

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society

Interviewee: Petrecia "Pat" Hovey (PH)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Petrecia Hovey was born in 1924 and came to the Grand Canyon after her husband got a job there as an engineer. She raised her kids there and created a community among those working and living in the area. Once Fred Harvey was bought by AMFAC, the family left the company and have been living in Phoenix.

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TM: Today is the 31st of July, 2012 and this is Pat Hovey and I'm Tom Martin and we are at the Atrium of the Grand Canyon Plaza Resort. And so Pat if you wouldn't mind, to just tell me a little bit about your parents. What year were you born? What did they do? What were their names? How did they meet?

PH: I don't know how they met. In Chicago, because my mother was born there. I'm not sure where my dad... and I need to look at my dad's birth certificate and see where he was born. I'm sure they met in Chicago. Mom was a secretary. Dad was a research chemist. I was born in 1924. I was born later in their lives so I was an only child and the Petrecia comes from Peter. My dad's name was Franz Peter and was German like Hannah and Frank [Franz Rotter]. My mother was Swedish. So, it was a combination. When I was five my dad was told he had pernicious anemia and was told he wouldn't live more than five years. So, we moved to Michigan to a house that they had built some time before and that's where I grew up. Dad didn't work but he did a lot of things at home. I mean he still did chemistry and mom... I don't remember a whole lot growing up but I remember mom worked a lot. I'm sure that was just to bring money in. I had a great growing up period because we lived out from town and you made your own fun. So, I had a good friend who lived across the lake from me and we would swim together, ice skate together, and do things together. But my walk to school was probably two miles, maybe. Winter time you slide through the snow. In the summer it was beautiful. Lived on a lake, which we still have and still go back to for two weeks every summer. Just a great growing up time, you know. It was before television and before gadgets, so you made your own fun whatever it was. Summer times, my cousin's family... my uncle had inherited my grandmother's home at the lake. So, they would come summers and spend time with us. In their house and our- but you know, we got together. Those years I still, I know, we still had an ice box where we had to get ice from the ice man who came. I remember my grandmother's house having this great big... well it would be like a deep freeze now, the box type. I thought that was the greatest thing in the world except it took lots of ice. But it was just a great time. Our kids were fortunate later on to have kind of the same thing. We lived in Death Valley, and they had to make their own fun because there was no television and they did. So, it was a good time. Went to grade school up until seventh grade in a one room school. Then there were just too many kids and so

they transported the seventh and eighth grade to a school about six miles from us. First year we had our own teacher and our own... our group was seventh and eighth grade group were together. But the second year they combined with the school we went to and our teacher we had had taught seventh grade and we had a teacher who taught eighth grade. So, I had two different teachers and that's where I met my husband. I was in seventh grade or eighth grade. Probably seventh grade. We didn't really connect at that time but because our names were close, I guess, we sat one in front of the other and then graduated from eighth grade. Went on to high school in Muskegon which was the big town at that time and didn't see my husband very much after that. Until we graduated from high school and he asked me if I would like to go out after graduation. So, we did and we kind of did things together. I, for my part I saw another fella. His name was Vern Hovey. We went together from after graduation and he went to junior college and I started with my dad; needed someone to drive him because he did not drive. By this time my mother had died. So, I left school and did that. And also, he worked at the health department... my dad did at that time. So, I did things at the health department when they needed somebody to do filing or something. Vern went off to service the following January which was... we graduated in forty-two so that would have been forty-three. I had met his family by then and they kind of adopted me and I kind of adopted them and got to know them. When there was Christmas or Thanksgiving, they included my dad which was nice. Vern was in service until 1945 and by that time he had asked me to marry him. So, we were married July 30th.

TM: Your husband was in which branch of the service?

PH: CB's, Navy.

TM: Where?

PH: South Pacific. Would have liked to go into the Air Force but he couldn't pass the eye exam. Went in the CBs and loved it. Drove big vehicles and made roads and landing strips and so on. Like I said he came home in probably summer of forty-five and then went back to school. Went two years at Junior college in Muskegon and went... Well like I say we got married the following July so yesterday was our anniversary.

TM: Oh Congratulations.

PH: We were married on my mom and dad's 25th wedding anniversary which made it special for me. I'm not sure, I think it was for Vern too. So, we had good years together and after he finished junior college, we went to Houghton, Michigan. It's the college of, Michigan College of Mining and Technology, at that time. He got a degree in civil engineering in 1950 and got a job in Cleveland, Ohio working for a company that was building the rapid transit system in Cleveland. We should have kept track because one job led to another and he had three or four different jobs in Cleveland and ended up working at a company that did the underground work of the rapid transit under the Cleveland Union Terminal. And he came home one day and said to me "I have to dig a- or put a hole in the floor" and he said "I'm not sure what's gonna happen" but it worked out okay. He met, during that time, he met Fred Harvey people and became aquatinted with several of them. And at that time Fred Harvey had never had a chief engineer. I'm not sure what they did but they hired a man by the name of Al Henderson, who was an ex-army man, retired. And he had met Vern and asked him if he would like to go to Death Valley, California. So, they took a trip, flew to Death Valley, well flew to Las Vegas and drove to Death Valley. Vern came back and he said to the kids "how would you like to live in the desert?" and they said "are there camels?"

1956... and so, that was probably May or June and we packed up in September and well the kids and I had spent the summer in Michigan which we had done for years.

TM: Had you been west yet?

PH: I had been west when Vern was in service, I had come out because I had an aunt who lives in San Jose. And Vern was stationed near there, so I stayed with her and could see him when he had time off. But yah I had...

TM: And what were your thoughts that during- that would have been the mid-forties during World War II when you had gone out to stay with your aunt to then see Vern. What were your thoughts of the west as you traveled through it coming and going?

PH: You know I probably took the train out and didn't really think too much about it. Loved California because there were so many flowers and everything was so green and you know at that time you don't think much about living there. I think now people have different thoughts about "oh I'd love to live there" but I'd spent all my life in Michigan and hadn't... no thoughts of moving. It was passage of time and you did what you did and went from there. So, we...I'm trying to think. We did have a moving van that moved our things, because Fred Harvey moved us. So, we... The moving van I think got there after we did but we had an old car with no air conditioning and the only thing that made it bearable for the kids was Vern told them they could swim when we got to Death Valley. So had no idea about Death Valley or what there was so didn't do any grocery shopping or anything. Didn't have any idea what we were into. Went to Death Valley proper to the Valley. Stayed in a small cabin and the kids... I think we were there a couple days before school started. But we were going to live in Death Valley Junction which was 30 miles from the valley but the kids had to go six, three miles each way to school in Shoshoni and so first day I took Pat and Tom to school. And somebody said "well you got to get groceries" so I shopped in this little town.

TM: In Shoshoni?

PH: In Shoshoni. And learned that if you wanted to do any shopping you went to Vegas.

TM: And what year were Pat and Tom born?

PH: Pat was born in forty-eight. Tom was born in fifty. Sue in fifty-one and Nan in fifty-three. And Pat was born in Muskegon, where we lived. Tom was born up in Houghton. Sue was born in Cleveland. Nancy was born in Lakewood, Ohio. So, I said they were all born in different places.

TM: So, was the lodge built at the time in Death Valley? What was there?

PH: The hotel?

TM: Yah the hotel.

PH: Oh yah, the hotel was there and there were cabins at the ranch- well what did they call them... They had a name for them. They were kitchen, eating area, and two bedrooms, I think. Anyhow, there was no place for us to live in the valley at that time so we moved to Death Valley Junction where we lived in the Gower's house. Harry Gower was the engineer for the Borax company. Which...

TM: US Borax?

PH: Borax Company was the owner of the Inn and the Ranch and Fred Harvey bought them from them. We lived in Harry Gowers house which was... The kids couldn't believe it. In fact, when we moved in one of the fellas from the ranch who helped unload the moving van said "you could have a dance in here" because the living room was so big. But it was a dining room, kitchen, big living room, a bedroom downstairs, laundry room, and then an upstairs. Which had three bedrooms, I think. So, it was a fascinating place to live, but we only lived there one year and then we moved to the valley. And they took a house and I'm not sure who had lived there, but anyhow they converted the house to suit our family. So, we moved down there and then the kids started in a one room school. I think, I was trying to remember this morning. Sue and Nan weren't in school yet when we moved out there so they both started in this one room school with one teacher and then before we left there, they had two teachers and two rooms. So I, you know, I think it was an experience that a lot of kids don't experience you know? Their strung into what, twenty and thirty kids in a room and now they have that.

TM: What kind of projects was Vern working on? Do you remember?

PH: Well at that time Death Valley made their own power. They had a... Oh I suppose a generating plant that generated power. So that was part of his... had to make sure that everything ran well in the valley. The water for the swimming pools came from a creek or-

TM: The springs? The spring system there?

PH: The springs that came up the mountains. Had to make sure that that worked and the Inn emptied their water every night, their pool, their swimming pool water. The Ranch did not. But I think probably at that time Vern had maybe a half a dozen men working for him and you just had to make being on the ranch work. At that time the Inn closed in the summer and the Ranch closed in the summer and they only kept a skeleton crew.

TM: Did you guys stay in the summer or did you?

PH: We didn't. Vern took us back to Michigan. The kids and I spent the summer in Michigan and he went to Grand Canyon and worked Grand Canyon and then would go once a month to Death Valley and make sure everything was okay.

TM: When did he first- so Harvey sent him to Grand Canyon then at one point?

PH: Well it was... We finally ended up at Grand Canyon but at that time it was just some place for him to go because there wasn't anything really to do.

TM: In the summer-

PH: They had a skeleton crew.

TM: I see, okay.

PH: Because they put- they had a eight hole...eight... yah what do I say, eight hole, is that right, golf course?

TM: Yep, mhm, yep.

PH: That doesn't sound right.

TM: It's a small golf course, it's not a big golf course.

PH: Yah, well its half of it.

TM: Yah its half yah.

PH: They put cows on that to get the grass clipped in summertime. He had to make sure that the power and everything was okay. Then he would go back and do whatever he needed at the Canyon. So that was- I think we were six years in Death Valley.

TM: From 1956 to 1962 then?

PH: No sixty, so it would have been four years.

TM: And what were your thoughts of Death Valley at the time? I mean it must have been a huge shift for the family.

PH: You know, probably the best times of our lives. The kids had to make their own fun. Vern had a playhouse built for the kids and they had a sand box and a date orchard was right outside our door and the kids would go out and make toy pots in the date orchard and Nan went back several years later when Sue and Erik were working there. And went to the date orchard and made toy pots. So, you know, memories were good. I always said it was, well kind of like when I was growing up. You had to make your own fun and whenever birthdays came along, we had all the kids in the school for lunch because there was only, from one side of the ranch to the other to go to school. They always wanted to take their lunch and I said "you're not that far from home" I said "you can come home". So, I think on Fridays they took their lunch. And the girls had to wear dresses and they said "how come?" and I said "because that's just the way it is". But it was a good time and we met a lot of people down there and you know we met a lot of the Harveys. And we met, well we got to know the general managers and you got, it was small enough yet that you got to know all the people that worked there. And that was where I think I met Rosemary, was down there.

TM: Rosemary Acosta?

PH: Yes. Just a good time. I don't know how to expound anymore on that. It was because you did the things, oh and I ventured onto the golf course and took some golf lessons and by that time the kids were all in school. Vern was always bringing somebody home who something- they'd had car problems or something. One day he came home and he said "I need your toaster." And I said "why?" and he said "Stovepipe Wells doesn't have a toaster. They need a toaster." And it was... My mind is blank on names but Amelia Earhart's ex-husband had married a gal and she ran Stovepipe Wells. So sometime after the toaster incident she asked the family to dinner there at Stovepipe Wells. And you know it just expanded the kid's arena of people that they knew and connections that they had. And there was always people coming, especially to the Inn and you always had, they had cocktail parties and it was just a good way to meet people and people I'd never thought I would meet.

TM: Like who?

PH: Oh well down there I don't really remember. First all the Harvey's came in off and on and one time I remember our chef at the time at the Ranch made iced tea in a jar and set it out in the sun. Stewart Harvey came along one day and he said to the chef "what's that?" and he said "I'm making iced tea."

And he had never heard of it. You know and kind of, I guess, kind of raised his eyebrows a little bit. I think of Christmases... There used to be people that would come in, bring their Christmas presents, bring their Christmas trees and especially to the Inn and spend their Christmases in Death Valley. Which to me was, it was family, but it still wasn't what I remember as Christmas. You know, you stayed home at Christmas. I'm sure if I'd had six months to think about this, I would have had lots of people to remember but you did you know, it was... people who came it was a destination for a lot of people so it was fun to know that you were involved. The Park Service at that time was about four miles away from us. And their kids went to school in the valley, to the same one that our kids- so we met lots of the Park Service people. People we have kept in contact with over the years and oldest daughter Pat still has a friend that she keeps in touch with from down there. Just... I'm trying to think if there's- oh I know, we had to, this is throwing names out. We had... somehow or another Vern had met a couple from Omaha, Nebraska and their name was Buffet. And he was a nephew or Warren Buffet. I think she had forgotten her binoculars so Vern came to borrow the binoculars so she could bird watch. And one summer on our way east they asked us to stop and so we stopped at their Omaha... we never went Warren but they had an old store in Omaha, I think it still is there. That they had taken all the old cash registers and things and put up on the second floor to make a museum kind of thing. At that time Warren Buffet was just getting started and was buying stock. They asked Vern if he wouldn't like to buy it and he said "I don't have money to buy and invest, we're just starting out!" It's been fun, you know, to have those memories that you knew people who were related to people. And I'm sure there were a lot of others who we met that way.

TM: Would you drive back east in the summer or would you take the train or would you fly? How did you-

PH: Well we usually drove back. So, I had the car, and Vern would take the train back or fly back and then he would bring us in- I think the kids were out of school and he'd take us back then he'd come pick us up a week before school started in the Fall.

TM: And you were driving Route 66?

PH: Yes.

TM: What kind of car did you have?

PH: It was a Buick. I'm not sure what year. A Buick that a friend of ours was into carpets and she said "got this car, its hail damaged" but she said probably in Death Valley [PH laughs] all the hail damage would be gone. So, I think we drove that probably a couple years before we got something else. But you know, it was like everybody else. Nobody had air conditioning in their cars at that time and you stopped- our kids always remember we stopped in Garden City, Kansas because they had a public swimming pool. And the kids could go swimming to cool off and at that time there were a few Fred Harvey Houses still along the route. If our trip hit one of those we could stop and stay all night there. And then go on. And then I had a cousin who lived in Chicago and we always stopped one night there and then on to Michigan. At that time my dad's house was right next to the cottage that we now have. And the cottage was built by my cousin who did all the work. He was an architect. Built all the boards. He had it all figured out how to make the windows and make the doors. And he came up and dug the basement by himself. And laid the blocks, and then a friend of his would come up and help him put the house together. And it's just a small house but kinda like a pullman downstairs. The downstairs has a kitchen

and a dining area and then had a hide-a-bed. And the hide-a-bed pulled out and the table pulled down like in a train where you put the table down and put the cushions. And then upstairs was just one big room with a bathroom and two beds up there. And so, for the kids and I it was just right. Lots of memories you know, because we and the Reeds were close to me. He was the big brother that I didn't have. I was an only child and so the kids you know, the kids had that connection too because they grew up with him. Then back to Death Valley. Pat was going to go into seventh grade and she would have had to go sixty miles each way to school.

TM: Where was the school then? Where was sixty miles out?

PH: Shoshoni. Because we were living in the valley by then.

TM: Got it, okay.

PH: And so, the engineer at Grand Canyon's daughter had just graduated. And so, they swapped jobs and we swapped houses and he went to Death Valley and we came up here [to Grand Canyon]. And we lived in his house and he lived in our house in Death Valley.

TM: Do you remember his name and do you remember what year that was?

PH: John Feedam and it would have been sixty. And I think John retired from Death Valley and then they moved to Vegas, I think. So, kind of a different thing but Vern of course got busy right away and the kids were ready for school.

TM: And he was working with Herschel Stickler at that time?

PH: Stickler.

TM: Stickler, thank you.

PH: Herschel was the general manager.

TM: Who was he like? What do you remember of him?

PH: Oh, you know, up- we have kept in touch with Hershel and Lavern. Hersch died many years ago. Lavern, I think developed Alzheimer's, I'm not sure because her daughter never really said. But they had retired to Sun City.

TM: Lavern was his wife?

PH: Yes. And they would spend summers- they bought a home up in, oh it was up where the fires were in Colorado. By Pike Peak and I can't remember the time.

TM: Colorado Springs?

PH: No. Oh, I heard it just the other day. Anyhow, they spent, when they retired, they spent summers there and then winters in sun city. So, Vern and I would go out probably once a month and have dinner with them.

TM: In Phoenix?

PH: In Phoenix. When they were in Phoenix, we kept in touch and after Hersch died we still went to see Lavern and had dinner once, usually, once a month. So, it was, you know, it was a good connection and another instance where the family knew them and had a lot of memories of them. So, at that time after we moved to the canyon there was a greenhouse there up next to the road, the road that leads... just when you go up the hill, below the El Tovar and then on there was a greenhouse. So, Vern said "oh you can take care of the greenhouse" so I played with that and probably not real successful but it was fun. It was something to do.

TM: Yah.

PH: And the kids were all in school by that time.

TM: Going to the Grand Canyon school?

PH: Yes.

TM: Where the commute wasn't quite so bad...

PH: No that was like Death Valley. They you know had a block and a half to walk to school. But you know it was a different atmosphere than Death Valley. More bigger, more people for the kids in school. But they made friends easily and you know, had a lot of friends. Lot of those friendships have held over because they, you know in a small school, and Grand Canyon was still small. I think it's like anywhere you form a friendship with people. I'm not sure what year Ben Quinn came to the canyon but his boys were our kids ages and so there's still a friendship there you know.

TM: What did Ben do?

PH: Ben was a general manager for a while.

TM: After Herschel?

PH: I'm not sure if he came right after Hersch or not. I think- I'm trying to think. I think Ben had spent one winter when we were there in Death Valley too but came along because his family was in Phoenix and were running a motel there at that time.

TM: So what was it like for you going from Death Valley, where basically its shut down in the summer, so that you could go back to Michigan and hang out with family and friends back east to the Grand Canyon which was busy in the summer, that was the hot time and the winter was basically shut down?

PH: Well our kids were still young enough they couldn't work so we still... It wasn't until Pat and Tom were old enough to work that we stopped doing that.

TM: So, you still went back east in the summers?

PH: We still went back to Michigan for the summer. So, it probably was... Well Pat would have been sixteen which at that time I think was, you could work at fifteen with a permit. And I'm not sure if Tom was fifteen or his dad might have put him to work before that. Pat went to work as a Harvey girl so we, then we spent summers here. But I think we took two weeks and went back to Michigan.

TM: Nice.

PH: Saw family and... But it wasn't too hard to transfer from Death Valley to Grand Canyon. I don't think it was, the difference was there were more people and there were more things going on and more people. We made lots of friends and one couple that we had met in Death Valley came to Grand Canyon and Bill and Delma Holden and Bill was the auditor or the accountant or, I'm not sure which one he was. But they were both from Death Valley and came to Grand Canyon. And Death Valley, the kids got to know these people because it was smaller and there were more things that they would be involved with than at Grand Canyon. They all had their own things going on in school and friends and so we kind of did our own thing too. You get involved with PTA. We got involved with the church at Grand Canyon right away and... I don't know days went and you don't know where they go and you're busy and of course with the kids at home, why, there's always something going on.

TM: And so you would have met the Verkamps?

PH: Yes.

TM: What do you remember of them?

PH: You know by the time we met the Verkamps Jack's first wife had died but he had remarried. So, and then, Jack's mother Muzz and his siter Peggy were always in- at that time there was more get together with all the people, the verkamps and Parks Service, and Fred Harvey. I think there was more, I don't know if friendship is the right word, but

TM: Comradery?

PH: You did more things together I just have a feeling there isn't that anymore up here. Kinda too bad but different time different place. So, you know, everybody was invited when there was something special going on. The park superintendent was invited and the Fred Harvey people who were heads of departments were invited and Chicago people came in, you know, you always had a dinner. So in that way we were fortunate to meet a lot of the Harveys and a lot of the Chicago office people. Which probably doesn't happen anymore. I think Fred Harvey has become too big, it's not Fred Harvey anymore, which is kinda sad. You know, I'm glad that my daughter Sue's business still carries the Fred Harvey name on some of their things. It probably won't always be so because as the company is sold people have different ideas and different ways to do things. But like with Hannah and Frank when they came, you know, there was always something going on.

TM: And what were your thoughts on meeting them? Which would have been 1970 maybe, late sixties?

PH: Late sixties maybe. I'm not sure. There was a friendship right away. Of course, Vern had met Frank before Hannah.

TM: Oh.

PH: So, he knew a little bit. You know some people just mesh when they meet and I think this was the way with Hannah and Frank. We just got along good together and I remember Hannah used to love to having people over for dinner and would do that. And we did. I think we did more things in our homes along with all the dinner parties that went on. But Frank and Hannah and I usually when we get together, well, when Vern was alive too, you know, you went back to the old days. What was what you remembered and who you remembered. So it was, it's always fun to come and you know see that many- the old time people. In fact, there aren't too many left anymore I don't think.

TM: That's right. What do you remember of Merle Stitt?

PH: He was another one you know there were a lot of superintendents that we just loved. We got along well and superintendents' kind of came and went. When we first came John McLaughlin was the superintendent up here. His daughter and our Pat were good friends and our son Tom and their son, now I won't remember his name. Anyhow, were good friends. So, we got together a lot and I think most of the early superintendents after we came you know for whatever reason, we met and we got along and I'm trying to think who else. John McLaughlin and Merle Stitt and probably a couple others and I can't think-

TM: Maybe Dick Marks. No-

PH: No. You know the kids would probably remember better than I. But until the last, probably the last two superintendents you still invited them to things but there wasn't that closeness because I think it was starting maybe to get away from Park Service was asking more, maybe, of the concessioner than they had. The friends we made were the friends that lasted.

TM: What do you remember of Emery Kolb?

PH: [PH laughs] Mostly his car accidents. I can remember Katherine Wilcox talking about Emery going to the Post Office and backing into somebody at the Post Office and he said "oh that's alright, send me the bill, I'll pay it". You know. But he was eccentric, but he was fun to listen to he just you know his life had been such an adventure. I think that his wife maybe had died before we came, I'm not sure. But we knew Edith. It's one of those things that you say "Oh I remember him" and you remember the silly things about him as much as the brilliant things about him. I'm just so glad that they're leaving the building on the rim and you know not doing anything because its historic.

TM: Have you taken a tour? Have you been downstairs? Since they fixed it up?

PH: No, I have not.

TM: You need to do that.

PH: Down to the living quarters or down- no, I'm trying to think if we were up here for something and they did a tour but I think we didn't have time. And it's something you have to know the right people to get down, there don't you?

TM: No, I bet if you just show up there and the people that are working the studio would be glad to try to get somebody over or just take the time to, they have the keys there, to just let you in and show it to you right then and there so.

PH: Because I think we were probably in there once or twice when Emery was alive and it was a picture window in the front of the house is just tremendous.

TM: So, did you guys do any hiking or exploring of the canyon? Did you get over to the North Rim?

PH: Probably the North Rim not until after we left. Yah I think the north after we left. The kids did lots of hiking. Hiked into the canyon at moonlight came out the next day. Vern did many trips down I think mostly on mules because if that was part of his work down there too was the Phantom Ranch. So, I'm not sure how often he would go but you know, whenever needed he would take a trip down.

TM: Did he help on the pipeline?

PH: Well he was... I don't think he helped on the pipeline but he knew, we knew, the Halversons and of course you know, watch it because that was important to the South Rim to have the water cleaned up. When they were building it Vern's mom and dad came out and Vern's mom did not like high places. She wouldn't look over the rim or anything. So we were out on Yaki Point one day and the helicopter had just landed and was going back to the airport and Vern, I'm sure had talked Elling beforehand to get his mom and dad and all the kids and they took the helicopter back to the- Vern's mother loved it but, you know, she had no idea what was happening when they put her on this helicopter. [Both laugh]

TM: What was her name?

PH: Tilly.

TM: Tilly. And her husband's name?

PH: Charles, Charlie. And just you know, as common as they'd come just... I don't know how to describe them really just great people you know give you the shirt off their back. Our kids were the first grandkids so of course that was special. I have pictures of the kids out in their garden picking strawberries and grandpa showing him things and grandma showing him flowers. Like I say that is what I had missed growing up and what our kids remember from back then. And I, you know, I'm so glad we had those years that we could send back there. And oh, my dad too. My dad, I'm trying to think. My dad died before Vern's folks.

TM: Did he outlive the doctor's predictions?

PH: He did. He lived to be ninety. [TM laughs] He had just had his 90th birthday.

TM: Oh, that's great.

PH: Passed away the next day so.

TM: Oh. Did you know the Babbits?

PH: Mhm! Probably Vern knew them better than I do because he had lots of transactions with them building wise. Because Vern had built the Yavapai buildings. He built Kachina and the Thunderbird and he also... I forgot what I was just going to say.

TM: We were talking about the Babbits and his building the hotels.

PH: But he built the things that you know probably now could not be built and they talk about every few years taking down those buildings on the rim. So, it would be kind of sad if they do, it's kind of fun. Vern hired John Hyatt to be the transportation man after John Cunningham retired. The thing was he had never been here so Vern got him rooms on the rim and you know there's nothing like opening the curtains on those rim rooms and seeing the canyon in the morning you know. So, it would be a shame, but I suppose eventually somebody- hopefully not but. And they moved the Brown building, which Sue tells me is still there and I have not found it. Its over somewhere around where the train spends the day. Or where they turn around. Somewhere over there. It was on the rim where the kachina... I never remember if the Kachina or Thunderbird, which is which, but they moved it. And of course, you spend all day watching them move that building from the rim down through the Motor Lodge and then where it

finally landed. And that was the Brown building was, wasn't a men's dorm. I'm not sure who lived there in the Brown building. The girl's dorm was the stone one.

TM: Colter? Was that Colter Hall?

PH: The girl's dorm, uhuh. And then the men's is still down across from the community building. But I'm not sure. I'm not sure who lived in the Brown building. Anyhow they moved it so they could build other things. But it was... It was a fun time to see all these things being built.

TM: And then when AMFAC took over from Fred Harvey what was that transition like?

PH: You know I think it was good. It was hard to see the Fred Harvey name go because AMFAC, it was AMFAC that did that.

TM: Did Vern stay with them?

PH: Vern stayed. And I'm not sure what happened they... The fella who was head of AMFAC, I'm not sure why he wanted to change things up here, but he wanted Vern and I to go to Death Valley and Vern said "no, that's not" you know. And so, we left the company in seventy-two. So, there have been lots of changed since then.

TM: What did you do then?

PH: I'm not sure how Vern connected with a Mormon company in Phoenix and went to work for them probably within a year after we left and they were owned by Western Savings at that time. And I think about five or six years after Vern joined them, they- five of the fellows decided to buy the company and form their own company, which they did and Vern stayed with them until he retired. So, it's still around but it's a very small company.

TM: And he was engineering? Was he doing engineering projects for them?

PH: Yah design and had two girls who did all the interior planning for hotel rooms and so on.

TM: And did you guys move to Phoenix then?

PH: Yes. We moved Sue down to go to college and lived in an apartment for about three months and bought a house and I'm still in the same house.

TM: Oh wonderful. It's interesting because that early seventies is about the time Franz left and there were a bunch of people it seems like that left AMFAC.

PH: And that was the difference in the management and management had their own ideas about who should stay and who should go. It survived but... in hindsight you wish that it had been different. So, you know, I think the people that left were people who shouldn't have been let go. Everybody has their own ideas about how to do things and I think you find that in everything. And we would have loved to have stayed but it was just not, and I think this was probably when Frank and Hannah left, I think. It was hard for Vern to see them go because you know Frank was doing a good job and it was just somebody else didn't think the same way so we can only do what we can do and you have to let it go from there. But you know, we had a good time in Tempe and it was meant to be, I guess. Host to all our kids and that's what's important.

TM: Yes. And what are your thoughts on Tusayan today on the whole expansion not expansion, city council journey? Tell me your thoughts on that.

PH: You know it would have been nice to have seen it left the way it was but I guess if you have money anything can happen. And that's what happened. Hopefully the people that are still there will make everything work and make it a good thing. Only time will tell. It's only been what, a year? So, it's always nice to come back and I always stay with Frank and Hannah when I come because we get our chance to visit and I don't see them that often anymore.

TM: And what would be your thoughts, I hear this often about that sense of community between whoever managing the concessioner at Harvey whether its Zantera or whoever, and the Park Service, and the Tusayan community, that sense of community that was there in the sixties, how could we rebuild that today?

PH: I don't know that it could. I think that times change, people change, and I think we found it with all the superintendents. There were some that did agreeable things and some that weren't and I think that as time goes on, I think... Maybe people want to have more say or be more in control of what's happening. Whereas I don't think it used to be that way. I think you worked together rather than against each other. It probably, I think they get along but that's it. They don't mesh like they did. We were fortunate. We were here at a time when you were friends with the superintendent and you were friends with Babbitts and any other groups that were involved and you know it was the school too. You know all those people were good friends and I'm not sure that that's there. I don't know and I don't ask Sue and Erik enough about what's going on but different time and different place and you have to go with the flow. You can do whatever you can do.

TM: I wanted to ask you about healthcare at the south rim. Did you know Dr. Lacy?

PH: Mhm.

TM: What else can you tell me about healthcare at the time?

PH: Probably the best. I just think of Elling Halverson when he had his, and I can't remember if it was a helicopter crash or what happened with him, but we would go because we lived right next door to the hospital practically and you know we would go over and he would come in and he'd- The Lacy's were another family that were close you know. Got to know Dr Garbio too after he came and he was so different than Dr Lacy. But we-

TM: How were they different?

PH: Different personalities, I think. Dr. Lacy may be a little more serious. Dr Garbio just a little more outgoing a little more friendly, I think. And in fact, he went to Chandler and after we moved to Phoenix Vern went to him for a little while. So, we still had a connection to the Grand Canyon. But Lacys were family oriented, I think. But I think they were in a good hospital and it was important you know that it be there. And like I say personalities make a difference sometimes and probably didn't have as much connection with Dr Lacy as we did with Dr. Garbio for whatever reason, I can't tell. Good to have memories of these people.

TM: When the clinic, the new clinic hospital, was built in the early sixties.

PH: Was built before we left.

TM: Okay.

PH: Was built as the hospital and didn't stay a hospital very long.

TM: Maybe a year or so?

PH: I'm not sure. And then didn't... I'm thinking one of the Phoenix hospitals took it over for a while?

TM: That's right, Samaritan.

PH: Yah.

TM: Good Sam.

PH: That didn't last too long either did it?

TM: Until 1999, I think. So, a while actually... Yah.

PH: So, is the clinic run now by people from Flagstaff?

TM: Flagstaff, yah.

PH: But it's a necessity for up here.

TM: I'd like to think so. I think.

PH: You know there's always people who are having accidents and it's a stepping stone. At least people have a chance to find out what's wrong with them or are taken care of before they're transferred somewhere else.

TM: That's right.

PH: In this big a place you have to have something, I think.

TM: Yah. Do you remember the big snow storm of 1967? Were you guys here for that?

PH: We were here. We had been to Albuquerque with our youngest daughter and came back and didn't know if we'd make it but we kept going.

TM: Driving in from Flagstaff?

PH: Driving in from Flagstaff.

TM: I don't remember if we came 180, we probably came 40. But we knew our kids were home and we knew we had to get here. So we did. So, yah. But lots of storms. Christmas time I remember one year, kids and Vern hadn't got the Christmas tree went out in the storm, cut a Christmas tree. Probably illegally. You know as you talk and as you talk to the kids, and all of a sudden, they say "Oh yah I remember that." That was neat and so it's a good time to remember.

TM: Sounds wonderful, a wonderful journey.

PH: It is and you know it's something I would never have anticipated having always lived in the same place and not knowing what your future was or if you were going to stay in the same place. But it's been good.

TM: It's almost a spirit of adventure it's what I learned from Rosie was, you know, it's a German traveling, coming to the States, going to LA, coming back to the Grand Canyon and then sort of staying here. You find a nice place and you settle down.

PH: You do. And Phoenix might not have been the place that I would have chosen but its where we ended up and it's been good.

TM: So you guys moved to phoenix then in seventy-two?

PH: Mhm.

TM: Which would have been a different Phoenix than it is today of course.

PH: Oh yes. Sue was in college and she was taking pictures of cotton fields just miles from the house and I ran across a picture the other day and she goes "where did you find that?" and I said "it's one of the pictures you took of your dad when you had him go into the cotton fields with you." Because she was a photography major and... I have friends down there who say "Oh do you remember when..." and it's like "do you remember when up here?" So just... we were here at the right time and I wouldn't trade it for anything. Like I say lots of friends and the Verkamps and...

TM: Did you know the Stevens? And I'm trying to think of who else.

PH: Oh judge steven?

TM: Mhm.

PH: We lived in his house one summer. All I remember, we came up, Vern worked up here probably while John Beedam was on vacation. And so they moved, he was gone by that time but we moved into his house. And we also lived in a house, and I don't remember whose house it was, but the house, it's the first house as you go to Avenue A that sits kinda up on a hill and Buford and Myra Belgard were in that later.

TM: And what do you remember of Buford?

PH: Bufford [laughs] of course was all American Legion and that was his life. Kind of Mary and Myra's too. You know, and that was good, you need somebody that has a big interest and they were other people who you always got together with for whatever was going on and it was fun to be with. And somebody you know anything about Mary?

TM: I know I want to interview her. [laughs]

PH: Well I heard somebody say she wasn't too well. I don't know, that might not be. You wanna do it soon.

TM: Thank you.

PH: Because her life was Buford and Myra.

TM: That's right.

PH: That was her family up here. I saw Mary about three years ago. Nan and I stopped and left a tape recorder with her and said "please when you have time, do some of these memories for us" and I don't think she's ever done it. So, I never followed up on it, which was my fault, probably. But it would have been fun because she had good stories to tell and she was here a long time before we came.

TM: Yah, I need to talk to Al Richmond and see if he can talk to her and we'll see if we can make it happen. Yah. Do you remember the Lopezs? Do you remember Jesse and?

PH : Josie?

TM : Yah Josie.

PH: My daughter was married to Josie's son for a while and well they went to school together. And married had a son who is coming up here today, first time he's been back since he was like this. Bringing his family who have been up here once before but coming up for our whispers and souvenirs. And Sue has pictures of Erin when he was six or seven maybe, I'm not sure. Stomping grapes and the guys all sitting around watching him. So, you know, its... Hopefully it's a good time for him to come back, reminisce and remember his wife is a city girl so I'm not sure whether the outdoors life will be quite what she expects. But it will be fun. It will be nice. Sue and Erik have been looking forward to it, so it will be fun. Yah you know, there are lots of people to remember and you really have to start talking and reminiscing and say "oh I remember them". Then well it's not until you do that you know. But Ray, Josies husband worked for Vern. He was an electrician for Vern and his brother, not his brother, his cousin Tommy was the plumber for Vern. So, there's lots of connections there.

TM: Did you know the Watahomigies?

PH: Mhm went to school with our kids and our son Tom was married for a while to Gilbert Timechee's daughter. So, there's a connection there. You know, you remember where they all worked and what they all did. When Vern died Gilbert came and I couldn't figure out what why Fern's suit had gray on it and and they had spread something but that was part of their culture and you know and Gilbert had known Vern for so long that it was nice. And I'm sure the kids will remember too. You could go on and on about memories that you have but they're good memories and you know things you look back on and you really appreciate the life you had. More probably, we were more fortunate than a lot of people. I think a lot of people never have the chance to live the life we did. Just well like I grew up you know in the country and making my own fun and my own entertainment, and the kids did too. I think they appreciate it. I think that's why they're happy where they are out there Sue and Erik just you know it's a quiet life and Nancy made her own life in Tucson. Tom's doing what he wants to do. Our other daughter is in Denver. City Gal, kind of.

TM: Big city

PH: Yes.

TM: So, what are your thoughts on, I'm gonna kind of broaden this out a little bit because now that you have a rear-view mirror of eight decades, what are your thoughts on technology? We're talking here this is going into a digital file that we can share on a computer, telecommunications changes, we've gone to the moon. Just the nuclear age.

PH: I have not followed the new, I do not have a computer. I don't have a phone that does all kinds of things. I keep telling people I'm too old to learn and they say "you're not". But I don't believe them. I figured if I need to do anything my kids can do it, I don't need to learn at this age. I think I would like... I went the other day to a book store in Tempe and they were talking about iPods and iPads and I think that would be fun. I think my kids would say "no mom". But I think it would. It would be different I mean, but not like a computer. Put things up, I may get an iPod and try it, see if I like it. If I don't well, I'm not out that much. But I think it's great all the things that all the new things can do and you know I think most of my kids can do everything fancy and do computer and internet and email. But I just I was never that interested in getting involved with it, I guess. I should have probably, but I didn't. But I... Some of it may be not necessary but maybe it is. Its...

TM: Its interesting because it seems as though we spend an awful lot of time staring at a plastic screen called a computer versus being outside doing a different type of entertainment if you will, self play, self-directed activities and socialization together and I'm just not sure that the computer is enhancing that skill.

PH: No, I think more people are spending more time inside than outside. I guess, just thinking of my own family, my girls all love to garden. And they do spend a lot of time out in the yard. They also spend a lot of time in the house on computers and fortunately they still have to write their mother or call their mother because I don't have any of those fancy things and I like that. You know I do mailings from our church and when the post office talks about closing because they you know, people aren't writing letters or anything, I think It's a shame. Because it's so nice to get a birthday card or a Christmas card rather than an email. It has its place. Nan, when we were in Michigan this summer, we had somebody try to break in the cottage. So, we got a young man who was a handy man, not a carpenter. And we had him come over to see if he could fix the window that had, the bottom had rotted. And he, oh he probably spent most of an hour talking to the girls. And couldn't do it until after we left. So he emailed Nan and said I got it done and how much it was and she must have emailed him back, because she got an email yesterday thanking us for letting him do the work and hoped that it was alright and said "please call me when you come back next summer and if it isn't right I'll fix it". Which for a young man is very impressive. The girls were very impressed. So, we kind of got away from that a little bit. It's always nice when you get a thank you from somebody. Which a lot of people don't do anymore. I probably am guilty of not doing that myself sometimes but if you don't write you at least can call and say "thank you, I appreciated it". And I try to remember that because as I get older people look out more for me and I try to at least say thank you. I don't like that they're doing it but I understand where they're coming from.

TM: And that's a good thing.

PH: It is. Hopefully it rubs off on my daughters and my son.

TM: I'm sure it has.

PH: But it's been a good journey.

TM: It sounds like a wonderful journey.

PH: So, we've gone places and done things that most families don't ever- probably they do more so than when I was growing up but there's a lot of families that don't ever get anywhere. We've been here and

done that and gone to most of the states and had friends in most of the states, I think. I just went back for my 60th high school reunion.

TM: Where was that?

PH: In Michigan. There probably were 25 members of the class and then a few spouses, a few friends. So, it's fun.

TM: Did anyone do any oral histories there?

PH: I don't think so. Other than keeping track that we have done it, where we have done it and who has been there and pictures. I think that's, if it's not like this it's at least on paper who was there and who has died and who wrote that they couldn't come. I think probably that's there. But it's you know as you get older its chore to try and keep track of people. And we've had the same committee ever since we started. And they're getting worried.

TM: Sure, you're all in your eighties now.

PH: Yes. But it's fun just to know that somebody has an interest yet. And one of the last two or three years one of the fella's sons has been doing pictures which is nice. They say "Oh yah, I remember them." I'm glad they could come. So, they have one every five years but it's for the whole school not just the class.

TM: So, Pat I've talked with Franz and Hannah, and Rosie, and you, and I'd like to talk to Mary. Mary Hoover. Who else would you recommend that I chat with?

PH: You know, I'm not sure who is around anymore.

TM: And I sort of think of you as my mom's age, you know so I want to try to capture that generational shift. Yes, I could talk to Sue and I could talk to Erik and you know their generation, your children's generation but trying to reach further back.

PH: You know right off hand I can't think of anybody other than Mary. I'm sure there are a few out there.

TM: I want to talk to Josie Lopez and... and Rebecca Watahomigie's brother, what's his name? He just retired from Park Service.

PH: All I can think of right now is Cecil.

TM: Oh yah, no, Cecil's passed away.

PH: I thought he did.

TM: Yah. Anyway, so there are some others, Dan Kaska is one of the people I want to talk with and he's a Havasupai and you may not have met him.

PH: Oh.

TM: He's been, he's in his eighties or nineties now, for a long time.

PH: Yah I don't know how Gilbert Timichee is. Lives on, I think he's out in Hopi reservation. He was living with daughters off and on. He's Teresa and, I can't tell you what her name is now but she was the gal who was married to my son. She's married again to a Hopi and they live in Tuba City I think or that area. But her dad if he could tell stories would still be a good one. And his father was Porter Timichee who was around in the canyon for years and years. Just you know, you can picture them in your mind, what they look like. And you know, good people to remember. And you kind of remember the Indians who worked for you or worked where you were involved. So, it's a yah, I'll have to talk to the girls because I'll have to think about who else might be in that generation.

TM: Yah that would be good. Yah that would be fun to chat with, especially if they're nearby. I'll really try to track down Mary Hoover. Thank you for reminding me about that.

PH: Yah, and I have not seen Mary for a while so I can't remember what Sue-

TM: Its different.

PH: It is. My cell phone is very basic. I bought a track phone that I add minutes to just so that if the girls need me or they're on their way home and want to call and say "I'm Home. But like I say, seeing everybody doing their iPad and all their technical phones. It looks like fun but you have to try it in order to see if you're smart enough to do it. Maybe.

TM: Yah I wonder, and I always wonder what happens when the electricity goes out what will we do?

PH: You find the candles [TM laughs] and you enjoy the fun in the dark.

TM: That's right. That's right.

PH: It's kind of nice to be quiet and not have the TV on and not have the radio on and just be quiet and enjoy life.

TM: It is interesting we were, yesterday we went from here over to one of the restaurants here and the television is playing, and there's sound from that and the background overhead music is going and people are talking and the waiters are running around and the people in the dining are dining and it's amazing how much stimulation is coming at us from so many sides.

PH: Well I walked down the hallway to come here and the noise coming out of the dining room was, you kind of wonder how people can even hear each other. It's like when there's music playing in a restaurant if it's like a thing and people continue talking, I think "why don't they be quiet and listen to the music?" But they don't. I was trying to think, I was somewhere the other day. And I was trying to listen to something and the lady next to me insisted on visiting and I thought I'd love to tell her "I'm listening please!" But I didn't. We're not a quiet civilization anymore. It has to be talking all the time I guess.

TM: Yah and you've seen Arizona fill in and double in population a number of times.

PH: It's getting, Arizona or- Phoenix is getting too big. I think they've overstretched their limits. They're going to Tucson, you know we're going to meet one day. That's not that fun town it used to be. And it will never stop. It'll keep going everywhere. You have to move out in the country, I guess. To get away from anything. And you know I suppose I realize that more. Growing up in the country and having lived in it I hope I never outgrow that feeling for small town and Tempe is still small. Its growing but I'm in an old neighborhood. Not too many people I know anymore, but a few. They change but I don't.

TM: Yah its interesting watching the technology march along.

PH: It would be nice if time could stand still but it doesn't. Technology is one of those things that you know we always have to learn more and do more.

TM: Yah we were just thinking about your story with the toaster. That you had to loan out to somebody and when the toaster came along. Well the toaster came along because electricity came along and because of electricity we have the cell phone in the pocket and a quarter here and they do all these amazing things, it's amazing technology, but there is a cost. There is a price, and at what price? I do not know.

PH: Well and I see my granddaughter especially always with her phone you know. Somebody is calling or something is going on or something is happening. Kind of a sad commentary. I mean they're learning things, but there's other things in the world. Our Pastor on Sunday was talking about making a trip in the sixties taking the back roads back to the east and he said "my two kids in the back seat with their heads with a blanket over them with their," whatever they had at that time. And you know I remember our kids with comic books in their hands. And you know you'd say "oh look at" whatever. And they'd look right back to the comic book, so it's no different.

TM: In a way that is very true.

PH: We just have to go back and remember all those things. But it's like coming home to come up here. Fun times. But This is good that you're doing this.

TM: Well thank you so much for letting me. It's a lot of fun. So with that I'm gonna hit the stop button.

PH: Okay