

**Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society**

**Interviewee:** Keturah Pennington (KP)

**Interviewer:** Tom Martin (TM)

**Subject:** Keturah narrates early 1960s Glen Canyon river trips side-canyon by side-canyon using photos her husband Phil took. This interview travels from Hite at mile 162.3 to Scorup Canyon at mile 154.5

**Date of Interview:** April 16, 2019 Part 3

**Method of Interview:** by telephone

**Transcriber:** Ellen Parker

**Date of Transcription:** February 15, 2020

**Transcription Reviewers:** Sue Priest

**Keys:** Glen Canyon, Hite Ferry, Sam Green, airplane shuttle, Art Chaffin, Hite store, Phil Pennington, White Canyon, Trachyte rapid, Two Mile Canyon, Cy Benton, The Horn, Scorup Canyon, Anasazi

TM: Today is Tuesday, April 16, 2019. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Keturah Pennington. My name is Tom Martin. Good morning, Keturah. How are you today?

KP: Wonderful, thank you. And you?

TM: Very good, very good. I'm excited that today we're going to be able to look at some pictures of Glen Canyon. Before we do that, may I have your permission to record this conversation over the telephone?

KP: Certainly.

TM: Thank you very much. In our last interview, you talked about amazing adventures before going to Glen Canyon which would have given you just a huge skill set in climbing and river running and swimming and caving, how was it that you heard about the trip to Glen Canyon that you could actually participate in?

KP: The hiking club had already been on one hiking trip in that area and one boat trip down Glen Canyon. That last boat trip was in the spring of '62. Gotta stop and think about my dates. I had elected to go to Mexico for some time in a field station down there and didn't go on that one. But when I got back, that river trip had also been back. The whole hiking club was buzzing about how the place was really wonderful; when was the next trip going to be; slides were being shown here and there. The hiking club had this habit that they called "slide orgies." Anybody who had slides would meet at the designated time and place with a projector somehow and show slides. Anybody who had slides brought theirs and sometimes these slide orgies would run more than a day. We'd come in with food, or go out and get food. Some of them who had children, the kids slept in the corner, had their naps and so forth, and slides just kept pouring. People who hadn't been on the trips got to see what they'd missed. People who had been on the trips told their stories and added tidbits here and there. So that summer, the whole club was buzzing with, "When is the next trip going to be?" It sort of settled into it was going to be that autumn before school started again. So people started planning.

Almost all of the club had two-man rubber rafts that we bought at the surplus store over in San Francisco. That wasn't all that long after the Second World War had ended and there was still a lot of surplus material available. So we bought rubber rafts over there, rubber bags that the Navy used. Let's see, I think, as I remember, they were a foot square on the bottom and 18 inches high and they had a method of rolling the top and tucking the ends under and so forth, that made them absolutely waterproof if you had them filled and properly sealed. (laughs) If they fell out of the boat, they would float. In fact, I don't think we ever got them loaded so full that they didn't float. But, of course, if you'd have put lead in them I suppose they would have sunk. We made a lot of trips over to San Francisco to

the army surplus store that summer and outfitted ourselves really cheaply because, you know, students never have any money.

TM: Right.

KP: And, a trip was planned to get us back in time so we had a day or so to wash our clothes and get ready to go to class. I had also planned to go on a hiking trip, a two-week backpack trip in the Sierra that would end just before the boat trip. So I had just spent two weeks eating the lightweight, dried food and I was really, really tired of it. Since I would have a kayak to go, I didn't see any reason to go for lightweight food anymore. I just went down to the grocery store. For breakfast, I bought big packages of ranger cookies. I checked the nutrition value and so forth and they were full of all sorts of good stuff and I was going to have ranger cookies every morning for breakfast. Every lunch was going to be a can of tuna and some crackers, which may have been a mistake because crackers are not packaged in very waterproof packages. Anyway, it was going to be tuna and crackers and a small can of fruit. Every supper was going to be a can of some sort of a meal. Spaghetti, lasagna—not lasagna—spaghetti, maybe chicken and dumplings, and so forth. Anyway, a can of supper, a small can of vegetables, and more cookies. (laughs) So my kayak was *really* loaded.

TM: Heavy.

KP: Yes. But I wasn't carrying it. For two weeks previous to this trip, I was carrying everything I ate.

TM: Right, right. (laughs) Now you just had to steer it. (laughs)

KP: That's right.

TM: So, hang on. Before we get quite that far, how did you all get out there to Hite? I'm assuming that the put-in was at Hite, Utah, this remote, remote little ferry crossing in the middle of nowhere.

KP: Hiking club people are extremely creative. They have a system. I think I described to you the leader's role in this was to put up a list and match those with cars and space for a passenger with those who needed a ride. And so that was the way things went on all the trips. And, of course, this was no problem. The problem here was that on this trip there were going to be two kayaks going. And you don't just load a kayak into the back of a VW Beetle or even in a VW van so we had to arrange for a kayak carrier. And, some of our people had summer job problems. That was another reason for putting this trip off as late as possible. Those who had summer jobs, some of them had trouble getting back in time to go on this trip. But they got creative. One of our members had to come in by bus. He had checked the schedule and he had a bus that would get him into Hite on time. He said that he would be spending the summer surveying for the Forest Service and he could come with rolls of blue survey tape and would tie them around things to let the whole group know that he was there. Another one had no transportation and essentially no money either but a lot of creativity. He was an exchange graduate student. When he got down close he went to the local radio station and told his story to the local programmer there who was doing chat things and local news and this and that and asked if he could ask for a ride out. But, anyway, he was there, he needed to get himself... I'm blanking on the name of the place where the planes took off.

TM: Okay. That could have been... Oh, you mean down near Hite?

KP: Yeah. Well, no, down near our takeout point.

TM: Oh. Well, that could have been Cane Creek or...

KP: No, no.

TM: ...Kanab. Oh. Wait a minute. Could have been Page, where the dam was being...

KP: Page, Page. Yeah, he went to the Page...

TM: Oh, went to the Page radio?

KP: Yeah, and said he needed to be in Hite by a certain time on a certain date the next morning, and was anybody going down that road? He needed to get to Hite. He was backpacking and had all his stuff in his backpack and needed to get himself out there because he wasn't going to be flying with us. He managed to get a ride. He said a farmer in a truck came around to the radio station and picked him up.

TM: Huh. That's great.

KP: He had a wonderful chat with the guys they drove out. So he got himself out there at the top of the river. The guy who had to come in from surveying and was putting blue tape around everything, went into Page and he then flew back with almost all of the rest of us.

TM: Oh, so for the shuttle, you guys arranged to be flown back. Is that how that worked?

KP: Yeah. Almost all of us went to Page and then flew back. Were landed on the airstrip at Hite and started our trip from there. But those of us who had kayaks had another problem. The kayaks had to be dropped off at Hite and then the drivers had to get their cars down to Page to be at the end. Cars shuttles were always a jolly big problem.

TM: I bet. Yeah.

KP: And very long. This one was about a 300-mile shuttle, as I recall being told. Because I didn't either or drive it or ride it, why, I don't really know.

TM: How many people were on this trip in what is August of 1962?

KP: I used to know how many was on every trip and who they were, but that one I know precisely. That was 12.

TM: So not an unmanageable group. And two kayaks? Who was in the other kayak?

KP: One was mine and one was the guy who had turned me on to the whitewater group there in Berkeley.

TM: Who was that? Oh, I think it'd be OK if you mention their name, but if you...

KP: That one was Sam Green. Sam and I went to the whitewater group meetings and really got turned on to kayaking. We and another girl made kayaks. Sam had gone on the first trip while I was in Mexico. Sam was on the first one with the group and he loved it. He was really eager to go again. And he had managed to figure out how to put a kayak rack on his vehicle. Yeah, that's true, we had a slightly more difficult shuttle because we had to drive the kayaks to Hite and then he had to get the car down to Page.

TM: And then fly back.

KP: And fly back, yeah. Well, all the cars had to get to Page.

TM: So did the two-person rafts and the food and the camping gear and all that stuff, was all that flown, as well, up to Hite from Page?

KP: For almost everybody, yes. The rubber rafts were collapsible. With various difficulties, we all ended up getting there to Page. Most of us had not been in that country very much. And, you know, there are an awful lot of parks and national monuments between Berkeley and Page. Nearly all of the car groups started fairly early, so they could spend two or three or even more days hiking in the various other interesting places down there. Yeah, it was really a great trip.

TM: So maybe now is a good place to introduce the Glen Canyon website. The URL for the website is explorepdx.com. On the home page it says "Discover the magic. Explore Portland Community." And on the lower right, it says "See Glen Canyon before Lake Powell. Spectacular! Historic." So I'm going to click on Glen Canyon, which is a clickable link. I'll do that now. I get to a home page that says "Beauty Adventure History — Unique Stunning Irreplaceable Glen Canyon – 1962" and there's this wonderful picture of a kayak and then one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight little yellow two-person rubber rafts on a sandy beach and the incredible sandstone slick-rock country up in the background with heavy riverside vegetation across the river. That picture right there on that home page, was that from the August '62 river trip?

KP: Yes.

TM: So, in the lower left, there's a kayak there. Looks like a 14-foot-long kayak, maybe. It's a good looking little boat. Was that yours or Sam's?

KP: All of the kayaks on that trip were either his or mine. I can tell by the looks of it that that one was mine.

TM: Nice. That's great.

KP: And everybody else, then, had the rubber rafts.

TM: Okay. And they look like fun, those little rubber rafts. What did people use for paddles?

KP: They come with paddles. They're military issue and they have a set of blue metal paddles with them. I happen to know it's there so I can see it on the picture on the second boat from the left, but there are better pictures of the paddles not very far along.

TM: Alright. On the right side of this opening page, it says "Take a trip from the top." I'm gonna click on that. "Take a trip" is a clickable link. I click the little button here and it says "Hite mile 162.3." The opening image on the top of that page is an aerial view. Now, you missed these aerial views because you had to drive in and then wait for everybody else to show up, is that right?

KP: No. That one, I am fairly sure, was from the plane that I was... No, no. Scratch that. That was from my trip, all right, but it wasn't my plane trip down.

TK: I'm just trying to make sure we get things kind of sorted out. If you and Sam had to drive to Hite from Berkeley, and then he would have left you and the kayaks and the gear, and then he would have scurried on off to drive down to Page to link up with everybody and fly back.

KP: On this trip, Sam had a VW Beetle and I had a friend from Iowa who was staying with me. We had borrowed or scrounged or somehow gotten her outfitted with a raft and all the other necessities. So the three of us, Sam and my friend and I were in the car together.

TM: (laughs) That's crowded. OK.

KP: Oh, most VW Beetles carried four people and their gear (laughs) because the hiking club didn't have very many wheels and a lot of people. So we were doing right well.

TM: It was roomy! (laughs)

KP: The three of us drove there and we left my friend in charge of the kayaks and her gear. Then Sam and I drove down to Page and flew back because I love flying and I didn't get a chance to do it very often in a small plane. But that's the view coming into the airstrip, which you can see on the left side of the picture.

TM: Do you remember the name of the pilot?

KP: Oh, Phil would have. Caleb. I don't remember Caleb's last name. He was the one we always used, though. At first he thought we were nuts. The first air shuttle that he did for us, he said something about, "Who would want to be in that country? It's not even a fit place to lose a cow."

TM: Interesting.

KP: But the more he flew us up, why, the more interested he got. He was real obliging. He had a set fee for flying from Page to Hite.

TM: Do you remember what that fee was?

KP: \$17.50.

TM: Wow. OK.

KP: And at the time, I really couldn't afford it but I wanted to fly so badly and my friend was with us was to monitor the gear overnight and was willing to do it. She couldn't afford it so I should have flipped her for it but I didn't. I selfishly took the flight myself and left her down there by the edge of that little creek that you can see coming in from the left.

TM: There's a photograph. It's not on this page titled "Hite", but there's an aerial picture. It's the confluence of the San Juan, it's at the bottom of the picture, and it's an incredible view. I stopped and I looked at that and I was just stunned. Do you remember your thoughts flying over that country from Page up to Hite? Do you remember that? What you were thinking?

KP: Oh, whenever I'm in the air I'm looking like mad to see what I can see that I might not have been aware of. I was enjoying every minute and thinking how great it was going to be to get into some of those canyons. I mean, that's fascinating-looking country from the air.

TM: Yeah. Yeah. I was just stunned.

KP: Yes. Right. And to think it's all been there all my life and I never even thought about it. But here we were. This is our approach and the airstrip is that little narrow piece over there. So as we go down, I think the next picture is the view from over the pilot's shoulder. The airstrip you can see through his front window. There's two tracks off to the left that is the road that leads down to the other end of the airstrip. The airstrip is not all that big.

TM: So for you and Sam, it would have been fairly easy because your gear is down by the river with your friend. But for the rest of the crew, they get dumped out at the airstrip. How far did they have to carry all their gear to get down to the river?

KP: Less than a quarter-mile. You know, it wasn't outrageous. Actually, as I think about it, I think it was a lot less than a quarter-mile. It wasn't hard. For the hiking club, it was not even a little chore. It was simply the next step because they were accustomed to hauling stuff around and being self-sufficient and making do. Most of them had to make two trips: one with the gear and one with the boat. But I think some of the guys loaded it all up and...

TM: Were tough enough to...

KP: ...make one trip.

TM: ...pile it on down there.

KP: Well, most of them were accustomed to backpacking and not to river running. So most of them did not do like I did and bring two or three cans of food for every day. Most of them brought much lighter stuff. (laughs)

TM: There was a gentleman that was farming there named Art Chaffin and it's possible that by...I'm not sure of my history here...1962 he may have left but he might have still been there. He had a fairly large ranch and was growing corn and watermelons that were giant, and had figs and quite an amazing ranch there by the ferry. Did you get a chance to talk with any of the residents that were there?

KP: At one time, I spent a lot of time talking with the people who were running the store that was on the left bank a little ways back from the river.

TM: What do you remember about those discussions? What were they saying?

KP: At that time there were two other young women camping. They were camping up by the store. I don't know why they weren't camping down by the river where I was, but they weren't. They were waiting for Georgie White's river tour boat to pick them up. They had arranged—and I can't even remember the shenanigans that were involved there—but arranged to be picked up there by Georgie White because someone had canceled and they took over their reservation, or whatever. Those two girls spent a lot of time talking about their things, where they lived and why they were going and what they liked, and so forth. But the woman liked being out there at the store. She said they got a fair amount of traffic through there during some of the months of tourists going through and she just enjoyed meeting and talking to everybody. They had people from all over the world, actually. I don't know where one rented cars in those days. But apparently people from Japan and the Philippines and everywhere came through to see that country. How did those people learn about it and I hadn't? (laughs)

TM: Interesting.

KP: You know, I was getting an education, too.

TM: Yeah. Yeah. There's a photograph of the "Hite ferry, landing on the left bank" is the title. The ferry has a big long deck and it has four metal scow-type rectangular barges (KP laughs) underneath a platform with the motor that would pull itself along a cable. On the deck, looks like a black Volkswagen bug which must have been very hot in the summer, and it's got kayaks on the top of it. There are a couple people sitting on the railing there and there's one person sort of looking like he's running the motor. Can you tell me about that picture?

KP: I'm pretty sure that that's Phil's VW, and I don't know who that second person is. The one in the pink shirt, if you look very carefully and know what you're looking for, is wearing a sailor hat with the brim turned down.

TM: Yes, I think that's right.

KP: That's me. Anytime that sailor hat shows up, that's me.

TM: Okay. And you're sitting next to someone in a yellow shirt, it looks like.

KP: Yeah, and I'm trying to think... Oh, I do remember, yes. We lucked out that time. Usually you have to go to an old hand-cranked telephone... There it is, in the next picture down.

TM: Yeah.

KP: An old hand-cranked telephone and call the ferry to come over. But we had taken the ferry across and driven out on the right bank road for a ways and as we got back this person/this lady was coming over to the store. So the ferryman was down there and we just drove on from the right bank and came over and are about to... I don't know how Phil got them to pull away. But anyway, Phil rigged this picture. He wanted *that* picture of the ferry coming in. The ferryman was quite obliging about it. I mean, they didn't get idiots like us down there very often and it made a bit of change to their day.

TM: It's great. It's a great shot. Shows the ferry in action, almost pulling to shore. It shows that the landing has been built up by a little tractor so that the ferry meets the shoreline.

KP: Actually, the ferry was... We had pulled over, Phil came ashore and he talked the ferryman into backing off a just little and holding while he snapped his picture. And the guy obliged us. Phil's very good at setting up pictures like that. He looks at the scene and sees what he wants the scene to say to the audience and he gets it set up if he can. If he can't, why, he takes a bunch of pictures and takes the best one out of it. He was an extremely good photographer.

TM: Do you have any idea of this trip, with the Volkswagen on the ferry, what time of year was that? When was that? It wouldn't have been the August of '62.

KP: I would guess... The water's fairly low, so let's see. We did August of '62. Possibly as early as April of '63. The water isn't very high, though, there.

TM: Well, it wouldn't have started to really come up until May. So April, that could definitely be April water right there.

KP: Yeah.

TM: And it would make sense.

KP: We were there in April and in June. So it would have been either April or June of '62.

TM: Sorry, '63?

KP: We're not wearing sweaters, so...

TM: Right. Let's step back for a minute and just list out, if you can, the trips that you did in Glen Canyon. There was August of '62 and then were there any trips later that fall in '62?

KP: I think our next one was the Christmas trip which would have been December of '62.

TM: Okay, brr. Alright, December of '62. And then in the spring, January, February, March, April, was it then from December?

KP: Well, no, there was a one-weekend trip to do Labyrinth. That I don't think was New Year's weekend, but it was in January of '63. And then April of '63 and June of '63. I think the next one was June of '64. I think somewhere Phil says that was our last one. But it wasn't, there was another one in June of '65.

TM: That's helpful. Thank you. Then there's a picture of the telephone to...

KP: Yeah. That's how one summoned the ferry.

TM: ...call the ferry. Did that go ring in the little store or where did that...? I wonder where that phone went.

KP: Well, I was going to say no, the ferryman lived on the other side of the river. I think he did. I know there was a house over there and the ferry was there when we called it. But I'm not positive that the ferryman lived in the house over there. The house over there was a farmhouse. That may have been the farm you were speaking of that raised corn and watermelons.

TM: Alright. I think that would make sense, yeah.

KP: But there was a phone on each side and I don't know how the ferryman set it up. If I were he, I'd have anybody who called from either side ring really loudly on both sides. (laughs)

TM: Well, at Lees Ferry they had a bell, a large kind of church bell, and you just rang that bell until somebody showed up. But it makes sense to have a phone on both sides because if the phone went maybe to the store, where maybe there was a radio playing or there was some music or something, people wouldn't necessarily know somebody needed a ride. So it was a great way to get in touch with the operators and have them come work the machine.

KP: We only took the ferry across once. We went over to the other side because we wanted to drive the road over there and see what it was like on the other side. But when we did ring it, Phil talked to someone, said, "Hello, we're down at the ferry on the left bank and we'd like to come across." The whole thing probably took a half an hour from the time we first rang it till the time we were ready to drive onto the ferry.

TM: Keturah, there was a uranium processing mill not too far from there. Did you guys see that mill?

KP: No. I don't even think we knew about it. We would have seen it had we known about it.

TM: It might have been closed by then.

KP: If we'd known it was there we'd have gone and looked even if it was closed.

TM: Right. Right. Okay. Then the next picture down, there's an Anasazi building, looks like an ancestral Puebloans structure up on a high bench. A fairly large structure, maybe 8 or 9 feet high. Is that picture looking downstream or upstream?

KP: Let's see. We're on the left bank looking upstream. Oh, it says that under the picture.

TM: Oh, it does. "Looking upstream." How did you get up there from the mouth of White Canyon? Was it quite a scramble or was it a pretty easy walk?

KP: It depends on whether you ask (TM laughs) someone from the hiking club or someone my age now. If I were looking at it now, I would say it was quite a scramble, but not a hard... You're a climber, right?

TM: Yeah.



KP: Fourth class, easily.

TM: Right. But just up a slope, up a kind of hillside slope and there it was.

KP: Right.

TM: I'm wondering with the reservoir being as low as it is now, I'm wondering if that photo could be rematched.

KP: As I recall, that was a two-story building. The Anasazi made two-story buildings, but I believe this was the one we looked over really carefully and discovered rebar in the corners.

TM: Oh. So somebody had worked to fix it up, or do you think that it was actually a structure that had been built in the...

KP: I think one of the pioneers built himself a cabin up there. I don't know why. There were a lot of people in there looking for gold and looking for other things, and whatever. Yeah, I don't know.

TM: So maybe it wasn't as old as I surmise, then.

KP: That was what we thought when we saw the rebar. And I'm pretty sure it was in that building that we saw it. Farther downstream you got, though, the less you saw of the remains of other people. Although, as I say, there was dredging for gold and other things going on in the canyon.

TM: The next picture at 160.1 is about 2-1/2 miles downstream from Hite. It's Trachyte [misspelled as Traychite on website] Rapid and it's titled "The first "rapids" below Hite." That looks like a class II in the I through V scale. It's more riffles than anything else, but is it worse than that?

KP: I haven't boated enough to really know their ratings on rapids, but this one barely above flat water. On a windy day, a lake will be much rougher than this. (TM laughs) This was the big rapids down there the locals told us about and it wasn't anything except for the fact that it was the first rapids that any of us encountered. People would have just sat with their feet up on the decks or the edges of the raft and whatnot and floated. That was the point Phil was trying to make here. It was a nothing bunch of bumps.

TM: Yeah. Yeah. Well, he did a good job.

KP: (laughs) Yeah.

TM: I'm assuming that there's a side canyon here that's bringing in gravels that's making this rapid. Is that what's happening there?

KP: If we look at the map...

TM: Oh, I see on the page here that we're on, at the bottom it says "Upper Map."

KP: Click on "Upper Map." Right.

TM: Okay. I see the Dirty Devil comes in, I see the North Wash, I see Hite, Two Mile.

KP: You see Hite.

TM: I see White Canyon. Trachyte Creek. Yes, okay. So there is a creek coming in with the same name as the rapids.

KP: Right. And I'm sure you're right that it's dumped gravel in there.

TM: All right. That's very helpful. So I'm going to go back...

KP: Okay, if you want to go where we just were, click on the blue box that says "Hite." If you want to go down one more, click on the next to the left blue box that's "Two-Mile Canyon."

TM: Oh, that's wonderful. Thank you. That's a great little navigational tool there. OK, so now I'm going back to the photos. Again, looking at this photo of Trachyte Rapid, the photo is taken from someone sitting in a kayak. You can see the nose of their kayak in the picture. Then in the center right of that photo, is someone else in a kayak and I'm assuming that's you.

KP: Yeah. The first kayak is Phil. So this was from a later trip. He was in a rubber raft on this trip.

TM: So this must be April or June.

KP: Ohhhh, it could have been... It wasn't April because that was a short trip.

TM: And it would make sense that it matches the ferry picture where you had the two kayaks there on the Volkswagen.

KP: Right. If you're looking at a kayak and there's a white sailor hat with the paddles, that one's mine.

TM: Behind you is a pile of gear on the boat. It looks like an orange bag and some sort of a square thing.

KP: The square thing is a square of foam padding because I wanted something soft to lean on.

TM: Oh, nice.

KP: And besides that, it held my lunch behind my seat. The orange thing is the life preserver. We were supposed to have them at hand legally. Usually I did have mine at hand on the back of my boat there.

TM: If I hazard a guess, I'd say Phil was never without his. He was wearing it.

KP: He wasn't.

TM: Really! Really!

KP: No, no, it wasn't that he was never without it, he always had it, but none of us liked wearing life preservers. And Phil (laughs), by that time he had already done kayak-rolling practice in the swimming pool and he felt confident enough that he did not wear a life jacket.

TM: I'm impressed. I'm very impressed.

KP: I think maybe I have once said, and it was pretty much true, too, that he could barely keep himself afloat, but he *could* keep himself afloat. Very soon after our first trip we were always together. I had told him (laughs) that I would see to it that he never drowned. So, as long as he could see me, why, I don't think he worried about drowning. Those life preservers are jolly inconvenient.

TM: Well, yes, but...

KP: And especially if you're about to hop out your boat and go hiking up a narrow, difficult canyon, you don't want to put it on, take it off, put it on. So we didn't but we did keep them handy. We stayed legal.

TM: So in this picture of Trachyte Rapid, I see some fairly large sandstone mountains in the distance, a blue, blue sky. The water looks enjoyable. It looks attractive, like, you know, "Come swim in me." Was that indeed the case or was the water temperature fairly cold?

KP: In June, I think it was fairly warm, actually. Eventually we're going to see it with ice floating in it.

TM: Yeah.

KP: So (laughs) it ranged. A lot of our people swam. My friend who was on my first trip with us, who stayed with the kayaks at the top of the shuttle, enjoyed swimming. She would swim the way some people will ride a horse just because you liked to do it. She often would swim for a mile or two down the river towing her raft behind her just because she enjoyed swimming. I don't enjoy swimming for swimming's sake. I swim because I want to go there and there's water between me and it. But, as I recall, I didn't mind getting in the water. So it must have been warm.

TM: At least warmish enough to comfortably stay in. I mean, if you're going to swim for a mile towing your raft, that water's gonna be comfortable.

KP: (laughs) Yeah. And she was a good, strong, fast swimmer. Then the navigation here now, will go down to Two Mile Canyon.

TM: Okay. I've clicked that. Now this shows Two-Mile Canyon, mile 158 and it shows three people there. Are you comfortable naming who those people are? There's somebody looking like they're writing on a journal.

KP: That's Cy Benton and she's reading her map.

TM: Oh. How do you spell her name?

KP: I'm not real sure how much... Usually before I give out people's names...

TM: You check with them and make sure it OK.

KP: Yeah.

TM: Okay. Well, then let's not do that. I won't ask who's who.

KP: I suppose for history, and this is what, 50 years afterwards. Very shortly, they're going to be all dead. That's Cy Benton. She spelled it C-Y. I think it stood for Cydney. The one in the blue shirt is Roger Ulrich. And that was one of the two brothers with the foreign name. I can't come up with his name right now, but I maybe... This is a trip I did not go on.

TM: Okay, so would this have been the spring '62?

KP: This was June of '62.

TM: June of '62. Okay.

KP: Yeah. That was the first river trip while I was in Mexico.

TM: All right.

KP: You asked about the paddles and we haven't come to where they're easy to see now. But take a look at hers.

TM: I see it. It's a piece of plywood on a dowel.

KP: On a two-inch dowel, right.

TM: How about that. What a great idea. And, it looks like there's some sort of little oarlock or a little rubber kind of retainer for the oars on the little rubber raft.

KP: Well, the little rubber raft came with a little blue metal oar of approximately those dimensions. And all the rafts had the oar locks. Cy was not always as well organized as she should have been (TM laughs) and her oars are in Berkeley at the moment this picture was taken, yes.

TM: Oops. Oops.

KP: They were well on their way before she discovered it. So the whole group stopped at one of the little hardware/lumberyard, etc. shops that small towns out there have that sell a little bit of everything. They went in and explained the situation to the proprietor and (laughs) said they would like to buy some two-inch dowels—they had measured somebody else's oars and got the dimensions—and they needed some marine plywood. They got the shop owner to cut things for them. Then they bought some bolts and bolted them together. And that's what Cy is using on this trip and why.

TM: Let's see. I'm just reading some of the text here. And the rapids. The next photo is just wonderful, 157.4-mile.

KP: Right.

TM: It's just people are laid back. They're looking pretty relaxed in their little rafts.

KP: Yeah, you can get an idea of the outline of the oars of the other rafts besides Cy's from that there.

TM: Got it. So, the regular oars that came with the boat.

KP: Right.

TM: That look like oars. So, right away, in this caption for mile 157.4 it says "The image of a fierce, roaring river of whitewater and foam is usually conjured by the mention of the Colorado River." And, of course, here's a picture of looks like a mile and a half straightaway of flat water. (laughs) So was there trepidation going into this trip for those that hadn't done it before that, yeah, it was gonna be a lot of whitewater.

KP: Well, I think Phil was probably the most apprehensive about it, but they all knew that the Trachyte Rapids was just around the corner and they could hear the rapids on their June '62 trip. This isn't very far below Trachyte Rapids and you can see how quickly everybody relaxed.

TM: Yeah. Yeah.

KP: If you refer to the map, you can see exactly how far it is below them. It didn't take them long to realize this was gonna be a really neat trip.

TM: Great. Then the next picture below that shows the two kayaks. There's an orange life jacket on the deck of one of the kayaks. The paddles look like chucked up on the shore there.

KP: Right.

TM: Then there's someone up to their shoulders, wearing glasses, and has a kind of quizzical look. (laughs)

KP: Well, that's Phil and if you read underneath you'll understand what we...

TM: "Keturah has just stood on my shoulders to push me down enough to get a picture with just my head out. By the time she jumped back and snapped this picture, I had floated up."

KP: Yeah!

TM: "It was the best we could do." (laughs) That's great.

KP: He was holding a really big, heavy rock to hold him down. The moral of that is, the movies show people drowning and grasping and flaying in quicksand and you *don't* drown in quicksand.

TM: You guys just got to play in the mud, it looks like.

KP: He was really filthy when he came out. (laughs)

TM: Nice. I'm going to click back to "Upper Map." So that was Two Mile Canyon.

KP: Oh, yeah. Click on "Go down to The Horn." If you click on the upper map, we'll just go back to that map again.

TM: OK, hang on. I'm following along here. I'm going to click on The Horn off the map. The Horn is mile 156. Who's the gentleman in the hat? Now, that looks like the same guy we saw in an earlier picture with a nice straw cowboy hat.

KP: He's one from the early trip that I didn't go on, and I don't know. This is the early trip and I don't know who he is. Because I didn't go on those trips, I didn't learn their headwear.

TM: Right, right. That makes sense. What was the name "The Horn" from? You might explain it. Oh, I see. "The Horn is a hairpin turn in the river between miles 157 and 155. This picture is from the top of the ridge in the middle of the hairpin." Okay. So this picture that describes The Horn shows the river down below. It's got a nice, big, wide sandy beach. Clearly, the hiking club is up on a cruise here to get up high and get some pictures. And that's wonderful.

KP: Most of them weren't, but Phil was. Not only that, he had spent the winter of... No, he'd spent even more time, starting even earlier. But he had gone to the library and gotten the location of all the archaeology recovery sites and this was one of them. On my first trip there, the guy who had made the first kayaks with me was on the trip. I figured that he and I would be buddies because he'd been down there before, he had a kayak, so we moved at the same pace and so forth. But right about this time, even though Phil was in a raft, I realized that I was going to tag him because he knew the area. He had studied the maps and he knew where to find the interesting stuff. Sam was interesting and a skillful climber, actually, which appealed to me, but he didn't have the depth of knowledge that Phil did. So, after this climb up to here, why, I figured I was going to make sure I knew where Phil was all the time.

TML That's an incredible little scramble up there with some great views.

KP: Yes. And apparently the Native Americans felt so, too.

TM: You bet. There's a wonderful little... Its labeled "An Anasazi-built oven on top of the ridge at The Horn." That's really a nice little wall there with a lot of black up on the ceiling.

KP: We never figured out what they were doing with that oven. We searched the mesa for a reasonable distance around. We didn't find any evidence of former dwellings. We don't know... There was this little rock ledge in the front and obviously you can see from the flat stones in front of it that it had been built up more and somebody else previously, probably (laughs) the salvage crew, had opened it up and the

only fire had been in the back. The smoke had come out the top and the front but there had been no fire in front of that little... We never figured out what it was.

TM: I wonder if one could use that to fire pottery.

KP: We discussed that. I don't know. I suppose if I had been *really* interested, I'd have gone to the library and looked up to see what the salvage crew thought of it. I never did. One can still do that, of course. The papers are still there.

TM: Oh, yeah. That's right, that's right. Recently there's been a number of new publications about the people doing the salvage work.

KP: Okay, our navigation from here, we have a choice to go up to Two-Mile Canyon, that'll be the pictures we just saw previously, or go down to Scorup Canyon, or go to the map. So let's go down to Scorup Canyon.

TM: Okay. "Scorup Canyon mile 154." I'm gonna go back to the map for a minute to just kind of see...

KP: Okay. Click on "Upper Map" and you'll get you right back to the map.

TM: Okay. I see The Horn and there's Scorup Canyon at 154.5 and Hite's at 162.3 so the mileage is going down. So it's not quite 10 miles, maybe 8 miles downstream from Hite is Scorup Canyon. Okay. I always kind of want to go back and look at the map and figure out, all right, how does this...? You know, the map is not the territory, but where are we? So really nice little dwelling here under a shelf of rock at mile 154.5.

KP: Yeah.

TM: It says "village" so there must have been a series of walls here?

KP: This is on the left bank not very high above the river but obviously high enough that the floods of the last couple of centuries had left it, so it was real easy to get to and this was about the only house left. There was a series of ledges like that that were big enough to accommodate small structures. I would guess that they made intermittent camps there, but...

TM: Did you see any pieces of pottery or bits of corncob or anything else there?

KP: Since the whole area had been salvaged by professionals, there were a very few flakes very occasionally high up. While we were there, the river was rising. As we were going up one of the canyons, Phil and I watched it creep up and finally we got tired of watching so we took off from sitting at a pit that the salvagers had dug about half an hour before the water was going to spill into the pit. When we came back down, part of our crew who had been behind us, said, "Oh, we got there just as the water was spilling over the lip into that pit and it knocked a bowl out of the wall." They found a small pottery bowl. The corncobs we didn't find on any of these trips because we couldn't get into the granary. But later when the water had risen, it carried our boats up to almost as high as the granary and I was able to climb in and find corncobs and some seeds that had been gnawed by rats and mice. But mostly everything was gone. I'm sure the salvagers did a pretty good job of cleaning it up.

TM: So when you mentioned the story about the river rising and spilling into this hole that was dug for salvage purposes. That would have been April or June of 1963?

KP: Oh, I think maybe it was September of '64 when Phil was still in the raft because it was at that point that he came to trust my climbing ability. From then on, I didn't have any trouble keeping him in sight. (laughs) He was quite willing to have me with him after that. (laughs)

TM: Okay, because I'm just trying to get a sense of... I read a report somewhere, it was in a letter, that as soon as the bypass tunnels were closed down to 1,000 cubic feet a second, people were surprised at how quickly the reservoir began impounding water way up Glen Canyon very quickly. So that's why I was trying to put a date on that.

KP: Yeah. No, I take that back. It was April. Yes.

TM: So it would have been April '63.

KP: Of '63, right.

TM: Okay. All right.

KP: I can remember the blooming things around us about that time. I was so disappointed that we had moved on not too long before I could have found that bowl.

TM: That's the way it goes.

KP: Serendipity doesn't always work in my favor, but mostly it has. I've been real lucky. Go ahead.

TM: You know, I was just looking at this thinking for Scorup Canyon it's just this one picture. We've been happily yik-yakking here for about an hour and 7 minutes. Maybe it's a time to wrap up this Part 3 interview and then we'll pick up again at Red Canyon.

KP: If you do have the time now... No, I was going to say maybe we should finish that map. But, no, it doesn't matter. As long as you remember where we were, why, we can pick it up anywhere.

TM: I'll definitely have a lot of questions for you about Red Canyon, so I thought it might be a good time to stop here. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we wrap this up?

KP: No. Don't worry about getting too many questions about Red Canyon because I don't think we even stopped. I think we just floated by. Red Canyon is not one of the interesting-looking canyons. And we knew that interesting-looking ones were coming up.

TM: Okay. With that then let's go ahead and wrap up Part 3 Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Keturah Pennington. My name is Tom Martin. Today is Tuesday, April 16, 2019. Keturah, thank you so very, very much.