

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society

Interviewee: Shirley Patrick (SP)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Family life and employment at Grand Canyon during the 1950s and 1960s

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Method of Interview: By phone with Shirley from her home in San Diego, CA

Transcriber: Amy Bayer

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KEYS: Manford Allen "Slim" Patrick, Grant Wedoff, Steve Ledding, Francis Ayers, Carl Lehnert, Lynn Coffin, Ken Talakte, Phantom Ranch Swimming Pool, North Rim Housing, North Rim Fire Lookout

TM: Today is November 14, 2017. This is the second, Part 2, interview/phone interview with Shirley Patrick. My name is Tom Martin. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History interview. Shirley, thank you so much again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Are you okay if we record this conversation?

SP: Yes, I am.

TM: Thank you very much. At the end of Part 1 we were talking about your time at Phantom Ranch in the spring of 1953. You talked about Dean Tidball and going across the river on the cable. Would you mind telling me a little bit more about your recollections of Slim Patrick. What was his name, his full name?

SP: Full name was Manford Allen Patrick.. He previously had been married to Pansy Jane. Irwin I think was her maiden name. They had three children the oldest of whom was Ken Patrick. However, they divorced, oh, I guess when Ken was about 12-13 years old, something like that. Then Ken...he was torn between his mother and his dad. He ultimately, basically, ran away from home to be with his dad. His dad, he had worked on the railroad and had good jobs but when he had to leave the east, left Indiana and came out west, a different world out west. He got into logging. He was logging in the forest on the east of Flagstaff. Trying to think of the name of the...I think, is it the Mogollon Rim country?

TM: Yes.

SP: On the east end. He was logging there. In those days they logged with mules. Mules pulled the logs and stuff like that. Pretty tough. Wasn't in '53, it was before that. Was probably...let's see...Ken was born in '33...maybe '50, '49 or '50, something like that. Ken was pretty young then. He was probably 15-16 years old. That's what he was doing. Working out with the men 'cause he quit school and worked with the men logging. And that's what Slim was doing. So Slim was born in 1906. In '49, Slim was only what...only 43 years old. He wasn't an old man when he was out there, but that work made an old man out of him. No doubt about that. I do want to tell you an interesting story.

TM: Please.

SP: First, when talking about Slim Patrick. During the Depression, he and Pansy, and Ken was the only child then, they went West. There was no work in the east and he started West. It was some kind of an

old car, I don't know what. Got as far as Williams, ran out of money, ran out of gas. Williams – that's in the olden days when 66 was the main drag going east and west and it was a two-lane highway. So Slim stopped there. Slim got out, started walking down the street and the first guy he met, he tapped him on the shoulder and he said, "You got any work? I need a job." This is about 1935 maybe, something like that. The guy happened to be...don't know if you ever heard of him before...Pete Akers, A-K-E-R-S. Have you ever heard of him?

TM: No.

SP: Wonderful man from Flagstaff, Arizona. He owned a ranch near Williams. He had a little ranch just east of the road going into Grand Canyon from Williams. And this was getting near, I guess it was fall, probably. Pete said, "Yeah," he said, "I got a job for you. I got a ranch out here." He said, "If you don't mind ranching," he says, "you can go out there. It's a cabin out there." He said, "You can live there and ranch there," he said, "It'll be fine." Of course, Slim was happy as a clam to do that. So they went out. He and Pansy and Ken moved out there. They were there for one winter and the winter was terrible. Terrible, terrible harsh winter. It got near Christmas time and Pete Akers rode all the way in there on a horse to take a little bag of candy to the baby Kenny for Christmas. So that's Pete Akers. I think he grew pinto beans or something out there. Slim stayed there, I think, until spring and then they went up to the Canyon to work. They lived in what they called Tent City. The people either lived in tents or they had little trailers or whatever, but that's where they kind of set up camp. Where Ken first lived at Grand Canyon was in Tent City. Slim went to work on the trail. His wife didn't like being home alone at night, so he would run up and down that trail. Down the trail in the morning to work, up the trail at night to get home at night.

TM: Wow.

SP: Yeah, that's what he was doing besides working trail all day. Manual labor. So those were the things that ultimately ended up in him having a massive, massive coronary at 56 years old. He'd had a hard, hard life. But anyway...

TM: Where's he buried?

SP: Huh?

TM: Where was he buried? Do you know?

SP: He's buried some place in Kentucky. I don't remember where. Ken and I went back there for his funeral. We brought Dottie back to Grand Canyon. Dottie was marvelous. Of course, Dottie's not buried at the Canyon either. When she died she wanted her ashes spread over the head of Bright Angel Trail and she got approval to do that.

TM: Nice.

SP: So that's where Dottie Patrick's ashes are. I can't remember her name after she married. She married one of the guys that worked out at the Orphan Mine. What was the name of the mine there on the rim of the Canyon?

TM: Oh, the Orphan. Orphan.

SP: Orphan Mine, yeah. He worked there. She got acquainted with him when she was waitressing and they got married. Wonderful guy. I can't think of his name offhand. He wasn't well. He ended up dying of lung cancer from working in the uranium mine. She always took care of her mother. Dottie was from Montana. Her mother came to Grand Canyon and she took care of her. Dottie was one of those people that took care of everybody. Always with a smile. She was just an amazing person. So anyway, Slim and Dottie worked at the Canyon in the 50's. Ken was in the Air Force and Slim was not well enough to work at Phantom Ranch anymore. Dottie was doing most everything because Slim's heart was bad and he wasn't able. They/he wanted to go back to Kentucky, so he and Dottie left Arizona. The reason I'm getting to this is because they went back to Kentucky and, of course, I told you Dottie could make a living any place. They went ahead and bought a little place back there. Had a little grocery store in the front and they lived in the back. She made a living for him back there in the "hollers". But Slim died and was buried there. Because back there in those days, this happened in about 1962 or thereabouts, they didn't have much in the way of cemeteries. They weren't in any big city. Anyway, apparently folks who had farms in Kentucky would set aside a corner of their property for a cemetery.

TM: That's right.

SP: So anyway, that's where Manford Allen Patrick is buried. Some corner of somebody's farm back there and I've never been able to go back since then. Kenny was only 2 or 3 years old when his granddad died. So he doesn't remember much about the place. I'm the only one that's left. Dottie's gone. I'm the only one that knows anything about it or cares about it. I've always wanted to go back there and see if I could look at the records and find where it was he (Slim) was buried. But that's the reason he's not at Grand Canyon. Otherwise, had he not died in Kentucky he would've been buried at Grand Canyon because he spent so many years there.

TM: Wonderful stories.

SP: He's one of those guys who could do anything. He could tell tall tales and he was just a good ole' boy. That's all I can say about Slim. Good ole' boy.

TM: What else can you say about Dottie?

SP: I told you about Dottie, one of the finest people I've ever known. She came from Montana. She had been married before to a sheepherder when she was very young. You know, in those days they used to marry the young girls to old men. Make sure they were taken care of. Anyway, they married her off to a sheepherder up near Cut Bank, Montana which is on the Canadian border. Apparently, she got tired of that...whatever was going on with the marriage...and finally she just bailed and came down to Arizona. Where did she go to work first? The first place I recall she worked was at Phantom Ranch. As I told you the other day that's where she met Ken. They went up to see Slim and then later on she and Slim got married. She was just a helper down there. Fresh out of Montana so far as I know. I don't know when she passed away. I lost touch with her. She died probably 10-15 years ago in Las Vegas, Nevada, in a hospital. She had married again so she left a widower who remarried. I had a chance to find him and talk to him about Dottie. So that's where I found out what happened to her. She died of a heart attack. She

was, I think, 60 years old when she passed away. That's all she was. She wanted to be...he got special approval for her ashes to be scattered over the head of Bright Angel Trail.

TM: Nice.

SP: So that's what happened to Dottie Patrick. Finer person you could never, ever want to know. That's the best I can say for her.

TM: We had talked about your time at Phantom Ranch and you mentioned the swimming pool there.

SP: Ah yes. The swimming pool. I remember the first time I went down on the mules in 1952. It was in August so it was pretty warm. Everybody was told, "Bring your swimsuits because there's a swimming pool down there and you're going to want to go swimming when you get there." Cold, oh you bet, cold. So anyway, everybody had their swimsuits with them. As soon as they got off those mules, as wobbly as they were, they went in their cabins, put on their swimsuits and jumped in the water. Nobody ever felt it was cold. It was just delightful. It was a beautiful place. The grounds were beautifully taken care of. That was one of the things that Slim did. But there was the other couple that was there besides me. I've got a picture that was in a Fred Harvey booklet one time about the crew at Phantom Ranch in 1953 and that was the five of us.

TM: I'd love to see that.

SP: Dottie, Slim, me, and then this other couple. I can't think of their names off hand. (Bea and Joe Erickson) I will find it, because I have a recipe of hers. She was a marvelous cook and I've got a recipe of hers that has her name on it so I'll know it. She lived in California.

TM: When I think of a swimming pool, I think of a concrete bowl, you know, with a little concrete thing around the side. Can you describe the Phantom Ranch swimming pool?

SP: It was oval, but it had natural rock around the edges of it. Where the water came in at the north end of it, it was like a waterfall, a small waterfall. The water came in over the rocks diverted from Bright Angel Creek. They diverted the water north of where the kitchen and the last buildings were and brought it on down and into the pool. There was a big area in the front of or south of the main building (where everybody ate and where the kitchen was). Quite a few yards in front of that, was where they built a swimming pool. I understand the 3C's built it. They had a 3C camp down there during the '30s. So the 3C's were there and had their tents and what have you. Anyway, from my understanding, that was when the swimming pool was built, for the 3C guys.

TM: Were the sides of the pool or the bottom, was that all rock boulders put next to each other?

SP: I couldn't tell you what the bottom was, honey, I never got near the bottom of it. I don't know...It was pretty deep [laughter]. I couldn't swim, so all I would do is get near where I could sit on the edge and put my feet in the water. That's about the best I would do. There was a postcard that came out. Some photographer was down there and took a picture, unbeknownst to Ken and me. Took a picture of Ken and me. Ken was in the pool and I was on the side. We saw that postcard all over the place for years.

TM: Oh, my gosh.

SP: But anyway, no, the water came in. It was just like it was on a little stream. Came in, went over the rocks coming into the pool and then at the other end there was a place where the water just went out and it was diverted, then, back into Bright Angel Creek and on down to the river.

TM: Makes sense. Yep.

SP: The pool blended with the rocks and plants and everything of Phantom Ranch. As I said before, it was well cared for. Slim took care to make sure that it was all clean. There was never any trash around. You'd see trash cans all over, didn't see trash any place. Everything was trimmed well. It didn't go to weeds. Now it's, it's ugly. Oh, they say 'it's natural'. Excuse me, so it's natural. But anyway, Slim kept it up. He had a cart with wheels on it and one mule that was down there most of the time. All the trash went down to the river. Slim maintained the restrooms and the heating system and all the mechanical stuff and the electric generators. The only kind of phone we had was one that if the phone rang your number, you picked up the receiver. If it wasn't your ring you didn't pick it up but most everybody picked it up and listened to everybody's phone calls.

TM: [Laughter]

SP: That's the kind of a phone system it had. So we did have a phone. The mail would come down on the mules. Red...I can't think of his last name...he was just a really great guy. Everything came down on muleback. Didn't have helicopters at that time. It was either on foot or mules. That's the only way anything got down there. We had to generate our own electricity. The fuel oil to run the generators was brought down on muleback. Slim had to keep the generators going.

TM: Were there Cottonwood trees around the pool? Were there shade trees around it? Do you remember?

SP: No. There were Cottonwood trees there, but there were none planted specifically around the pool. What were there were there, but they kept the weeds down. You know, that stuff that was ugly, they kept that cut down. It was just very pretty down there. Nowadays, of course, they think 'let everything grow naturally' which is the dumbest thing that ever happened. However,... So no, at that time, it was very well-maintained. The walkways were well-maintained. The thing is you used to see down there was a lot of wildlife. You had to watch out for different kinds of snakes and snails and different kinds of vermin. You had to watch out for it because it was down there. Nobody bothered setting out traps to kill it all. You were just told watch out for it.

TM: I did want to ask you, how many beds did you have at the time? What was the maximum occupancy that you remember? Do you remember that?

SP: Well, uh, they had...let's see... There was one big cabin for Dottie and Slim and one cabin for me and one cabin for the other couple. Those were where we lived. Then there was the main building where the kitchen and the dining room were. Then there was the public restroom where the "dudes" took showers. The public room that had the toilets and the showers was where you would go for showers. They didn't have them in the cabins, as I recall. They may have had toilets in the cabin, I'm not sure, but

I know you had to go to this shower cabin if you wanted to take a shower. Of course there was a men's side and a women's side for the showers. You'd leave the dining room area going down to the river and to the left-hand side there was the building that had the showers and restroom. So that was that. In the other buildings, I can't remember how many cabins there were other than that. There might have been 5 or 6. I can't remember there being a lot of them. And of course there was that nice room at the south end of the pool. I guess it was built by the 3C's, but that was built as a recreation room, I understand. I never was in it. I never had occasion to go in it, but I understand they used to have a pool table in there and different things for recreation. The recreation room. If they wanted to have a party sometime, I guess they could have... They never had one while I was there. But it was just a recreation room. I understand now they've got it all messed up. It's a dormitory now. Then there was an area out between this recreation building and the pool. There were lots of chairs and places for people to sit there around the pool. It was all so neat and so nice. You just can't believe how nice it was compared to now. I was down there for my 85th birthday.

TM: Wow.

SP: I went down because I wanted to celebrate. It'd been 60 years since my first trip down on the mules to Phantom Ranch. My son went with me and we went down there for my 85th birthday. You know, I could remember how it'd been 60 years before and how it was now. Of course, it's typical when the Park Service gets ahold of anything they try to modernize it, change it depending upon on who's in charge. Things change, not always for the best that some of the people think and some of the people who are new think it's great. They have nothing to compare it with. That I guess should be off the record because that's just my estimation of it.

TM: That's all right. So when you were there at Phantom, you mentioned Ken was in the Air Force.

SP: That's right.

TM: What did he do there in '53?

SP: I can't remember. He wasn't in very long. He was in about a year. Then, of course, his dad got sick and had the heart trouble. So Ken was sent home. That's why we went back to the Canyon, because of his dad. He was then discharged from the Air Force.

TM: How did you end up leaving Phantom Ranch in the summer of '53?

SP: Who me?

TM: Yeah, you.

SP: Yeah, well because I went up to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where Ken was in the Air Force. We got married up there and we stayed up there until he was discharged from the Air Force. Then, of course, we came back west. It was a lot of traveling here, there and everywhere trying to get settled. But, no, that's why we were there.

TM: Okay, I see. Can you tell me about that time? How did you end up back at the Canyon then?

SP: Well, we ended up back at the Canyon in, I think, New Years of 1954. We had stayed with my grandmother in Southern California. That would've been 1953, because he was discharged in late '53. We visited Slim and Dottie's then we went out and visited my grandmother. Stayed at my grandmother's a few weeks and worked there for the holidays. Then when the holidays were over, we went back to the Canyon and I was able to get a job right away, of course.

TM: Doing what?

SP: I was a...let's see...I was a secretary...oh darn...Josephine...to Grant Wedoff. Grant Wedoff. W-E-D-O-F-F. He was the business manager, something like that, for Fred Harvey. Our office was in the basement of the El Tovar. I was very fortunate when we came back because somebody had to work or you had no place to live. So they had a job for me and I worked with some really neat people. Grant Wedoff was just a terrific guy. I loved his wife, Josephine. I worked for her part time later on when she worked for the Shrine of the Ages, when they were trying to get the Shrine of the Ages built. And of course, as you know, Jack Verkamp was the honcho behind that.

TM: Right.

SP: Put a lot of money into it and a lot of time into it. It was up there at the Canyon. The office was set up there for the collections of all the donations that came in from all over to build the Shrine of the Ages. Josephine Wedoff was the manager and she needed help so I worked part-time with her collecting the money and writing the thank you notes, etc. And, as I say, I worked for Grant Wedoff, for Fred Harvey down in the office at El Tovar. It was at that time that Ken and I lived in the Brown Building. The only reason we got a chance to live there was because I was working. If you didn't work at the Canyon at that time, you didn't have a place to live. So I got a job. Then finally, Ken got a job a month or so later in the El Tovar kitchen. I can't think of the chef's name, really great guy. Ken had to make all the salads for El Tovar, as I recall. We're talking about 1954, honey, that wasn't yesterday. [laughter] It was a long time ago. That's what he was doing. At that time, as I mentioned, when you were at Grand Canyon, if you wanted to live there you had to work. There was no place to live if you didn't work there unless you were going to be a dude and live in some of the cabins and stuff like that. But no, if you wanted to stay there you had to have a job. So I was very, very blessed that I had a job.

TM: What was Grant's position, business manager?

SP: Grant, he was the head of the office. Now what they actually called him, whether they called him a "manager"... I don't know what his title was. Anyway, he ran the office down there that took care of all of the bookwork and business for Fred Harvey.

TM: Accounting?

SP: Accounting, it was an accounting office. I can't think of the other lady that worked there. Her husband was the manager for the gasoline station. I can't think of their names and I'm trying to think where I'd have paperwork that would show all that stuff but, oh dear Lord, don't know. But anyway, there weren't too many of us down there. The beautiful part about that was since I was working in the El Tovar, guess where I got to take my meals? In the El Tovar. There was a little side room, I don't know if it's still there or not. A little side room that was set aside for the Fred Harvey people that worked there

at El Tovar. So because I worked for Grant Wedoff in El Tovar, I got to have my meals there. Ken however, had to have his meals at the cafeteria. All of the other employees had to go to the cafeteria for their meals.

TM: That was a nice perk for the job.

SP: It was! Oh you bet it was. We didn't get to choose anything off the menu. What was for lunch was for lunch and that's what we got and very, very happy to have it. But the whole point was that that's where we ate. Kind of like the help's little dining area.

TM: Nice.

SP: Real nice.

TM: What do you remember about the El Tovar and its operation there in 1954?

SP: Well, they've ruined it now, of course. That's the first thing I'm going to tell you.

TM: How so?

SP: Where they used to come in, the main entrance to El Tovar Hotel, that was very, very classy. Very classy. They didn't sell any imported junk. In fact, at that time in 1954, Dottie was, as I told you, working there at the El Tovar. She was working in the part selling the jewelry and rugs. I'm trying to think of the lady who was in charge of that. Real, real sharp. Her husband was the blacksmith for Fred Harvey. Great guy and she was just terrific. If I could look at my paperwork, I'll finally get a lot of these names for you, I hope. But anyway, she was in charge of it. So Dottie went to work there and she worked at the jewelry part, where the really beautiful things were. She's the person that I talked to, as I told you, when I went to Grand Canyon to take the mule ride, she said, "You may have my son." She called him "her son" because he was her son by marriage. She said, "Well you'll probably have my son for a guide." And of course that was Ken. But anyway, she worked in El Tovar. They didn't have all the imported junk that's there now. I go in there now and it is very disappointing to me. I don't even like going in there. They had one centerpiece right in the middle as you'd walk in. It was all glass and in that was the most exquisite... The things they used to have then were all Indian-made. They didn't have a bunch of commercial junk like they do now. All Indian-made stuff. They had beautiful pieces, beautiful jewelry, beautiful turquoise, beautiful rugs, actual Indian-made rugs. They had beautiful, beautiful things in there. You walked into the El Tovar and you were walking into luxury. Very, very, very lovely.

TM: Paintings on the wall like are there today?

SP: Like what?

TM: Like are there today? I mean, they've got some wonderful paintings that are there.

SP: Oh, I don't know what they've got on the wall there.

TM: Did they have...back then did they have...?

SP: You know, no, they didn't have a lot of paintings that I remember. The thing that got me was when I first walked in... They didn't have the little room on the left-hand side as you go in where they sell the gum and aspirin and stuff like that. That didn't exist. You have to understand that El Tovar Hotel was elegance. Only the rich went there. You had to have money to go there. When you consider the fact that it was expensive for the time. The help they had was top notch and the decorum was just absolutely superior. It was a five star restaurant and five star hotel at that time. They didn't sell junk. If you wanted junk, you'd go down to the Bright Angel. At the old cafeteria, which is where I worked first when I went there, all they had down there was a place to eat. They didn't sell anything, as I recall, either. It was a cafeteria. You went there to eat and that's it and then you went to the Bright Angel. The main place where they sell stuff now, is the same now as it was then. The quality of stuff isn't the same but the selling area is the same. They did not have the ice cream stand out there then. They did not have the addition to Bright Angel, in between the Bright Angel and El Tovar, that wasn't there. That's where the Brown building was.

TM: Right, the Thunderbird building.

SP: They tore the Brown building down and put the addition in there into the Bright Angel. The El Tovar was different. They've changed it somewhat. Not drastically, but enough that the old timers would notice the change in El Tovar. Primarily the change that I notice is when you go into the lobby and all the quote-unquote we'll call it 'modernization' they have done in there, which to me has taken down the elegance and the beauty of the El Tovar as I remember in the mid-1950s. And, of course, my other big disappointment to me is what's happened to Verkamp's.

TM: Okay. Yes.

SP: And I will say on the record, I was very disappointed that the Verkamp's kids did not feel they wanted to retain the store there. I was very sad when they opted, didn't want to be bothered with it anymore. It breaks my heart because, of course, Jack and I were good friends. Off the record, I want to tell you one little story quickly crosses my mind. I went back there...

TM: Hang on there. I'm going to talk about the record here for a minute. If you want it off the record then we're going to have to do the hitch in the gears on this.

SP: Okay, we'll do that later. What else do you want to know?

TM: What can you tell me about Jack Verkamp on the record?

SP: On the record, he was a wonderful man. So far as I know, all of his people that worked for him... He hired a couple of real sharp Indian people. I think Talakte. Wasn't that the guy's name?

TM: I'd have to look.

SP: Talakte.

TM: Yes.

SP: I think that was his name. He was Jack's right-hand man basically. Had a place, I think, to live right there with Verkamp and his family. I'm trying to think of Talakte's first name. Real nice guy. But anyway, no, Jack Verkamp was, of course, a very, very devout Catholic.

TM: Was that Ken? Was that Ken Talakte?

SP: Yes, Kenny Talakte. That was it. Terrific kid. He was really Jack's right-hand man. And, of course, Jack's sisters, some of them worked there off and on. It was really a top notch outfit. Jack early on, he did a lot of the buying of the blankets or rugs, I should say, the Indian rugs. He did a lot of the buying. I don't know, later on after I left, I didn't keep up with it as closely as I had before. He had absolutely stunning quality of Indian rugs and Indian jewelry. Indian-made. In those days, in the 50s and the 60s, he didn't have imported junk. He had all honest-to-goodness Indian-made artifacts of different kinds: bowls, dishes and all the different things he had there. It was just absolutely a museum, basically, of all of the things Indian. He was just, just great. I never was too acquainted with any of his family. I just knew Jack because we became friends when I'd come into the store all the time. I'd see him and we'd chat. We were just good friends because of that. I remember Jack and the Verkamp's shop in the '50s and '60s. After that, I don't know much about it. I was gone, I had moved east and I was gone for so long. I'd come by for a visit. Every couple of years I'd come through the Canyon and I remember the disappointment I would feel every time I'd go and see the changes... There was an aura, there was a real aura about the Grand Canyon. Whether it was the Bright Angel Lodge or El Tovar hotel or Verkamp's or the cafeteria or the mules, there was an aura about that that I saw in the late 40s and during the 50s and even during the early 60s. Then after that, every time I'd go there, everything was changing. And, of course, the thing that upset me, as we discussed before, was when the Park Service, or whoever was in charge, decided to tear down every historical artifact in the Grand Canyon. That did not go over well with the majority of people there. But we had nothing to say. We weren't necessarily happy when they decided they were going to haul all the mules out but that was after I had left they did that. They began trying to modernize everything and make it so they could have more people come in. The other thing I want to do/want to tell you about is you know where the beautiful rock building is now? That, I think, is where they have the trail permits or something. Right where I call the 'old road' that used to be the entrance road 50-60 years ago?

TM: This was the park headquarters building back in the 50s, is that right?

SP: That's right. That was the Park headquarters. You know, it's a beautiful rock building and that...

TM: Today that's the law enforcement.

SP: ...that held every single one of the offices. It held the engineering office, it held the ranger office, and...

TM: Did you work in there?

SP: Yes, that's where I worked.

TM: When did you get a job and start working in there? Who were you working for?

SP: Oh, let me see, I started working in there... I was there when the plane went down and Ken was working for the Park then in '56 when the plane went down.

TM: So '55 do you think?

SP: '55. Yeah '55 was probably when, because my daughter, first child, was born in 1954, so it must have been '55 when I went to work for Steve Leding. He was admin assistant to the Superintendent. I worked part-time for him. They called it W-A-E, When Actually Employed. He was a terrific guy, very, very sharp. We had to do all the letters. We'd get lots of letters from people, questions and things like that. That's what I had to do with him was answer a lot of those letters. Prepare them. Of course, we just had typewriters in those days. That's when the secretary was there, that was there so long...what was her name? I can't, you know the names...

TM: I want to say Lois Schellbach. That's not right.

SP: No, no. She and her son and grandson are buried at the Grand Canyon. I'd look at the book, I could tell you what her name is. Ayers, Ayers. Francis Ayers.

TM: All right. Thank you.

SP: She was there at that time. I'm trying to think of the guy's name. Was a sweetheart of a guy who was the forest ranger. The forest office was just outside the edge of the Park. Valentine was his name. His wife's name was Thelma. I think that's it. It comes at me now. Don't ask me tomorrow.

TM: [Laughter]

SP: So anyway, her name was Thelma. She worked in the Park office. So anyway, when I was working there, a lot of the letters that I would have to do, they'd have to go up to the Superintendent John S. McLaughlin for his signature and they'd go through his secretary. Well, you know, I thought I was pretty sharp. I'd had a terrific job in Santa Monica, made good money. It was a great job, but I left so I could go there and marry Ken. So anyway, I would snap out those letters and send them up and boy, they'd come flying back to me so fast it would make your head spin. Thelma Valentine kept telling me, "Well, that's that secretary up there. That Francis Ayers, she is just absolutely terrible. You really ought to get this straightened out with her." Really encouraging me, you know, hey don't put up with this stuff. So one day I walked up there to the Superintendent's office and Mrs. Ayers, never called her Francis, Mrs. Ayers was there. I was only in my 20s at that time and I said, "Mrs. Ayers," I said, "I can't understand why you're sending me all these letters back all the time." She said, "Basically, specifically what do you want to know about it?" I pointed out different things and...wait a minute...I looked and I thought to myself, she's right. Little nitpicky things. She was right! Afterwards I came down and thought, you know what, I'm going to be more careful. From then on I made sure that the spelling was absolutely correct, that the hyphenated words were correct, that the punctuation was correct, and everything was absolutely perfect on it. I never got another letter back. I realized then that she knew her stuff. Thelma, she had it in for Mrs. Ayers and she was attempting to use me to try to straighten Mrs. Ayers out. Well, excuse me, I came down from that one visit from Mrs. Ayers and, boy, I was a different person. I'd learned something from the pro and she was a pro. She was one of the best people that ever happened to me.

TM: What else do you remember about her?

SP: I felt very sorry for her. I was surprised, I saw a write-up in the book about her. I was a little disappointed in some of the information about some of the people I read about. Quite a bit different than I had recalled from my times there. She had come, I think, from San Diego, California. She had come from a wealthy family and she made the mistake of marrying a ne'er-do-well. Basically her family abandoned her because she married him.

TM: Wow. Okay.

SP: She was married to him and he was not a very good soul. I think he was an alcoholic. He just wasn't a very good provider. Mrs. Ayers, she did everything she could. She had four kids I think it was. Either three or four and she was doing her best to take care of those kids. I don't remember that he died. I remember that she divorced him. And when she did, somehow or another, she ended up at the Canyon working. She raised those kids herself at the Canyon being the secretary there. She was tremendously intelligent. Very, very dedicated. Very hard worker. Very reliable. Devoted to her children. A really, really terrific person Mrs. Ayers was.

TM: Nice.

SP: Yep.

TM: What can you tell me about Steve Leding? He was the Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.

SP: Yeah, he was the Administrative Assistant. He was so proper. Very, very mannerly. Very good manners, good decorum, very professional. Very competent and capable at the job that he had. He was a stellar person. One of the things I remember he used to have to do was he would have to do the surveys because the un-graded people (the people who did the pick and shovel and all the construction work) were on a different pay scale than the GS people (like me in the office). So every year or two, I can't remember exactly when, he'd have to do a survey of the pay scales in the surrounding community which, of course, was Flagstaff and Williams. Then, based on that survey, that would be what the Grand Canyon NPS employees, the workers/the outdoor workers/people who weren't GS, that's what their pay was based on.

TM: Contract workers. Yep, okay.

SP: So anyway, that was one of the things he had to do. But primarily he was the Superintendent's right-hand man so far as all the paperwork drills were concerned. Steve Leding was perfect for the job. He had the decorum. He had the professionalism to do that job just absolutely perfectly. I really liked Steve Leding. He was very nice. Of course I didn't know any of these people socially because in those days there was quite a divider between the GS employees and the uniformed employees.

TM: Okay, can you talk to me about that?

SP: They didn't get together very much. The uniformed people and the wives, they were together. Then the worker-bees, like for instance Ken, he worked outside, he was a laborer and people like that, they lived in a different part of the village. So it was quite segregated. Then you had the people that were the Santa Fe people, as I told you about. They lived on Avenue A and they lived in the very, very lovely rock homes along there. Wonderful people. Johnny Rudd was one of the finest guys I've ever known. Then there was the Fred Harvey people. Primarily those who were, say, permanent there. Then there were the Fred Harvey people who were seasonal, who just came in for a couple of months in summer and gone. So it was very, basically, segregated.

TM: You know, Mary Hoover talked about this as well so I'd really appreciate it if you could... Within the Park Service you mentioned there were the Superintendents, Superintendent's assistant's, there was the head ranger being Lynn Coffin, there were upper level management people, and then there were people that were, you know, the maintenance people and trails.

SP: Yeah, some of the maintenance people were NPS employees. Then, a lot of them were not. There were a lot of maintenance people. All of us were different than the 'uniformed'. The 'uniformed' people, they were the cream of the crop there at the Canyon. It was very segregated.

TM: It must have been...

SP: Avenue A was Santa Fe, then you got up the next Avenue B. That was Fred Harvey homes. We were very lucky to get a house there when our first child was born in 1954. The only reason we got it was because an Indian family had moved out. I don't know what happened to them, why they went back to Supai, but anyway, the house became vacant. Ken went up to see Mr. Stevens (I think was his name). Homes were very hard to get in the Canyon at that time. The supply was nil compared to the need. So anyway, Ken would keep going up there and he was very nice. He said, "Well, this Indian family is moving out. If you want it you're going to have to clean it up. We don't have anybody to clean it up." Ken said that's when Johnny Rudd's boys...can't remember their names. There was one boy, especially the elder one, was just an absolute saint. Helped Ken get it all cleaned out and painted up and ready for me when I came back with the baby. That's how we got a Santa Fe house.

TM: So I'm going to come back to this, sort of, segregated world for a minute. It sounds to me like even life amongst the 'uniformed' people, they would've been sort of really isolated. Sounds like everybody was really isolated from everybody else. Is that, is that right?

SP: Well, they were because they were segregated. You know, there wasn't a lot of interaction. There was some, occasionally. But like for me, I worked there with all the 'uniformed' people but I wasn't a 'uniformed' person, I was just a GS employee. But I got along great. The person I got along with extremely well with was Lehnert. Carl Lehnert. A saint. A saint of a guy.

TM: So tell me about Carl.

SP: Oh, Carl was so great. I felt very sorry for him. His personal life was a mess. But insofar as how he was at work with the rest of us, absolutely a saint. He's the one that I told you put in the short wave radio between us and the monument to John Riffey.

TM: So let's talk about that. So now this would've been again 1955, do you think?

SP: No, it probably...well, the plane crash was '56. We had the radios in '56, so it could've been '55, '56, '57...yeah, right in there.

TM: Right in there, okay. Was he the one that understood the radios or did he work with somebody else to bring that in?

SP: No, no. He was the one. Apparently, of course, after the war there was all this excess stuff that the government was trying to get rid of. Lehnert, he decided we're going to get the radios. He somehow or other got the Park to go along with getting in the radio and installing it. It was a real old fashioned radio. You can imagine it was from the '40s during the war and was put in there in the '50s. Carl set it all up. He taught me about it and, of course, worked with John Riffey on his side. Set it up on John Riffey's side so that we had radio contact every day. I loved Carl Lehnert. He was just a wonderful man. Very competent, very capable, very dedicated to his job and to the Park. Just a great person. I mean, I look back on the people that I knew at the Park and I think, "Thank you, Lord." I knew so many really, really great people.

TM: Do you remember in that building, in the Park headquarters building, there's two stories. Was the radio upstairs or downstairs?

SP: No, downstairs. When you walked into the building in that central...

TM: Up the steps.

SP: ...you went straight back and you hit my desk.

TM: Okay. There's kind of a big open area with the stairs going up. I think it's the left side as you walked in heading east.

SP: I don't remember it being the left side. I remember it being the right side, but then it's been a long time ago.

TM: It could be. Well, yep, it could be.

SP: I do remember when you walked in, on the right there was an office that was set up there. It was kind of an add-on at the time. I think the desk was there and then they put a kind of a little wall around it and that's where Steve Leding was. That's where I was with Steve Leding. Then if you come out of there and you walk straight ahead, you walk straight into my desk because I was in that room back there. To the left, in that room, the room was set off for Lynn Coffin. He was a wonderful guy.

TM: Tell me about Lynn.

SP: Wonderful, wonderful. There wasn't an arrogant bone in his body. He was the same to everybody. He had no airs about him. He was just a neat, great man. He was really a smoker. But when it came to being a human being and making decisions and the right decisions, he did. He was stellar. I never had a chance to meet his wife. I knew of her, knew what a great person she was, but I don't ever remember

meeting her. But, no, in Lynn Coffin, couldn't have found a better person or a better Chief Park Ranger than he was. He had his feet on the ground and his head out of the clouds. He was great. He was great at the job.

TM: Nice. How do you remember that? What were some of the things that he did?

SP: Well, you know, he was easy to talk to. He didn't ramble but if you needed to talk to him, he was available. He wasn't arrogant in any way, shape, or form. You know, some of them used to get around people and they had a little swagger to them. He didn't. Here he was a Chief Park Ranger and he didn't have any of that. He was just a down-to-earth, good, honest person concerned about the Park, getting a job right and having his people taken care of right. Of course, I worked there at the time when the plane went down and Dan Davis was there. I remember that was the first time they used helicopters. What was the name of the group that had the airplane outfit out there at Red Butte?

TM: Hudgins?

SP: Hudgins brothers! I knew the Hudgins brothers. They were great guys. They had, I think, 4 or 5 boys and they had all been in WWII. They came out of the war and they wanted to fly. I can't remember each one of their names, but one of the brothers had been injured in the war somehow that he couldn't fly anymore. So he was the guy who was the mechanic and they had their hanger out there at Red Butte. I can remember going out there quite a few times. Maybe '55, '56, '57, in through there. Hudgins brothers used to fly tourists over the Canyon. Then the eldest brother, he decided—helicopters were just coming in—he decided he wanted to learn about helicopters. The other aircraft, they were left up to the other one or two boys. They took care of the flights. The elder one went to learn helicopters. Anyway, he had a helicopter crash in the Frisco Peaks and killed him. Did you/have you heard about that?

TM: No.

SP: That was the eldest Hudgins brother. Which made us all very, very sad. But anyway, the thing was, they used to fly back and forth to the North Rim. This was in, oh I guess '56/'57/'58, in through there. I can't remember exactly. Anyway, there were times when either I was off work or wasn't working and Ken had a little band. They would go over to the North Rim to play at the lodge one night a weekend, maybe a Saturday night, I don't know. But anyway, they would fly over there. I remember it cost \$7 a person to fly over to the North Rim from Red Butte. So they'd fly over there and play either Friday night, Saturday night, whenever it was. Ken would go and he'd have one or two guys that played with him in the band, he'd have them with him. There was enough room I guess for 4 people including the pilot. It was always interesting. I flew over with them a couple of times. I'd go out there to wait for Ken. You know, I'd be early out there. I remember they'd say they were going to take some dude up and they'd say, "You want a ride?!" and I'd say "Sure!" So I'd get to fly with them all around while they were taking rides around the Canyon. That was fun.

TM: Was the airport on the North Rim, was that just outside the Park?

SP: There was no airport. That's what I want to tell you. You fly to the North Rim and now...it may have been... You know on that road going into the Park there's that gas station?

TM: Yeah.

SP: Okay, well, across from there on the west, I'd say looking west from there, you know those rolling fields through there?

TM: Yeah, I do. The meadow there, the meadows.

SP: Yes! A huge meadow went through there. They used to have cattle in there in the summer time. I can remember, we'd fly over there. What they had done, they had kind of cleared out some of the land, got some of the bushes out of the way. Kind of cleared it a little bit for them to land there. There was no airport there. I can remember when we'd fly in, there'd be cattle there and he'd have to buzz the field a couple times to get the cattle out of the way. Then he'd come around and he'd land. That was just a little landing strip was all it was. Doesn't matter. Then he'd land and everybody'd unload and then they'd fly back to the South Rim.

TM: How did you get from there, though, down to the Lodge?

SP: Well, somebody would meet you. There was no bus ride or anything like that. Somebody who was with the Park Service or with Utah Parks at that time, they would come out in their own vehicles and...

TM: Pick you up.

SP: ...pick you up, yeah. They knew you're coming and pick you up. It was not an institutionalized thing at all. It was you're coming over you'd have somebody meet you.

TM: So let's talk about the 1956 air crash. How did you first hear about it? Were you working that day?

SP: I must've been. I remember we lived in a 3C (Civilian Conservation Corps) duplex. Ken, I can't remember whether he had come home from working on the North Rim or not, but anyway, we just got the word that this plane had crashed. Most of the crew was sent out to Desert View, out in that area. They would fly down into the Canyon early in the morning. Hudgins was flying them, I think. They'd fly down early in the morning and then they'd fly back out at night. The guys went down there to work and they were, you know, gathering up bodies and bringing up... Dan Davis was in charge of that as I recall. He was relatively new at the Park at that time. I don't remember Ken flying in and out with them. But I remember him going down there. Whether he hiked down, whether they had to hike down to bring up, I don't know. It's kind of a blank to me because I was busy working in the office and I don't remember.

TM: Did Lynn Coffin, fly in there? Did he go in?

SP: Not to my knowledge. I don't remember him going in, but I remember Dan Davis and a couple of the other rangers would go in and out. They had to do that because of the way the wind currents were. If they did it at other times of day, I remember Dan Davis talking about it, the wind would just crash them up against the walls of the Canyon. So they had to be very careful coming down and getting back out again because they, of course, were in helicopters that time. They had no place else to land. The helicopters, you're talking the mid-50s, they were relatively new at that time. Yeah, they went down there. A lot of people, of course, hiked down from the North Rim and that was a terrible thing trying to

chase those people away. They were out there, you know, trying to find all the jewelry and money and stuff like that. It was a terrible thing. That's the best I can remember. I remember when it happened and I remember how shocked we all were that it happened. Ken was involved in that like most all the rangers were in one way or another. I just remember all the bags they had to take down and they'd bring them out, fly them out. I remember that.

TM: Did you go to the service there at the South Rim cemetery when they held that for the...?

SP: You mean, originally?

TM: Yeah.

SP: No. I don't remember going. I remember they had one at Flagstaff for which was that, for TWA?

TM: Oh, I knew you were going to ask me...

SP: One's TWA and one's United.

TM: ...and I knew I wasn't going to remember.

SP: Of course, I remember the thing there, but they didn't have that up at the time. It took a long time between the time of the accident and the time they got all of the bodies and the ashes...whatever they got together...and then put up that monument there at Flag and then one in Grand Canyon. So I don't remember getting involved with that, because usually I was working or I was on the North Rim, living on the North Rim for the season or whatever. So I don't remember.

TM: What did you do on the North Rim?

SP: Oh, interesting job on the North Rim. The first year I was there which was 19...I mean the first year when this happened was 1960. By that time Kenny was born in 1960. He was only about, oh I don't know, 5 months old maybe, something like 5/6 months old. You know, most everybody used to work doing something. You had to, to make a living. So I was over there and Jimmy Kennedy was the clerk that was sent over to the North Rim from the South Rim during the summer. Vern Ruesch was the North Rim District Ranger. You've heard about him?

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

SP: R-U-E-S-C-H. His wife was Sydney Ruesch. S-Y-D-N-E-Y. She was the secretary to the park engineer when Vern was North Rim District Ranger during the summertime. She was extremely good, very competent. Very, very beautiful woman. Really, really a sharp, capable person. She was the secretary to Wilcox, who was the engineer, Waldo Wilcox. He was the park engineer at the time. Real nice guy. His wife's name was Catherine. She was the Superintendent of Schools, I think, at that time. She was wonderful. Wonderful people. But anyway, so we went to the North Rim in the '60s and Jimmy Kennedy was a clerk. Worked in the office at the Park and in the summer time he would be sent over to the North Rim to work on the North Rim with Vern Ruesch and clerk in the office. They needed somebody to work part-time in the office, I think. But anyway, the point I remember is they had a big fire tower over there.

They tell me it's still there. I don't think so. Ken and I (my son and I) went out there once and walked all over that North Rim entrance area and we could not find that tower any place! They said, "Oh, yeah, it's there." Oh yeah, well I don't know where you're hiding it because we walked all over that place. You'd think you'd be able to see it. It was about 80 feet high something like that. Now you know doggone good and well you'd be able to see a fire tower out there. Well, neither Kenny/my son nor I saw a tower out there. But anyway, the point is, they usually hired a couple to work at the tower. There was a nice house out there. Usually the man, he would work 5 days a week and then the wife would work the other 2 days of the week because the tower had to be manned 7 days a week.

Well, often times they'd have school teachers be out there for the summer. This particular year, 1960, somehow or other it all fell apart and the couple that was supposed to come, didn't come. A man came, or else the man of the couple came, but the wife didn't come. I don't know. However it worked out, there was just the man out there to work. Vern said, "Woah, he can't work 7 days a week. We have to have somebody else. Shirley, how about you go ahead and you work 2 days a week on the tower?" Oh, I had never seen the tower. That's the first thing. Never knew there was one out there. I didn't know anything about it. But I did know there was a tower on the South Rim. I had never been up in it, but I had seen it and I saw it was kind of low and had a nice porch around it and very, very nice. So oh shoot, yeah, I can do that! So I signed on to work a couple days a week at the North Rim fire tower. Vern Ruesch drove me out there. Took the Park pickup, whatever it was, drove me out there and showed me the tower. I about collapsed when I looked at it. It wasn't nice low little tower with a nice big room in it and porch around it like I thought it was going to be.

TM: So hang on a second. The South Rim tower, you mean just west of the developed area? It's only 20-30 feet high, it's fairly large.

SP: That's right.

TM: Was out by the Orphan Mine there and had a great view. The other towers are like 80 feet high, tiny little pill box at the top.

SP: Yeah! I thought when you work at the tower they were all there like that one there on the South Rim.

TM: What did you do?

SP: What do you mean what did I do?

TM: No, no I mean what *did* you do there? Climb up those stairs.

SP: Yep. You had to climb up those stairs and then there was that 8-feet, 6 or 8-feet square, little room at the top all glassed in and you had to crawl in through a trap door. That's the way you got into it. So regular stairs all the way up then you'd get up to the last stairs and you'd hang on with one arm and you'd push the other arm up... You had to keep it locked by the way. So I had to fiddle with the doggone key and unlock the lock so that I could give a big, hard push to push the trap door into the little room that was up there. Hanging on to the railing when I'm 70-80 feet up.

TM: Right. Right. Oh my gosh.

SP: Then shinny up! Shinny up on my rear-end up into that little room. I told Vern when I looked, "No, I don't think so. I don't think so. I can't do that." He says, "Yeah, you will." He said, "You're hired." He says, "You will do it. It's your job. Next time you come out here you come out by yourself." And I did. I stayed there all that summer and worked.

TM: Did you see any fires? Were you able to report any fires?

SP: Oh, honey, I was busy. Yeah, that's when they had the big House Rock fire. That's when Ken was injured and it stayed with him the rest of his life. The House Rock, which was a big fire for those days. The interesting part of my job then was I had a radio up there. I can't remember, some kind of a portable radio. I don't know if it was a radio or a phone, I can't remember. But I remember I had connection with, not the Park Service, with the Forest Service. When the fire was on, the fire was in an area where they had no communication. The only communication was via the tower. Well, come to find out the man who was supposed to be running the tower, he worked days. Well communication, as you remember probably from the Canyon in those days, communication during the day time...you couldn't even get a radio station at the Canyon during the day time.

TM: Yeah.

SP: Well, on the North Rim at that time, there was no communication during the day time with the fire. So that guy that was hired there for 5 days a week, he would sit up there and keep looking for fires and doing whatever he did but he had no communication with anybody. So I had to work at nights where all the communication was, besides working some days, whenever I could work days. So anyway, I was up there and I had all of the communications. Thank goodness I knew shorthand. I had all the communication going between the fire area and the Forest Service in Flagstaff or wherever they were. They had to relay it through me because they had no direct communication one-on-one, because of the area. We worked, as I recall, 12-hour shifts for a few days. I don't know, 5-6 days, something like that.

TM: How did you work out child care because Ken was working, how did little Kenny manage?

SP: Well, that was interesting. We had a pick-up truck. Ken had named it the Blue Goose. It was blue. He got it used. Old pick-up truck. He'd wanted a pick-up truck and he bought this thing, I mean it was practically given away. It was blue so he always called it the Blue Goose. Anyway, he had a covered bed on it and put a canvas tarp that rolled up and down on the back. That's what I had to take out to the fire tower on the days that I was working. We used to have some pretty terrific storms out there. So anyway, what happened I didn't have childcare at that time and Kenny was just a baby. He was, as I say, 5-6 months old, something like that. So my daughter, she was at that time about 6-7 years old, something like that, I'd take them both with me. I'd take lunch. Pack a lunch for them and everything for them. I'd roll up the tarp in the back and I'd park the truck so that I could see down and see what was going on with them in the truck. I remember one particular time a horrible, horrible storm came through. Rain storm. You know, the North Rim when they have a rain storm over there, lightning and thunder, you don't forget it. Those two kids were down there in the Blue Goose. I came out, walked down the step a ways and hollered out to Debbie to put the tarp down. So she put the tarp down and

she and the baby had to stay in the back of that truck all the while the storm was blowing over and I was working up there trying to track all the lightning strikes.

TM: Wow.

SP: Yeah, interesting.

TM: Did your tower get hit by lightning when you were in it?

SP: Did what, honey?

TM: Did your tower get hit by lightning when you were in it?

SP: Oh, well, you wouldn't know because I had to stand on the stool.

TM: Yes, that's right. You would've been, you would've...

SP: That was a crazy thing. When that thing was in the middle, you know, and I had to track everything on that, I don't know what you want to call it. Anyway, whenever there was any storm coming through, Vern said you stand on that stool because it had insulators. So that's where I was standing. I was standing on that insulated stool when the storms would go over. [Laughter] It was an interesting life.

TM: Indeed. Indeed. How many years were you there on the North Rim during the summers?

SP: Oh my, we must've been there... Oh the greatest people over there. Have you heard anything about Theda Flynn? Theda and Cliff Flynn?

TM: How do you spell Theda?

SP: T-H-E-D-A. D as in "Dog". Flynn. F-L-Y-N-N. Cliff. C-L-I-F-F. He was kind of like the straw boss for the Park Service workers over on the North Rim in the summer time.

TM: No, tell me about them.

SP: Oh, they were wonderful. She was real, real serious Mormon. If he was Mormon, you wouldn't know it, you know. Wonderful, wonderful people. She had been the head telephone operator for I don't know how many years at the South Rim. When they had the little telephone office there, she was the telephone operator, Theda Flynn was. Then, they'd come over to the North Rim in the summer time. He was the boss on the roads and the trails and the cleanup and all that stuff for the Park Service. He was just a wonderful, wonderful guy and his wife was just a sweetheart.

TM: Did Ken work for him? Did Ken work for Cliff?

SP: Yeah, that's who Ken's boss was.

TM: Got it.

SP: And then right next door to him...there were five cabins there. Right next door to him was Kennedy, Jim and Helen Kennedy. Have you heard anything about them?

TM: No.

SP: You should have from...from...who's the gal you've been talking to?

TM: Mary.

SP: Mary. You should know them because they lived in Williams. Jimmy was very, very well-known in Williams. So he and Helen were there and he was the clerk. Jimmy was the clerk for the Park on the North Rim during the summer time. They were terrific people. Wonderful people. Then in the middle house, that was where Ken and I were. The next house to us was a wonderful, wonderful couple. Really good Mormon people, in fact they're buried at the Canyon. Bob and Meta Middleton. Do you know anything about them?

TM: Um. Tell me.

SP: Well it was M-I-D-D-L-E-T-O-N. Her name was Almeta but she went by Meta, which I think was M – as in “money” – E-T-A, and Bob Middleton. He was the mechanic for the Park Service over there. He would go over there in the summer time. They had five kids and they had the cabin next door to us. Wonderful people. Their home town was one of those little towns next to the Arizona border. It wasn't Kanab, it was in further than that. I can't remember the name of it. But they were from that area. They would come back and bring fruit. They canned fruit back then and she taught me how to can. Anyway, then next to them, that was the fourth house, next to them I can't think of their names. It was a ranger. I don't know where he came from. Just all of a sudden he was there. He was married and had two little kids and the two little kids used to spend all their time at my place playing with my little kids.

TM: That wasn't Ken Hulick? No, he was later. Mid-60s.

SP: I might remember the name if I heard it, but that name is not familiar. But anyway, that was the five cabins that were there. And, of course, now you have to understand all those cabins have been torn down. The only buildings I recognize on the North Rim insofar as the Park Service is concerned...the North Rim park ranger's house, which was where Vern was, that's still there. It was a very nice house. Then right across the street from there was where, I think, I guess he was kind of like the next highest ranger. I can't remember who the guy was that lived there. Then you go down to where the construction area was. They had the mule barn down there and the mule corral. And you had kind of like a warehouse. And you had the gas station. That's about it down there. Well, then just a little bit further, I'll guess I'd say west of that, were some cabins. I don't know how many there were. Two or three cabins. And, of course, they had the administration building, which was down there. So you had the administration building and a couple of cabins and then you go down a little bit further. Down meaning west to where the housing area was. What will be interesting to know for people, in those days there was the wash house. It had one washing machine in it and a pair of stationary tubs. That was down in a great big, huge grassy area with real long clotheslines. That was a big area there. The wash house was at one end and that was what was in front of our houses, those five cabins. Those cabins where we lived.

So that's where you did your laundry. Well, let me tell you what. You had five families with a whole bunch of kids and there was one washing machine.

TM: Oh my.

SP: I can remember going out there 4 o'clock in the morning to start my laundry because I wanted to get there before anyone else got there. There was a ringer washer.

TM: With a mangle.

SP: ...ringer washer. One single ringer washer. That's what there was. You'd run your wash through and then you'd put it into one tub and rinse it and you'd have your ringer and you'd ring it through. Then you'd run it through the other tub to rinse it, the ringer there, and then you'd go out and hang the clothes on the clothesline. It was a job. And that's all there was for the five families. I was busy most of the time taking care of my kids and everything. You didn't really pay much attention to what everybody else was doing. You were too busy yourself. So I don't know whether... They had kind of a couple of cabins where they had singles - the single men that were working there lived. Did you ever hear of Red Valentine?

TM: No.

SP: You never heard of him. Well Mary Hoover should be able to tell you more about Red Valentine. I think he lived in Williams part-time. Sad part about Red Valentine. Wonderful guy. Ken had known him for years around the Canyon. Everybody knew him and liked him. He never really had what'd you call a full-time steady job. He was just a, just a good ole' boy. But he was an alcoholic. The last summer that I was there he was in bad shape. They'd have to take him into Kanab about every month and have his system pumped out because his, his...what was it? (Cirrhosis of the liver) What doesn't work when you're a bad alcoholic?

TM: Your liver or your kidney?

SP: Well, whatever it was, he would blow up and they'd have to go to Kanab and pump all the fluid out of his body. Then he'd come back and he'd be okay for a few more weeks and then he'd have to go back in and have it done again. I think it was his liver. Your liver quits doesn't it?

TM: Sounds like kind of early, early dialysis they were doing that would've been for kidney. (No)

SP: This was in the '60s. Finally he got to where he was so bad he couldn't work anymore and the next thing I knew he'd passed away. I think he's buried in Williams. Mary Hoover would know more about him, probably, because she's from Williams. Great guy.

TM: So, Shirley, at this time period, 1960, Glen Canyon Dam is under construction along with the new town of Page. At that time, and for the North Rim, when you needed to go shopping, I mean some people today will zip over to Page because there's a supermarket there and a road and blah, blah, whatnot. But my running assumption is for food you had to go to Kanab, is that right?

SP: That's right. However, the year that I remember being there, last year I think was 1960. I was there to live the first time in 1957. The last time I think was in 1960. I remember going over there to stay that summer and, of course, that was the year that I also worked on the fire tower. So I'm talking 1960. I remember, we went into Flagstaff. When we were at Grand Canyon you usually went into Flagstaff to shop. A: You got out of the Canyon and B: What you saved on groceries going into Flagstaff to shop, paid for your gas going in and out.

TM: That's right.

SP: And it got you out of the Canyon. I remember loading up. When you go there for the summer you take everything you're going to need there with you. All your pots and your pans and your clothes and your toys for the kids and whatever you're going to need you take it all with you when you go. I remember loading up groceries. What used to be, you loaded up with all the staples for the summer. Then if you needed meat, perishables, you might go to Kanab. But otherwise than that... They used to have the truck that came in to provide the groceries, vegetables and fruits and things like that, for the lodge and the cafeteria. They used to have a cafeteria then and the cafeteria was wonderful. I hate that thing they got now. Cafeteria was wonderful. Anyway, so that truck would come in and bring all its stuff for the lodge and for the cafeteria.

TM: Yeah!

SP: Well, there was always stuff left over. So it got to where that truck, when they were leaving, they would come into the Park area. Somebody would know in advance it was coming, and we'd all go out there and whatever, usually fruits and vegetables and stuff they would have leftover, he would go ahead and sell it to us pretty reasonable. So we got a lot of stuff like that, what was leftover that the Park didn't take. But otherwise than that, if we needed milk or anything we would get it at the cafeteria. They didn't have a freezer. Didn't have freezers over there, you'd be lucky to have a refrigerator. So we lived on a lot of pinto beans and fried potatoes and did most of our own baking. All of our own cooking. And had to take everything with you except a few staples. Once in a while if you wanted a really nice long weekend, you'd drive all the way into Flagstaff and stock up. But otherwise than that, the only other place you had was Kanab. Usually, if you needed just some milk or something you could go to the cafeteria, usually, and get some milk.

TM: Would you shop for others? I mean, if you were going to Flagstaff, would others get word of it and say, "Hey pick me up a such and such and so and so?"

SP: No, not that much. Nobody did that. I don't remember asking anybody to pick up groceries for me and I don't think anybody asked me either because usually people were pretty independent. Independent insofar as not relying on others to take care of them. They took care of themselves.

TM: So Shirley, on the south side you mentioned there was a big segregation between the 'uniforms' and the worker folks and the NPS. And, of course, then there was Santa Fe and then there was the Fred Harvey people. On the North Rim was it that same way or was it different?

SP: Well, it was not quite as noticeably segregated insofar as the Park because we lived in the same area. For instance in the row of houses we were, in the fifth house that was a park ranger that was

there. And, of course, Vern was up there and the other park ranger was there. There weren't very many park rangers there. There were more 'laborers' and clerks who were, you know, not uniformed employees on the North Rim. We got together more and were more comfortable with each other. More on the North Rim because there were so few of us. So it wasn't that noticeable. The one thing that we used to have on the North Rim that was so fun... There was a wonderful guy, his name was Wendell Seegmiller. S-E-E-G-M-I-L-L-E-R.

TM: Spell that again. Hang on, hang on. Shirley, spell that again.

SP: S as in "Sam" – E-E-G – M as in "money" – I-L-L-E-R. Seegmiller.

TM: Thank you. Wendell.

SP: Wendell. W-E-N-D-E-L-L. I think it was.

TM: Thank you.

SP: He's passed away now. But anyway he was Utah Parks. There were a lot of Utah Parks people there. Of course they were the ones that ran the lodge and the cafeteria. Those were Utah Parks people. Wendell would come down from, I don't know whether it was Kanab, Cedar City, where he was... He was the Utah Parks employee and he would have to come down and take care of the water system and the electrical system and that kind of serious maintenance stuff for Utah Parks. Ken got acquainted with him because Wendell played a mandolin. Of course, Ken played guitar. So next thing you knew, Wendell and then his wife and his daughters would come and visit. They'd come down to see their dad 'cause he'd be at the North Rim for some time. You know, a few days or weeks at a time and they'd come down. But anyway, we'd all get together behind our house that we had there in that little area of the five houses because we had a little bit bigger house and we had a fire pit out behind the house. Ken, and I can't remember who else was with him, they used to go fishing and they would bring back a whole lot of Bright Angel trout. And I would...

TM: Was this...where did they go fishing?

SP: ...fix a big pot of beans. On the day off, like the weekend, they'd go down to Bright Angel, the upper Bright Angel.

TM: Oh, okay!

SP: The upper Bright Angel. Way up there on the North Rim side of the upper Bright Angel. They would go there. I can't remember who he used to with now. But anyway, they would go there and fish. Hike down and hike out with the fish. If it turned out well, they got a lot of fish, we would have everybody in the Park Service and then, of course, a few people from the Utah Parks, namely Wendell Seegmiller and his wife. They would all be there, all of us together. We'd have a fire out behind our cabin and I used to make a cake. Huge, big cake. I would fix a big, huge pot of pinto beans and then we'd have fish and I'd bake bread. We all baked our own bread. I learned to bake bread over there and can over there because everyone did their own stuff. You couldn't get to the store all the time. Anyway, we'd get out there and

there were people that would sing, people that played instruments. They'd all get out there and we'd have our fish fry and music and have the best times you could ever have in your life.

TM: Wow. Yeah.

SP: That's when it didn't make any difference whether 'uniformed' or not, whether you were Park Service or whether you were Utah Parks or what you were. Everybody could come. There was always lots to eat. We had fun times. Great times. Wendell Seegmiller, he was a great guy with the Utah Parks. He and his wife visited us and kept in touch for a long, long time. He passed away quite young from some ailment he got from working, some infection probably killed him.

TM: Shirley, we have been at this for now a little over an hour and a half.

SP: Oh, you're kidding me!

TM: You know how time flies.

SP: I can sure talk, can't I?

TM: You know how time flies, so I think this is going to be a good place to stop this part. This is Part 2 and we'll pick up with Part 3. So hold the phone for just a minute. Don't go away. Today is November 14, 2017. This is the end of Part 2 of an Oral History interview with Shirley Patrick and Tom Martin. So standby here.