleeping outside.

TM: OK, you might have.

JK: So I might have had one of the pads or something that I could put outside. And I remember that we had to tie our food to a line and hoist it up out of the way from roving animals.

TM: Yes, because there must have been many of them.

JK: Looking for a free meal.

TM: Because there was food there. Absolutely. Mice and ringtail cats and all kinds of things.

JK: And food is so very precious. You don't really share it with other people because you know you only have limited amount of food yourself.

TM: Did you get into photography, then, working at the Lookout Studio?

JK: You'd think I would, that would be a natural for me. I must have had a Brownie camera or something like that. I did not take a lot of photographs.

TM: Paul Schnur, S-C-H-N-U-R, worked at the Lookout Studio with Virgil as well. I'm not sure if he actually worked there during '53 that summer, because eventually he started working as well as a bellman at El Tovar where I think the money was better.

JK: What was he doing?

TM: He would have been a little younger than you by a year or two. His father Leo was the doctor at the clinic, at the hospital there. So that was Leo Schnur. Did you ever have any reason to go to the hospital at all?

JK: I remember the name Schnur, but I don't remember that I had any issues physical or mental.
[chuckles]

TM: If you didn't, you wouldn't have gone over there.

JK: I would have. I don't think I had any accidents, not in my memory anyway.

TM: So just down the trail a little bit further to the west from the Lookout Studio was the Kolb Studio.

JK: Yes.

TM: Did you go over there and did you interface with Emery at all and any of the people that were there?

JK: Yes. Went to their program in the basement. I was fascinated with the photographs and the video that they had of going down the river, the Colorado River. And meeting the people that went down the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River. Since I was working and I only had one day, I never did that. I never when back and I really regret that.

TM: So after that summer of '53, then, you would have taken the train down to get to Tucson, or did you take the bus. How did you get down to Tucson, do you remember?

JK: I don't remember the details. I know the train went east-west and I don't know about north...

TM: You would have had to go Ashfork and then take the train down south that way, I think that is how that happened but I'm not quite sure where the line went to get to Phoenix.

JK: It would be or on to Tucson.

TM: Could have been a bus because the Southern Pacific was going east-west and the central line coming through Flagstaff.

KS: I remember two of the summers you said that occasionally you would go out with your peers/with your friends that you worked with maybe for an evening. Somebody had a car and you'd drive out for a little campfire evening with boys and girls.

TM: Oh, this was on the rim of the canyon. I did not have a car but there were people that were working there, same age as I was, that had a car or we would walk into one of the glades and have... I can't remember drinking until I was older. But I do remember that people would bring their beer, or wine, or a casket of something. And that they were not at the rim but near the rim, one of the little glades in there.

TM: Did you go out to Rowe Well at all? There was a bar called Rowe Well.

JK: Where was it?

TM: It was a little west but then south along the railroad. I think it was just outside the park, but I'm not sure.

JK: It's the name of a place or a community?

TM: There was a bowling alley there, there was a bar there, there were rooms there, and there was a shuttle going from the village out to that place.

JK: Apparently did not do it because I don't remember it.

TM: There was a huge man, just a giant of a man, named Jake Baranca.

JK: That name doesn't ring a bell. Did he work at the bowling alley?

TM: What did Jake do? He did many things. He was cooking. I'm not quite sure I'd have to look it up, what he did. Other people that were there at the time besides Big Jake... I'm drawing a blank right now.

JK: What's his last name?

TM: Baranca, B-A-R-A-N-C-A, I think but I'm not quite sure on that spelling.

JK: Doesn't ring a bell.

TM: OK, alright. Did you do your own clothing, did you wash your own clothing or did you use the laundry?

JK: Yes. They had a little laundromat somewhere.

TM: They did. Down by the powerhouse.

JK: I do remember that somebody, some woman, complained that I had body odor when I was working at Lookout Studio, I think it was. So that prompted me to wash my clothes more often. But, you know, you didn't have it in the room, it wasn't very convenient. You'd have to walk over and wait for your laundry.

TM: Did you interface with any of the National Park Service staff at all?

JK: Don't recall that. Anybody in uniform I assume you are asking. And getting to know them personally? I don't recall that I did.

TM: At that time, the powerhouse would have been making electricity. It had this giant smoke stack down on the other side the railroad tracks. Do you remember anything about it? It had a whistle that went off at noon I think.

JK: I don't recall that, but we just went to visit the power station, we couldn't get in. The gal that was leading the group had a key but it didn't work so we didn't get to go in.

TM: Oh no, that's unfortunate.

JK: But we saw the outside and the location. Now I didn't have much to do with the powerhouse or the people that managed it.

TM: So as you've just spent a couple days walking around the South Rim, of course, there's a couple feet of snow there, was there anything that struck you as being different from your time there in the 1950s, that you were like, oh wow, that's really different?

JK: You are asking me to compare what I just saw at the Grand Canyon from when I worked there? Snow! [laughing] You're asking about buildings or walkways?

TM: Impressions, just thoughts.

JK: Well, my age gives me a different viewpoint of it.

TM: Sixty years.

JK: We walked down a ways, one/two switchbacks or something like that this last time we did this. I had not realized there were petroglyphs or pictographs, which ones were they, on the wall to the left. We were prompted they were up there. I don't recall that I ever saw those before.

KS: Before the tunnel.

TM: Yea.

JK: You go through the tunnel and they are on the left hand side. You've seen them. Who made them? Do you have any idea?

TM: Ten thousand years' worth of First Nation occupation.

JK: It looked like they were made by one person.

TM: Could have been. Maybe yes, maybe no. I'm not sure. Wonderful to see them there. I am curious about the U of A in 1953.

JK: I was there in 1952, '53. From '53, '54, '55, '56, graduated in '57 and I would go back to Evanston in the summer.

TM: In biology?

JK: Yes, that's what I was studying. I taught biology at the... Name the high schools there.

TM: Tucson High School.

JK: It started with an "S".

TM: Salpoint, S-A-L-P-O-I-N-T, I think was one of the schools going on there. I went to school on the west side so I remember all those schools but that was 25 years later.

JK: It might come to my mind.

TM: Flowing Wells was one of the schools there. But Tucson High School was the big one downtown.

JK: Did I teach there or was there... OK, a high school that started with an S?

TM: Yes, there was, there may have been a couple of them but I'm not real good at rattling off the names of the 1954, '55, '56 high schools there besides THS. What do you remember about the U of A? Were you glad you went there?

JK: Yes and no. I had a bad relationship so that colored my years there. They had very good teachers I think. They still do. A good reputation I think. And I liked the weather. [chuckles]

TM: After you graduated, and you graduated with a biology degree?

JK: Mmm hmm.

TM: Then what happened? Did you stay in the West or did you go back East? Eventually you would have met your husband and raised a family. How did that time in the West affect you, then, having grown up in the East?

JK: Well, it's the Midwest I grew up in, not the East. [chuckles] East of Arizona.

TM: East of the Continental Divide. Yea, east of Arizona. Its east. [chuckling]

JK: How did that affect me? I was kind of breathless for the West and I enjoyed the West very much. Evanston is finite because of Lake Michigan and communities on all the other 3 sides. So wide open spaces appealed to me.

TM: I'll bet. After the U of A then where did you go?

JK: University of Arizona...what did I do? I have to look at my notes, what did I do?

TM: No worries.

JK: I don't think I have it here.

SS: We can help you out with that.

JK: Ok, what did I do?

SS: Well you stayed there for a year or two after teaching and then left, went back to Evanston for a little bit. You said not very long at all and then your parents took you to Boulder.

KS: Cause you heard about Boulder.

JK: I have met my... I heard of Boulder, right? So I went to Boulder, Colorado with my parents, that's right. We only had one car. I just remember taking the one car and looking for places to live and leaving them stranded. [TM laughs] They were not pleased with that. But I did find a house with two other gals. It was a three bedroom house and there was one bedroom that they advertised that was for rent. I'm so

glad I did that because... One was from England and became a very good friend and the other is still a good friend of mine. They had Friday night, or was it Saturday night...weekend night gatherings and everybody brought a little something. Not a whole meal, you just brought salad, or bread, or you know an offering for a whole meal and put it out. Everybody had a... I don't remember drinking.

KS: Was that when you guys called yourselves the YACs, the Y-A-C-s, the Young Adults Club?

JK: Well, yes, [chuckles] we did. We had a group that we called ourselves the YACs.

SS: And now they are the OACS, The Old Adult Club.

JK: I'm still friends with a few of them.

SS: But through that group you met Neal.

JK: There were three of us women that met the men at this YAC group and we married.

TM: Nice. Were you teaching in Boulder?

SS: You worked for the University doing...

JK: I worked not as a teacher but for the University of Boulder and met my husband Neal who was a T.A., teaching assistant. They asked him to stay on the faculty but you need a PhD. and here's where you're going. [chuckles] So he applied and was accepted at Stanford.

TM: Oh, wow.

JK: It was a WOW. So we went to Stanford and he managed to have a short career there. It was a new faculty member and he wanted to get a PhD under his belt. So Neal graduated in two and a half years and his classmates were there for seven.

TM: It can drag on.

JK: It can. Yea. So we came back to Boulder where he had a position, with a little boy.

KS: You had your first son in Stanford, your only son.

JK: So David was born in Stanford Hospital. One day he asked where he was born. We said, "Well, Stanford Hospital." He said, "Yes, but where?" [chuckles] We decided, OK, we'd make a trip back to Stanford. We got to the hospital, I walked in and they wouldn't let little boys into the birthing area. [laughing] Anyway he saw the hospital. That was kind of amusing to us. And had a very good trip through Canada back to Boulder.

TM: After 1953 heading off back to the Midwest and then back to the West.

JK: To the Grand Canyon.

TM: Well, to the University of Arizona, and then to Boulder and you met your husband, and out to Stanford, did you go back to the Grand Canyon at all from 1953 through those years? When was the next time you were back at Grand Canyon?

JK: I don't recall, because we had a family. The son and then the daughter. So we were busy. Neal did had the summers off. We could have gone, but he... I don't recall.

SS: I know that we did come when you graduated with your Master's in archeology from the University of Colorado and Dave graduated the same year. We celebrated by hiking from the North Rim to the South Rim.

JK: Oh, that's right.

KS: And staying at Phantom.

SS: We backpacked.

TM: What year was that?

JK: 1953.

SS: That would have been...

KS: '85.

SS: I think it was '82.

KS: When Dave graduated from college? I think it was 1985.

SS: We'll just say '85.

TM: OK. Do you remember that rim-to-rim backpack?

JK: Yes, because we went to the North Rim but we left a car there and walked through the canyon. Then how did we get home?

KS: Well Neal, your husband, had to drive around.

SS: Yea, dad drove around.

JK: Neal had heart problems at that time, health problems, so he agreed to drop us off and meet us at the South Rim. That's what it was. That was too bad that he couldn't join us, but he didn't, and so he did a little sightseeing on the way back. But, he met us at the end of the trail...the beginning of the trail.

TM: This was you, with Susan your daughter, and who else was in the party?

JK: Was Dave with us? Dave Kendig, as in my son.

TM: Nice. So you and your children.

JK: Yea.

TM: Nice.

JK: We stayed overnight at the Phantom Ranch. Do you remember swimming in the pool?

KS: I don't think it was there.

JK: It wasn't there at the time?

TM: The pool was filled in and closed because as the visitation to Phantom Ranch grew, it was just water in and water out with no chlorination, and that didn't bode well for the water quality.

JK: So it was a health department or something that took it? So there's no swimming pool down there now? Oh am I lucky, I remember it. I could drink the water, you know.

TM: Yes, very lucky.

JK: That's interesting. I just remember that we had to hoist our food up at night. There was a wire between poles away from all the marauding animals. Yea, OK.

KS: We also got to join, Jean got to join us and Richard Pekny from Tucson and the gang on a couple Thanksgiving backpacks.

JK: That was traditional backpacks. A friend from Tucson.

TM: How do you spell Richard's last name?

KS: P-E-K-N-Y. He always says the shortest way. P-E-K-N-Y, Richard Pekny.

TM: Thank you. And what years was that?

JK: 19...

KS: Let's see the earlier times that you joined us, I'm trying to think...

SS: We did a lot of backpacks.

KS: Would have been in the late 90s and then early 2000s.

TM: And this is Grand Canyon?

KS: Ah ha. Always from the South Rim. We'd always spend the night in Bright Angel on a Wednesday night and then Thanksgiving Day we did different routes each time. We all, like you said, took a group Thanksgiving meal down to the river down some trail. Down Grandview Trail, went down different ones and then spent four days.

TM: Did you take Jean with?

JK: Oh yea.

SS: A couple times.

JK: I think on two trips. The ladies remember Jean, there's a little bit of minor 5th class climbing or 4th class, that Jean was able to lead the women with their backpacks up some climbing around the trail on parts of the Tonto.

TM: Nice. So look what you did! You got the kids going out there!

SS: She did do that.

TM: That's great.

KS: I can maybe just... There's also, just with your experience of the Grand Canyon and the Native Americans. You got your Master's in archeology, you became quite involved with archeology of the West. Tom might want to delve into that a little bit.

JK: I worked in Colorado and was an archeologist in the four Western states for private contractors. Then I worked on my own because I found artifacts and...let's see...two cooking... The Native Americans would dig a hole in the ground and put wood in there. They didn't have charcoal or anything like that, but that's how they cooked. Sometimes it would be right on the trail or on the side of the trail. So I recorded that.

KS: Was this the high altitude one in the Indian Peaks?

JK: High altitude in the Indian Peaks Wilderness.

SS: You have two sites up there that you actually spearheaded.

TM: So the Indian Peaks Wilderness is up above tree line. It's the watershed for Boulder's drinking water...

JK: On one side.

TM: ...on one side, and so this would have been... Do you think it was a trade route from the east to the west across the Rockies?

JK: Well, finally what I figured out was that they had a quarry on the west side of the Continental Divide which had a lot of crypto-crystalline materials, which is what projectile points are made out of. That's the reason they went over the Continental Divide to get that. They'd either stay in Kremmling or come over the Continental Divide and winter along the Front Range in Boulder valley.

TM: Were these the Utes?

JK: Sometimes they weren't named, they were pre-historic Indians.

TM: So this was pre-Ute?

JK: When they were named they would be Ute or Arapaho, Arapaho mainly. Because its named Arapaho Pass.

KS: And there were fall hunting grounds.

JK: So the Arapaho Indians were the main Native Americans that lived in that area. Before that they weren't really named.

KS: I think at this site it was in the fall, so there were game drives up there where your digs were.

JK: That was the main provisions for the natives to have game drives and they would dry the meats. They would have very interesting game drives because what we figured out was the women would be kind of maneuvering the animals slowly. The men would be up behind rocks. I only know one pit where they would lie in so they would be there when the animals came. They could either smell them, hear them, or you know, see them. But they would be hidden and so they could kill them up there. It would be in the fall when the coats and the meat are prime. So that that was a very interesting period of time.

We have two issues. One is hunting in the fall, and the other is where do you get your crypto-crystalline materials for the hunt for your projectile points. And that was on the Western Slope.

TM: Did you learn to knapp?

JK: I tried.

TM: It's hard.

JK: It's very hard. You know, everybody tries and some are more successful than others.

KS: Some of your earlier digs after you graduated were with the Malvilles at Yellow Jacket. Kim and Nancy Malville. Kim, he was an astrophysics professor at CU and then Nancy was an anthropologist. But, the two of you together were friends and you would do the archeological digs at Yellow Jacket under Ben Wheat who was at CU.

JK: Dr. Joe Ben Wheat was the professor of archeology at the University of Colorado.

KS: Ben Wheat, that's right. I think one of Jean's talents is pen and ink drawing and sketching. So in a lot of archeological records, not only did you do the actual digs, but you were tasked to do for books in the archeology, you would actually draw the pueblos. They're still out there in the books with your famous pen and ink drawings.

JK: Well, some of the artifacts needed to be described. So, besides a photograph, I would do the drawings.

TM: So in, I want to say 1910, 1915, maybe 1920, there were some expeditions that went into the Glen Canyon country upstream of Lees Ferry. They found some amazing things, one of which was a boomerang. So I thought I would ask you what were some of the amazing things that you found that surprised you over your career about the First Nation cultures that you were impressed with what you found?

JK: Well, projectile points, whether they were full or damaged and thrown away. That was one of them. They started out with spears with the projectile point pretty big at the end. They'd have to be pretty close to get to their game.

TM: Clovis points.

JK: Well that was the first one.

TM: And then Folsom. And then the Archaic period, thousands of years of which we're sort of going...

JK: They had to get very close to their game, but they did use them. We made spears from bamboo, but they didn't have bamboo at that time. So they had to make it from... What did they make, what was the material? It was wood, but I don't recall. They had to soak it and then straighten it out in order to get a straight shaft for the projectile points. And to get the crypto-crystalline material was very difficult. So there are very few spots. One is on a hillside going from Boulder to Denver.

TM: Nice, really?

JK: Really. You find black onyx over there.

TM: Obsidian?

JK: Obsidian, rather. And then most of it was in Kremmling. It's still there, still a big quarry. You might like to go there, I don't know.

KS: There was another part, when you were there at Yellow Jacket, you and Nancy Malville and her husband Ken, well, he wasn't an archeologist. He was an astrophysicist. You should talk about what he did and what he started doing when he was there looking at the alignments with his...

JK: Yellow Jacket is a community abandoned by the Native Americans. They had, I call them pueblos, but they were living quarters. They were diagonal facing the morning sun. And then they had a road we would call it, a trail, coming down on the west side was ceremonial. And then down at the bottom they had on the ground that we found, were long stone, I'd say 2 or 3 feet wide and maybe 6 feet long. They were on the ground and they were scattered. It didn't make any sense, but we extrapolated if you stood them up, they were in a line and they aligned to one of the 14,000 foot peaks in the Rocky Mountains.

KS: It was in the San Juans.

JK: In the San Juans and I don't recall...

KS: El Diente? Was El Diente there in the San Juans?

JK: See, they've got the notes.

SS: He became an archeoastronomer.

KS: He sort of switched his career and really delved into archeoastronomy because he was observing... While the ladies were doing the digs, he was observing the structures and their alignment and then went on to discover and do so much research. You would say it changed his career, but he still lectures around the world in archeoastronomy. And you learned a great deal in working with him there.

JK: Nancy, his wife, is a physical anthropologist, so we were in good company.

SS: And then Jean... This is a little different aside, she spent another about twelve years living in Sedona, kinda over for the winters. So her love of the West from that Grand Canyon trip just continues, obviously, to this day. So she moved to Sedona and came up here a lot.

JK: Yes, Sedona doesn't have a university. It's a beautiful red rock country, so I hiked.

SS: A lot.

KS: You wrote a book there in Sedona.

JK: Sedona hiking club or whatever they call it. Sedona Westerners.

TM: Yes, the Westerners.

JK: They're still doing that today. We did some outrageous hikes. When I wake up at night, I think did I do that?

KS: Off trail all day.

JK: You've done that have you?

TM: Some, a little. Very nice.

JK: There's one hike where we had to jump 3 feet or something like that. There's a gap, but the trail is there. And another one where you walked along a ledge over Oak Creek, and the ledge was not as wide as your boot.

TM: Oops.

JK: We didn't lose anybody in my...

TM: Oh good. In your group. They call them wagon masters in the Westerners?

KS: The Explorers group.

JK & SS: Trailblazers and the scouts.

KS: Scouts. They go out early to do the hard hikes and figure it out for the group later.

TM: Right, wonderful. Am I missing anything else? Asking the kids with their notes here.

JK: They know more than I do. They remember it.

KS: I've heard stories so many times. I mean, I just think in essence, I think that Jean coming and falling in the love with West and the Grand Canyon, and then your career, and your exposure to the Hopis and trading their coins, and then becoming an archeologist. And just with your family, it made a major impact on your life and the love of the West.

JK: Well, my family made a major impact in my life.

KS: You, know what I mean. Sounds pretty comprehensive.

JK: Next question?

TM: Well, I think that's it unless there's anything else you can think of that you wanted to mention that I didn't know to ask.

JK: Well, good heavens, I think you covered a lot. I have a lot of memories and...

TM: Nice. Well in that case, Jean Kindig, and Susan Sheldon and Ken Sheldon thank you so very much for a wonderful...

JK: I was a maiden when I came here to the Grand Canyon the first time so it was Jean Matthews Kindig.

TM: OK excellent, Matthews Kindig. Thank you.

KS: And then her husband is named Neal, is spelled N-E-A-L.

JK: He was a professor of electrical engineering at the University of Colorado. So we had a fine life with the University of Colorado.

TM: Great. Today is Monday, February 25th, 2019 and my name is Tom Martin. Thank you so very, very much.

JK: Well thank you Tom. Lovely to meet you.