

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society

Interviewee: Don Hay (DH)
Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)
Subject: **Glen Canyon 1953**
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Interview note: Don Hay recounts a 1953 river trip through Glen Canyon. He was 16 years old at the time. Another participant on that trip was Gus Scott. Gus had allowed TM to scan Gus's photos from that 1953 river trip, so as TM interviews DH, TM is looking at the photos Gus Scott took of that trip.

TM: Don, what year were you born?

DH: 1937

TM: 1937 and you went through Glen Canyon in 1953.

DH: Right, we put into the river the week after my 16th birthday.

TM: What were you doing, this was a Phoenix YMCA trip.

DH: Right

TM: What were you doing in Phoenix? What were your parents doing there?

DH: My dad owned a liquor store. Are you familiar with the Golden Gate Barrio?

TM: No

DH: It was a, they wrote history books about it now. It was southeast Phoenix, near the airport. And it was an official barrio for Indians and Mexican decent people. And we were about the one or two non-brown people in the area. My dad owned a liquor store. I was, I found out years later talking to my 8th grade teacher, a charity case at the YMCA.

TM: How do you mean?

DH: I didn't realize, they gave me a membership down there. And actually we were the only family that had any money. So anyway I was in the YMCA and they put up this trip for 75 bucks.

TM: Which back then was a considerable chunk of change.

DH: Well, still for two weeks though. Del Webb hauled us up in an open truck.

TM: So Del provided the truck?

DH: Yep, well no he didn't drive the truck. I never met him.

TM: No I'm sorry, but Del Webb provided the truck.

DH: Yep, and Barry Goldwater owned the rafts and the paddles.

TM: And there were two or three rafts?

DH: ah, at least, I think there were 16 boys or something. Their names are on that paper of trip participants from the Rainbow Bridge Register. I think that you have it.

TM: Yes

DH: I think I was number 8,841 on the Register...

TM: You bet

DH: OK, well the story I was going to tell about Goldwater was is that Randal Henderson who was sort of a green editor before the term existed, in the old Desert Magazine...

TM: OK

DH: ran Goldwater stuff, back in the 40's and maybe even before for all I know. I remember reading very clearly something written I think in the 40's where Randal described all the things that Goldwater had done, was doing. And said he is the master of everything he does and fortunately for us he has decided not to go into politics. And this was of course before 1952 when he was elected into the Senate.

TM: OK

DH: Yea Ok and another little interesting tidbit for history is we, in the '53 trip, we put in the second week of July at Hite's Ferry.

TM: OK

DH: Well you know all of these episodic things that Edward Abby wrote about, his experiences? Well somewhere in one of his books, I don't know, Slumgullion Stew or one of those things. He was on the other side of the river that week. He was on the south side of the river, he had driven up there. And I always wondered about that, he might not have been such a sweet pleasant person if he had met me. I might have made him a cynical troublemaker.

TM: You didn't pester old Ed did you?

DH: No, I'm afraid as a 16 year old kid, and I think he was with his girlfriend at the time, so he probably wasn't, even if he was there that same day, he probably wouldn't have been too interested in us.

TM: So it sounds like you guys went from Phoenix to Prescott.

DH: I don't remember, you would almost would have had to in those days because Black Canyon didn't exist. I know we drove, we slept at night somewhere on the Navajo Territory, somewhere up in there in Navajo land. We were out on the reservation. Is reservation still a PC (politically correct) word now?

TM: Well, yes sure, it's fine

DH: It was in the early 50's anyway.

TM: From Gus's pictures, on the second night the truck is pulled over to the side of the road and you guys are cooking right on the side of the dirt road.

DH: Yea, I don't remember that. I remember we were just camped out and we went to that road, such as it was, to Capitol Reef. From there we went down in this open truck which is probably illegal as all get out now.

TM: Do you remember stopping at the Vermillion Cliffs at all?

DH: No I don't remember that. We drove past them obviously. I remember we went through Moab. And there were some teenage girls there. We asked them the score of the All Star Game and they didn't know what we were talking about. That's about, you know you remember these weird things. And even from there it was more or less just a long dirt road down to Hite.

TM: One single lane road?

DH: Yea, I'm sure, oh yea. In fact, oh yea it was, I have memories of that.

TM: Do you remember running across a broken down truck along the way and helping them do a little mechanics work at all?

DH: No, no I don't. Now if you talk to Gus, Gus I think went on three of these trips.

TM: Well, so I must tell you that as we are talking along here I am looking at Gus' photos, so I'm looking at this one lane road, I'm looking at this broken down truck where he's all stopped and piled out.

DH: I'd love to see that.

TM: Well, let's visit then. That would be fun.

DH: Did you get my newspaper pictures?

TM: I did, thank you very much for sending those.

DH: Yea, I love the one of Music Temple. There are some names on that wall.

TM: You got down to the Hite Ferry. And did you guys ride across the ferry? Do you remember that?

DH: No, I remember there was one of those old Model A or Model T engine kind of things to pull it along. Years later, oh jess not too long ago, fifteen years or something...

TM: Are you still there? It sounds like we have lost connection so I'm going to call Don back.

DH: That was me.

TM: Sorry about that.

DH: No, I think I did it. I hold it too tight and I hit the off button. They don't put the buttons in the right place. Anyway, I ran into a woman at Green River, Utah at the Powell Museum...

TM: Yes, Sir

DH: and she said she and her husband ran that place in '53

TM: Hite

DH: Hite Ferry

TM: Is that right

DH: yea, and of course I don't remember any names. But I was bragging to her about my experiences in Glen Canyon and she topped me, she lived there.

TM: Oh that is neat. So it looks like you had some rubber boats, you got to the river, you got the rubber boats out of the truck and blew them up. Mostly by hand it looks like.

DH: Yea, oh yea. I have a memory, it's not positive, that those were legitimate WWII rafts. I don't think they were commercial rubber rafts being made then

TM: It looks like they are legitimate ten man WWII surplus with the thwarts in them going side to side across the middle there. And it doesn't look like you guys had any frames per se.

DH: I don't remember anything like that, no. I don't remember how many we had. In my raft, Doctor Barker was there

TM: Who was Dr. Barker?

DH: Ok, Dr. Barker was a family physician. And he went on the trip with us. And he was just your classic old.... I remember years later in my... I was a first year teacher with no money and I had a sick kid, he told us how to make medicine out of home stuff because we couldn't afford anything in those days. He practiced in Phoenix for a long time.

Also one of the great moments, it is hard to understand today. But we were loading the rafts one morning; he and I were down there with another kid. Another kid came running down the sand dunes screaming, "I've been bitten by a scorpion!" And he had a scorpion hanging in front of his testicles. And of course it is funny now but then it was terrifying because in those days it would have been what, days before we could have gotten help.

TM: That's right, that's right

DH: We had no radio, we had no transportation. Actually the scorpion was just hanging there more scared than the kid was and Dr. Barker handed him a tube of suave and said "Put it on, I'm not going to." Then he also said that scorpions don't bite, son, they sting. You are OK. He was a classic old country doctor. He's the one that, he told my wife once when the kid was sick, had a cold, and said, "Well, I can give him a shot, some pills and he'll be ok in a week and a half. Or we can just let it go and he will be ok in ten days."

There must be some records of him. He was classic. They could make a movie about him.

TM: So, it looks like there were four boats at least.

DH: Yea we had 16 of us kids and then 3 or 4 adults.

TM: So that would be 20 or so in the group.

DH: So that would be about right for four wouldn't it?

TM: Four or five

DH: Have you contacted Willis Peterson yet. Gus knows him I'm pretty sure.

TM: You know I don't think I have gotten through to Willis yet. Gus has mentioned him. But

DH: He was a major photographer. He taught college photography. He was one of those Arizona Highways types

TM: Did he take a lot of pictures on this trip?

DH: Yea, he was the photographer

TM: Do you have contact information for him.

DH: I don't have anything, Gus does.

TM: OK

DH: And I think Gus said he lives in Cottonwood or somewhere in the Verde Valley, not very far from Gus, because Gus is just right over Mingus Mountain from him I guess. Willis Peterson, you know.

My memory is that picture I sent you of all of us under the arch. That was the cover photo of Boy's Life, the Boy Scout magazine; he sold an article to them. And I never saw it. I have actually looked for it on eBay over the years and such things. So Gus is the one that sent me that picture.

Transcriber Note: I could not find a cover photo of the trip in any 1952/53 Boy's Life issue. I did find an article titled *14 Day River Rats* by Willis Peterson in the July 1954 issue of *Boy's Life*, pages 10-11. It had a number of pictures of what I suspect is this trip. The link to this article is:

https://books.google.com/books?id=DT9yHUmb-H8C&pg=PA10&lpg=PA10&dq=glen+canyon+boys+life&source=bl&ots=_umMkczjN2&sig=k_PQ1Jbjv2WmjJzVvNxxWJBWDadc&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CBwQ6AEwADgKahUKEwjFydDfieDIAhUDwWMKHaEsDbo-v=onepage&q=glen+canyon+boys+life&f=false

TM: Indeed Gus has been communicating with Willis and Gus sent me an email here that says "I will look around my files and they are there somewhere. The problem is that they are 35mm and therefore are mixed up with other pics and carousels. When I find them I will bundle up a bunch for you. Meanwhile drop by sometime, going to have an exhibit on Sri Lanka showing at Prescott College. Well I need to get in touch with..." so Willis sounds like he went by Pete

DH: I don't remember that, but it could well be. I remember he was just married two or three weeks. And that is the only thing I can remember about him other than that he was just the classic photographer and was making us do everything two or three times to get a picture. I wound up teaching photography and being a photographer, I know how they are.

TM: So you guys just jumped on the river and headed on downstream.

DH: For two weeks

TM: Had you ever done anything like this before.

DH: oh God no

TM: Had you camped out before?

DH: I don't know that I had never been in a boat before.

TM: Had you camped out?

DH: A little bit. My dad being a small businessman there wasn't a whole lot of that. I was in the Boy Scouts. And I had a pretty good scoutmaster, we did some stuff. And we used to go out to Cave Springs when it was way out in the country before it was a city itself. And things like that. But not really. I had no strong camping background, no.

TM: And it looks like something happened to one of the boats, like it became deflated or something and it had to be modified right on site.

DH: I have no memories of that.

TM: Life jackets, did you guys have life jackets?

DH: I don't remember. I don't think we did anything... you know like going up in an open truck, things like that. It was a different world. I don't, no I'm sure we didn't have life jackets or we didn't use them. 'Cuse it was hot. We spent a lot of time in the water.

TM: One of the adults was wearing a military helmet.

DH: We had a guy that had, what you would call, post-traumatic stress disorder today, in those days it was shell shock. And I think he was a charity case of the YMCA. He kept talking about how this was good for him to get the killing out of his head. You know this was still a while, so he was either from WWII or Korea, and had seen combat and was probably not who the parents would want their sons around.

TM: Gus has pictures of this gentleman, he's wearing that helmet tight, the military helmet is on there tight and he is wearing his underwear and that's it, and a military helmet... maybe some shoes

DH: Yea, I can remember... I don't remember the helmet but I remember he's... My dad had a liquor store near and we had a few of those guys as his customers and I have met these guys... you know I was a young kid they were always giving me advice mainly to get the hell out and stay away from the military.

TM: It looks like you guys went and visited Bert Loper's cabin out there in a cornfield.

DH: Yea we did meet a guy out there that was farming. Is that just a little ways down from Hite's Ferry?

TM: That's right

DH: Yea, I remember that was the only guy we saw, as I remember, until we got to Lee's Ferry and there were people living in the old cabins at Lee's Ferry. I don't know anything about that other than there were people in those... This was before the Park Service changed Lee's Ferry so much. You have read Edward Abbey great description of the Park Service and what they did at Lee's Ferry?

TM: Well, that and Pat Riley's book

DH: In the name of preserving it

TM: I'm sure you know Pat Riley's From Mormon Crossing to National Park Lee's Ferry, huge work, great book.

Yea, it looks like you all went up to Bert Loper's cabin and cloudy, monsoon season

DH: Great waterfall days. We got one of those I'm sure you have seen that in your experience

TM: When the rain comes in. What was it like when the rains came in Glen Canyon?

DH: Surrounded by several, several hundred feet high waterfalls

TM: Oh nice

DH: yea, we had that experience that was...

TM: There is a picture here of the river and cliffs on the skyline and heads, just heads in the water. You guys are clearly just swimming along.

DH: A lot, we did that a lot. We would drift on logs and rafts and just you know... I don't remember any

lift jackets.

TH: Yea, I haven't seen any yet. It looks like you had some oars, not just paddles but some big long oars.

DH: Right. And one of the great sadness's of my life is one of those oars we all carved our names on and then at the end we drew cards or straws or something, oh it was cards. It was cards. And the high card or low card was to get the oar and I was tied with somebody. And for some reason, I think, someone said he had a spade and I had a heart and spades ranked above hearts or something. I don't remember exactly but anyway I didn't get the oar but I thought I was going to... I remember that from 60 years ago, I'm a bad loser.

TM: No that would have been a really neat documentation of that trip. There's a... it looks like you guys camped just above Tapestry Wall which would have been...

DH: You know I just did one of those tour things up at Page, and I was just there.

TM: Oh did you get on the boat and go up canyon?

DH: Yea, one of those tourist type of things, you know there were 20 or 30 of us on a boat

TM: And what did you think compared then to now?

DH: Well, you know it's a whole different world. You know we thought the dam was a good idea in 1953. We were Arizona kids.

I'm sort of a political liberal retro bate. I wish it hadn't happened.

TM: I want to explore this a little bit if you have got a mind. Because it did seem as though it was the right thing to do, in theory at the time, at least some people thought so. Clearly some people thought it was not. After the trip, after that trip through Glen, did you, you were only 16... Did that change your thoughts about the dam at all?

DH: I had a change. I don't remember being that young. Social conciseness does not seem to be part of my youth. I don't remember where I decided it wasn't necessary. And I am sure that I did not come up with the idea. I probably read or heard someone talk about it and then started to think about it.

I don't, I think it was one of your books, somewhere I read... something we did. We were asked by some government agency, I don't know who, to burn the driftwood. And we did set some big piles of driftwood and of course as teen kids we thought that was wonderful. Was that in one of your books?

TM: Well yea, it's a question. I have never found that in writing anywhere from a government agency requesting river runners to turn into pyromaniacs. Now many river runners were pyromaniacs and so it was an easy ask, if it was asked.

DH: You know we were told by somebody, a head of our, an adult in our group, that we were asked to do that. I of course have no more information than that...

TM: So now looking back in hindsight, having been one of the lucky few to go through Glen Canyon, lucky couple 10,000 maybe, people that did that. And having been out on the reservoir as a result of the dam, what are your thoughts today?

DH: I'm as happy about that as anything that has ever happened in my life outside of my family stuff.

TM: You mean going on that trip?

DH: Yea and it is sort of interesting because I can't keep my mouth shut. I was at the Grand Canyon, oh we go to the Grand Canyon almost every year, we walk down, my wife and I walk down that Phantom Ranch almost every year at least twice.

This year on her 79th birthday we did it.

But I came across the fishing crew, the Park Service fishing crew, and I couldn't keep my mouth shut. I had to tell them.

TM: Good for you. So I want to come back to this because I don't think I asked the question right. Understanding today's recreation on Lake Powell and the dam and what it was like before the dam, you've kinda of hinted at that but it sounds as thou if you had your druthers you would not have had the dam is that correct?

DH: Right. I think it was a mistake. I think we could have done the same thing other ways.

TM: Why?

DH: One thing is I don't know if the water works because you increase water loss due to significant loss in evaporation because of the lake. We lost, I know this is maudlin, but sacred is not out of place for land like that. I think that is a fair description. And the value of it to us as a people and our heritage. I'm really uncomfortable using words like that but I think it is appropriate.

TM: And so my take on this would be that you would not use the word sacred to describe many areas of the planet.

DH: Unfortunately probably to simplify for to many people I guess that sort of

TM: No, I'm thinking, when I think of about sacred landscapes there were a few of them that touch me in that way.

DH: Oh yea that definitely. We lived in the south sea island and they really look like travel posters. I was stationed for a year in Micronesia and the water is that blue and that clear. Things like that do touch you in a way that is, well here it goes, and spiritual I guess.

And the desert, of course I'm a desert rat.

TM: What made it that for you?

DH: I don't know, it is not part of my heritage in any way. My family wasn't particularly outdoorsy or anything like that.

TM: Having never been to Glen Canyon and having talked to some people who went through there I hear this expressed a lot, what you just said and so I.... Can you help me understand this more? What was it about the place?

DH: I'm afraid I am not that articulate. I have got a masters in literature. But that was writing not reading, I mean in reading not writing.

A lot of things. One thing is that my wife was a ranger at Grand Canyon when we got married. Her family was Park Service. So I think over 55 years of contact with them shaped me a lot. Her father was one of these classic guys, CCC, labor parleyed that into a job with the Park Service and retired as a GS15 administrator in the Park Service. That generation of guys. In fact at one time he was, they were even discussing him as superintendent of the Grand Canyon.

TM: I want to ask you more about how you met your wife and about your experiences in Grand Canyon

but right now I'm still kinda stuck on Glen Canyon and why that place meant so much to you.

DH: Well one thing... A lot of things. I thought about this over the years and having a couple of friends close enough to actually talk about it. Ain't nobody ever been there. You know. We were places where no one had been. Another guy, he and I hit up a friendship and we would walk at night. And I'm sure we were not the first people to walk in some of these ridges but we could well have been the first people of European descent to walk in those ridges. Or pretty damn close to it.

TM: So you would just scabble up the slick rock to the rim

DH: Yes. We all of us went up walked up what is it, Hole in the Wall, is that the correct term?

TM: Yes, Hole in the Rock

DH: Where you can see the ax marks in the sandstone. Yea we did that. We did stuff every night almost. We would just take off if we didn't have some sort of duties with the food or something. We'd just take off and go. I doubt that anybody can go anywhere on this continent that the original inhabitants weren't. But we had to be, but there could not have been very many people from Europe ancestry that had been where we were. Hand full. In fact the Henry's was still pretty well untouched in the early '50s.

TM: What was it like up on the slick rock at sunset, up there?

DH: Well you make me crying now. Yea it was like a South Sea sunset like in the pictures of the bad movies. Even as a 16 year old kid we had that thought you know. And you can't think of anything more insensitive than maybe a teenage male. You know. But yea we knew then. We talked about that. We're saying some stuff here.

Gus, you know Gus must have really been touched by it. Gus even walked in from Navajo Mountain once.

TM: And he very generously let me scan his slides and getting him to talk about Glen he will cry fairly easily. I have interviewed him a couple of times and it's painful.

DH: I agree, you know it is because... I remember, I went to Page to the Carl Hayden place when they had the original [Rainbow Bridge] register there or did. I think they might have moved it to Tucson I'm not sure about that. But they had it there. And I was really self-conscious about going and barging in and saying you know I would like to see that. Cause I have all of it on a DVD...

TM: You do, so you have what I sent you.

DH: Yes

TM: Ok Great.

DH: Oh yea I have all of that. I read the whole thing 3 or 4... There are some names in there, I mean some names! But you know when I finally found the place I couldn't get rid of the people, they wouldn't let me go. It was like, almost like I was a, sort of, celebrity or something, because even though they had this book with all these great... Georgia O'Keeffe, you know. Just all sorts of things. There's something as a historian you might want to check. I don't know there's several references in the 20's and 30's from the Lasky Group which was a film making group out of Hollywood. He was a fairly big name film maker. And he went through with some of his crew and they were going to make a film or something about that.

TM: Is that right?

DH: And I have no way to, I have no idea if they did, it exists or anything. But Victor Lasky, is that right? I don't know maybe Victor is another name in my... But Lasky was a big film maker in the 20's and 30's

in Los Angeles.

TM: How would you, how would you spell... L A S K E?

DH: K Y I would guess. Yea I'm sure that's it LASKY.

TM: And you think the first name might be Victor?

DH: The name Victor is in my head but that could be something else, I don't know.

But in the registry there were people that worked for him. Cameramen came down and set the trips... He talks about it. And Eddie Mckee's name in there, you know the naturalist, famous one out of the Grand Canyon. Roger Toll who is a big name in the history of the Park Service. Georgia O'Keeffe. A 19 year old L. Scott Carpenter who was one of the original astronauts.

TM: Producer of Paramount Pictures is Jessie Louise Lasky.

DH: Ok that sounds right. Yea, Victor Lasky might be a name out of a movie I saw.

TM: Victor Lasky is 1918 – 1990 is an American newspaper columnist and writer.

DH: Ok that's not the right guy then... unless he turned into a movie producer later.

TM: No but it would be interesting if Paramount was Lasky... because it would be pretty easy to look that name up.

DH: It would be exciting. You know they find film every once in a while is somebody's library or something. And nobody knows what it is or cares.

TM: It looks like you guys were just getting drinking water right out of the springs as you went along.

DH: Yea, we, I remember a couple of them tasted bad. Yea, I don't remember any water treatment other than we would, this was the original Colorado River water, we would set buckets out at night and take the top gallon or two or whatever. And let the stuff settle.

TM: And that was good drinking?

DH: I don't remember us drinking a ton though we probably did. Nobody ever told us not to drink the water in those days. I remember my scoutmaster once said well he saw a dead cow in a stream once maybe we ought to check the water. But that was the first time I even heard of that, not drinking water.

TM: Interesting, if it was just water you drank it.

DH: Yea

TM: And if you settled it, it was fine.

DH: Yea

How long have you been doing river stuff?

TM: Oh about a tenth as long as you.

What else can you remember about this trip? It looks like it was stunning, it was monsoon season, the mornings were just clear...

DH: Yea. There was a sand storm or two. Maybe just one but it was so dramatic I remember it as two. But you know camped on those dunes with the wind blowing.

TM: What was that like?

DH: It also, something else came neat out of it. I just thought a connection.

Not on our trip but the YMCA secretary was named Ray Day at that time. I went to school with his brother at Phoenix Union high school. Ray hired me to work with the Prescott camp, the YMCA camp at Prescott. And then somewhere about '57, in the spring of '57 he hired me to go with him a couple of times to Havasu. We took groups of boys down to camp in Supai.

TM: What year was that?

DH: That would have been about '57.

TM: Ok. Before we leave Glen Canyon, and yes, I want to get to Grand Canyon, but is there anything else you want to add about that? About that 1953 trip?

DH: Yea know I don't remember anything specific. The only name was Griffith, is that the guy that was head of it? I don't remember the YMCA guy that was head of it I had met later and did a little stuff with at the Y and then Dr. Barker took care of my kids when I was making \$4,000 a year teaching school and we had no insurance. I don't remember any other contacts after that. Just that I do remember walking in the late afternoon up on the ridge and seeing miles and miles of no people.

TM: Ok, I'm going to read a little bit here from your Rainbow Bridge sign in log

Third annual Rainbow Trail conducted by the Phoenix YMCA from Hite to Lee's Ferry in four rubber assault boats, Lou Smith, Tom Gabes?

DH: You know I have that sheet somewhere...

TM: Ok. I'm just trying to see if these names ring a bell as we are kinda looking at this from the adults, King Cooper?

DH: One of them, I can't remember, I saw later in the paper became a lawyer in the Phoenix area.

TM: One of the kids on the trip?

DH: Yea, and Dr. Barker was still in contact with some of them. And every once in a while when I would go over he would tell me about so and so. It really didn't mean a lot to me.

TM: You know it is interesting. You guys signed in the Rainbow Bridge Logbook on the 23rd of July and the next sign in was the 28th.

DH: Yea I have noticed that. That is really interesting isn't it? People just weren't going up...

TM: Before you was the 16th. So it was almost like in the middle of summer there was a trip a week.

DH: Yea and I think the trip before us was the Dodges...

TM: That's right.

DH: And I think wasn't that a Navajo group?

TM: No, oh you know what? That is Homer Dodge and his son Nort. And they were in Grumman

canoes.

DH: I have seen that name around in books.

TM: Homer Dodge is an amazing physicist. I made contact with one of the people that was on it, one of the trips he was on and he had a great series of photographs which we scanned in. Didn't get along with Homer real well. Didn't have much good to say about him. But some great pictures from that river trip. That was fun. But it is interesting there they are again, they were down there in canoes. It looks like just him and his son.

DH: That would be great wouldn't it?

TM: So when was the first time you saw Grand Canyon Don?

DH: 1946. After the war we went up and it must have been fall because I remember it being very cold, in a '41 Packard.

TM: And this was the first time you mom and dad had been up there?

DH: Yea, I don't know. That's my first memory. I just came across Bob Goldwater's name [in the Rainbow Bridge Logbook], Barry's brother, he was the 3,000 entry in 1951.

No, we lived in Flagstaff before WWII in the early part of WWII

TM: Oh you did? What were you doing there?

DH: My dad was actually working for Del Webb, I think. See, I was born in '37 so I don't remember a lot about that. I remember we lived in a little old motel, on 66 which was a two lane cement slab. But we did not have a car. I know we did not have a car then.

Waldo Dixon. That name sounds familiar. Was he a painter? Oh my God there's another Goldwater, I can't tell which one. 1950 I'm looking at.

TM: So you are looking at register names now?

DH: So my first memory is going to the Grand Canyon in '46. And then we went there several times in the '50's. Then I met my wife in Phoenix in 1958.

TM: How did you met her?

DH: Well, she and I were both... I was a student teacher and she was a teacher at South Mountain High School. And then she got a job as a summer ranger, seasonal, you know in '59...

TM: What was her name, Don?

DH: Sylvia Lyles was her family name.

Ah, then I went to Arizona State College in Flagstaff to graduate school that summer. And we got married then at the Canyon that summer.

TM: Fun, fun. So first time hiking in the Grand Canyon, when did you do that?

DH: That would have been Supai.

TM: Ok. '57 or '58?

DH: yea, probably '57.

TM: Ok what do you remember about that?

DH: It might have been '56. It could have been '56. I worked for the Phoenix ah at the Prescott camp in the summer of '55. So it could have been '56. You know I don't remember. No it couldn't have been either because in '56 I was in the Marine Reserves all summer, playing John Wayne back in the mountains of Virginia.

TM: What do you remember about that first hike down to Supai?

DH: 50 cents to get in. I remember it was hot and of course there was almost no visitation in those days. So to get away from the bugs and the heat we actually camped with the boys on the beach at Havasu Falls. Which you know is really a no-no now. You know I have been back every decade since, in one form or another.

TM: What changes have you seen over the decades good or bad?

DH: In Supai? Oh it's terrible. There was no government housing then. The people were all great. And the last time I was down there the kids were flashing gang signs, looking for drugs. There was graffiti on the walls. I saw a huge number of obese kids and adults. The population has increased immensely.

It was very unpleasant the last time I was there. It was heart breaking.

TM: So when you first went in there you did not see that much obesity?

DH: I don't remember it. I don't remember anybody being obese. I went to a big high school and I only remember two kids who were overweight. This is a different world, a different kind of diet, everything. I'm an old crank when it comes to that. I think that is one of the sad things that has happened in our culture. And the statistics I read in the paper sort of bear that out.

TM: They do, they do. And it's not something that the first nation tribes are unique with, it is a problem here as far as obesity with the entire US population.

When was the first time you hiked down to Phantom Ranch?

DH: My wife and I backpacked down there, it was October, so it must have been when I retired. So it was probably the fall of '94, might have been '95.

TM: Quite a while later.

DH: Yea, I retired in June of '94. And so I think it probably was. And we have been down 15 times since. And my wife is going to turn '80 next year and she wants to go back.

TM: So 15 times out of 20 years.

DH: Yea, and most of those have been in the last 10/12 years.

TM: That's great.

DH: For a while there we were doing twice a year.

TM: So even not just once a year.

DH: And one of those trips we met you in those great little dories.

TM: That's right.

DH: That was Gus' wife, that's where we met Gus' wife.

TM: Where you met Sandra. Now, so tell me... spiral us back to Glen Canyon. The others kids on that trip, did you keep in touch with any of them?

DH: No. The kid I hiked with, and I don't remember which one he is even when I look at the names, I went to West High and we both played JV football that year. And we met there and that was the only one I ever saw again, that I am aware of.

TM: And where do you live now?

DH: We live in Indio, California. I taught at Indio High School and retired and we stayed here. We spend the summer in Rocky Mountain National Park and we volunteer at Joshua Tree National Park in the winter and Rocky Mountain in the summer.

TM: Ok. What does the Grand Canyon mean to you?

DH: I'm not, I'm not into that. I'm a big, big, big fan of Grand Canyon literature of all kinds. And I notice in most books start off with "you cannot describe it in words" and then they proceed to try to do it.

Do you know who Ambrose Bierce was?

TM: Now I have to show my ignorance. The name rings a bell...

DH: No that's all right. He was a big name writer at one time. *The Devil's Dictionary*. He was one of these guys out of Baltimore. He wrote the *Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* which is a famous short story.

TM: You bet.

DH: Anyway the story about him was that he was killed by Poncho Villa's men in the Mexican Revolution. But there is another story and there are some people who claim to be witnesses that he wasn't. And that he said he was going to the Grand Canyon to commit suicide. And there are people who wrote that they saw him in a bar on Whiskey Row in Prescott after he was supposed to be dead in Mexico.

You know that kind of weird part of history is in the Grand Canyon. It always fascinates me. I was always taken with the *Roping Lions in the Grand Canyon* stuff by Zane Grey as a kid. I have a small collection, which I just added to with you book, about the Grand Canyon

TM: You are very kind.

DH: But as far as trying to get meaning out of all of that. I'm not into that.

TM: Yea, I wouldn't know what to tell you if you asked me, but

DH: I have some photos that I think are the greatest photos ever taken by any human being in the history of the World...

TM: I'd love to see them! Sure, so besides the hiking to Phantom and down to Supai have you hiked anywhere else in the park?

DH: Yea I did in one spring in college probably around '57. We were going down, a group of college kids, friends... we were going down Hermit's Trail to what creek is that over there?

TM: It would be Hermit Creek and then you go on the path to Monument Creek or Boucher.

DH: Anyway there were four or five of us going down and each, every kid for one reason or another dropped out and I just went.

TM: Just by yourself?

DH: Yea I went down and I spent three or four nights down there at the bottom of the Canyon on the creek.

TM: And how was that?

DH: And it never occurred to me until later when people started asking me about it that some people would think that was odd.

TM: I think that would be magical

DH: It was. It really was because at that time I was involved in, as a platoon leader part of the Marine Corp reserve and so the only walking I had ever done was with a pack and a 91/2 lbs. rifle. And of course at a forced march pace...

TM: So it was down, for four nights down...

DH: I think, you know it could have been three or four or something...

TM: Did you see anybody else on that trip?

DH: I do not have any memories of that whatsoever.

TM: Did you keep a journal?

DH: Oh no

TM: Did you take any pictures?

DH: No I didn't own a camera until, we don't even have pictures of my kids as babies much.

Then I wound up teaching photography and working in some minor levels in commercial photography and journalism photography.

TM: You've taken lots of pictures

DH: Oh yea, I go out. I shoot every day now because it's free and you can delete them all. I bet I shot 25 pictures today and I kept two.

Yea I didn't do, yea I really feel bad about that. I feel bad about we don't have pictures of our babies much.

TM: So four or five days on the Hermit. Where else have you gone?

DH: That's about it. The first time we went down South Kaibab, that summer or that fall I guess it was still hot but my wife was pregnant and we were going down to, I don't know where, Skeleton Point or something I guess, but by Cedar Ridge we decided with her being pregnant we were not really prepared to do this kind of thing. We were just as bad as the rankest tourist you know. You have got to learn the hard way.

TM: Did you ever go around to the North Rim, spend any time over there?

DH: Yea, we spent a lot of time at the North Rim. In the late 60's I went back to Flagstaff finally to finish my Masters and we had a VW van and we would go up there camping with the boys. And we were just there last year ah the year the lodge opened in May, the week the lodge opened, when the rim to rim guys were all up there. And we walked down not as far as Cottonwood...

TM: Roaring Springs, did you get that far?

DH: Yea. Another little side canyon story is that in our work at Rocky Mountain National Park we came across this neat little young man, delightful personable guy that was a summer seasonal law enforcement ranger at Rocky. And he had a Grand Canyon connection and I wasn't listening. He said he grew up in the Cottonwood area. You know, and we talked to this guy, he's a wonderful young man, very impressive. And my wife and I both were just charmed by him. And then about three minutes after we left, she says that's Silas Aiken. You know.

TM: Fun

DH: And I would have asked for his autograph....

I got chewed out by Mary Aiken once.

TM: Did you wow

DH: Oh that was wonderful. We were going down, some friends, we were walking down from the North Rim, going down to Phantom Ranch, and a guy we were with fell down and hurt himself, twisted his back. And he was limping pretty badly and we were nursing him. Another friend took most of his pack and I was with this guy helping him along and we passed their home and Mary came out. And I knew who she was cause I had read about her. And she started cross-examining me rather viciously to see if I was qualified to handle this guy, to help this guy. Oh she was delightful. I assured her, you know, I can do this.

TM: How did it turn out?

DH: Oh he walked on down and had a beer and he got ok. The next day, two days later he walked out. They did, they, when they got down there the EMT and ranger called the helicopter and had it on standby but he was ok. He walked out on his own.

TM: What other experiences do you remember that way of your...

DH: You remember the weirdest things. That was the same trip my wife who was walking ahead of us saw the pink rattlesnake. You know which people talk about but you hardly ever get to see.

TM: That's right. Fun. And have you been out to Toroweap? Have you headed out that away?

DH: No I have not and that's always big on my bucket list. Have not. There is a lot of the Canyon that I really want to do.

TM: And journeyed through by boat?

DH: I have not ever done real whitewater. I have never been in anything that would be called whitewater by a real rafter, people in your business.

TM: What else as we have been at this now close to an hour. What else would you like to capture on tape here, you thinking about Glen Canyon...

DH: I don't know, well let me think about it and see if I can come up with anything intelligent to say. This

is 60 years ago. Which I could remember but I can't remember what I did yesterday...

TM: I know the feeling and I don't have an excuse...

DH: Well its equal opportunity. It will happen to you some day.

TM: Well thank you so much for your time here, I going to...

DH: Well I hope I did you some good, I appreciate the work you do on the river and for the river.

TM: It's all fun, you are very kind. I am going to email you...

DH: Oh my God.

TM: What?

DH: Very faint, 1951 Barry Goldwater with his address...

TM: Oh is that right?

DH: I bet that didn't last long.

TM: I wonder if that was the first, if that was the first time that Barry had

DH: 1951 probably not...

TM: I don't know...

DH: I think he, it seems like I come across his name pretty close to Zane Grey's back in the '30s...

TM: No you are right because he was in the 40's. He did a river trip with the Neville's down through there in the 40's. So he... yea that goes back a ways.

That's a wonderful who's who list, is that Rainbow Bridge register

DH: It is. Waldo Dixon that crosses my mind as a famous writer or artist, did he write anything?

TM: You know I don't know. What is interesting is Paramount Pictures producer Jessie Lasky, that's an interesting connection and you aren't not doing much with your spare time these days actually. You could check up on that with Paramount couldn't you?

DH: Well, I could try. I don't have any information. I'm surrounded by all these people around here, the names but they don't invite me over for beer. You know we have Oscar winners, I've had students who are Oscar winners... people like that. But I don't have any call with them. In fact they don't even let me in their country club.

TM: Well no it would be... if Lasky had been down through there... it would really be interesting to see if there would be a way to find...

DH: Well I know he talked about a film situation. Tried to use it, I don't know background for Westerns or it could have been a documentary on that... I have no idea...

TM: So that was in the register that they had talked about taking a film...

DH: Yea. You should try, the Parks Service probably has that. I don't know if Gus ever got the whole thing but I did. They sent it to me, gave it to me. I was going to pay for it but they said no. I guess I was

one of the first people to ever ask about it.

TM: And I have got that as well.

DH: You do

TM: You bet.

DH: It's fun to read

TM: Great resource, great resource, it's so helpful. Doing the Big Water book to be able to run out and go wait a minute what year were they there and then what month were they and what day were they there and then go look at Lee's Ferry at the stage gage and say ok well the river was flowing this much...

DH: That's great. I was able to do a little bit of that for Gus before he... but I think he finally went ahead and got the full register. He kept asking me questions and I found these names and the dates and everything.

TM: Fun, fun, that's great. Well, Don thank you so much for you time.

DH: Ok well than you for your interest and I hope I helped you.

TM: You did wonderful. Again I will email you a pdf document. If you could sign that and mail it back to me that will go with this recording and that will head off to special collections at the South Rim and it will be there.

DH: Ok fine

TM: Wonderful. Thank you so much for your time this evening.

DH: Goodbye now.

TM: Take care.