

Interviewee: Robert "Bob" Cornelius (BC)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Bob recounts his early experiences followed by his job at Glen Canyon and as a Seasonal Park Ranger at Grand Canyon National Park

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TM: Good morning. Today is the 31st of May, 2018. It's a Thursday. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History with Robert "Bob" Cornelius. C-O-R-N-E-L-I-U-S. My name is Tom Martin. This is a interview conducted over the phone. Good morning, Bob, how are you today?

BC: I'm doing well, thank you.

TM: Good. Do I have your permission to record this interview over the telephone?

BC: Yes, you do.

TM: Thank you very much. This is Part 2 of our interview with you. At the end of our first interview, Part 1, you were recounting a river trip with the Sierra Club through Glen Canyon in 1963 just before the gates of Glen Canyon Dam were to close and begin a major inundation of Glen Canyon. Can you tell me more about that river trip and about its impact on you? What you saw, what you smelled, what you heard? What do you remember about that?

BC: Well, Glen Canyon was a very...you know, obviously a very beautiful place. I think there was a lot of...it was sort of intimate. You had all of these little side canyons, which they called glens, and each one of them was very unique and very beautiful. For example, even just contrasting from one side of the river to the other. I talked about going into Music Temple in the last interview. Across the river and just upstream was Hidden Passage. Hidden Passage was a real narrow, sculpted canyon pretty much without vegetation or anything, at least in the lower stretches where I went for an hour or so. Music Temple was an entirely different place. It was this big, sandy beach with kind of dunes in front and then in back was this gigantic sort of an amphitheater with this amazing acoustics inside there that we talked about. People would go in there and sing and it was unbelievable. Someone with a bad voice sounded wonderful in Music Temple. It's the way it was.

Other things I remember... One thing that was very impressive is when we went past the Escalante River, I was kind of surprised in that you had this sheer wall, it came in from the west, of course, but this sheer wall and then there was just this defile, just a big cut there. It wasn't, again, wasn't very wide but here came this...called it a river, it was not huge by any means, but it came out. We didn't stop there unfortunately, but I remember to the south, I think it was the south side of the river along the cliffs, were all these pictographs that had been drawn. About the time I was looking at those here comes a big flight of Great Blue herons by. It was very kind of a moving experience there.

Another thing I recall, there were several areas where it was more...you could see for a distance and you could see the edges of mountains coming down. Probably more as you got toward Navajo Mountain and

that area. We got into quite a wind storm on one day. Rain and wind and I... We were talking the other day about things that they talked about around the campfire. One of the things they talked about was, you know, we're going to have this lake with not a lot of accessible shoreline in some places and you're going to have these wind storms. When I came back to Glen Canyon I found out all about that firsthand [laughter] when it became the lake.

Another place that was really interesting to me was Navajo Canyon, where we spent our last night. The geology there was kind of stair-stepped and the Navajo Creek kind of came down over these blocks, so to speak. I still have that impression in my mind.

Another really interesting place, I don't recall where it was, maybe you would remember, but there was a spot where there were these tiny, little water-worn rocks that were perched on little clay-like pedestals. There were thousands of these things in this one area where it was very smooth rock. I never saw anything like that again until I was at Phantom Ranch one time. I hiked from the upper stretches of Phantom Creek back across past Cheops Pyramid and then came down into Bright Angel Canyon there above the campground. There's one area up there that's kind of smooth rock and here were all these little rocks that were identical, at least the way they were perched, to these unusual formations.

TM: And they're only a couple inches high. And there's lots of them.

BC: Yeah, real tiny. Yeah, like a miniature of going over to Arches National Park or some other, Mexican Hat rock or something like that, only on a miniature scale. Very...real intriguing.

Moqui Canyon was interesting. One thing I remember there was all the quicksand going up the creek. Gosh, you'd just sink down. We had fun playing in it. Then there were Indian ruins up there and very lush canyon as far as vegetation. I guess that's one of the things that was really great about Glen Canyon was all the riverine type of vegetation that was in all the side canyons, even after the...

TM: What did you see there? What type of vegetation did you see both along the main Colorado and then up the side canyons?

BC: The main Colorado, of course, you had an invasion of tamarisk somewhat, just like you did in the Grand Canyon, but you had other willows and those types of things. You went up the side canyons, you could see cottonwood trees. Redbud is what I really remember a lot. It was the first time I'd ever seen Redbud was when I was there. They're really a beautiful...probably my favorite tree. And then rushes and reeds and things like that. It was just unusual. I remember at Moqui Canyon climbing up on this rock above camp and kind of sliding down and somebody saying, "Well, that's why they call it slickrock." It wasn't a controlled... It was more a controlled crash than the way I wanted it to be.

Other things that I remember were just the...I guess the camaraderie of being on a raft going down. That's something that's interesting. I'm trying to remember... We had two rafts, two large pontoons. I think they were probably 33-footers, maybe. They were J-rigs. Some of the people put tarps up and things like that when we were having this rain and wind storm and they had like a flag on one of them. It was kind of comical. I don't know, you do get, I guess, the same type of thing at Lake Powell. I always said, "If you want to get divorced, you go on a houseboat trip up Lake Powell." [laughter] 'Cause there were so many people that had started as friends or even husbands and wives it seemed like and by the time they got to Rainbow Bridge they were arguing and fighting and wanting to go back home and everything. There's something about the dynamics of that whole thing.

TM: Do you remember the time of year when you did that Glen Canyon trip in 1963? The month?

BC: I believe it was in April because it was in spring break at school. I usually tried to do something, go someplace if I could, if my parents would allow me to go someplace during spring break. So I went to Glen Canyon in '63. In '64 I believe it was, I went to Havasupai with the local YMCA from my area. I don't remember what I did my senior year, I guess I didn't do anything. [laughter]

TM: Okay, still staying with Glen Canyon for just a little longer. Did you see the river, the water rising? I mean from...toward the end of your trip, like the last night. Or did you go on a hike maybe up to Rainbow Bridge and did you come back and...?

BC: It did start to rise that last night. We stayed at Navajo Canyon. That night, I think it was, the water started to come up. As we went further south on the Colorado there, the beaches were pretty much gone...starting to disappear. That was really sad. Everybody looked at that and knew what was happening. Knew that all that we had seen in the last week was all going to be drowned, or the majority of it was. So it was just kind of a sad, sort of morose time as everybody headed out.

TM: Yeah. Did you see any other river groups there at the time? Did you see anyone else down there? In April, it was a little early for the regular boating season.

BC: One of the things we saw, this was really kind of crazy... When we were at Music Temple we saw water skiers. People came upriver. Because the river was in flood because it was spring, they came up river and were water skiing right in front of where we were camped there at Music Temple. I don't know if it was Art Greene, probably an Art Greene tour, something like that. I'm thinking we saw other boaters on the river, but I don't remember. That's not something that's real vivid in my mind. I'm thinking there were very few.

TM: Okay, and then... I'm sorry, go ahead.

BC: I was going to say, one of the other things that was kind interesting about Glen Canyon was the accessibility of a lot of these really beautiful side canyons. It seemed like they just came right down to the river. You could go in and see places without having to do a tremendous amount of canyoneering initially. As the lake waters rose, things started to change dramatically. There was a period of time where it opened up. When the lake was coming up it opened up a lot of area, a lot of country, that was probably either inaccessible or very difficult to get to by people that were in rafts from the river. Then as the lake would drop then you'd have huge driftwood piles and mud debris in front of access points. When I was at Glen Canyon as a ranger...

[Beep]

BC:...I'd go up some of these side canyons. For example, Forbidding Canyon. I remember going up there. It goes into Bridge Canyon, or maybe it's the other way around.

[Beep]

TM: Yes, goes into Bridge Canyon. That's right.

BC: Right, and when you got up to the end there it was just a sea of driftwood. You couldn't get through the driftwood to access the side canyon because it had all filled in. Also you would get that infamous white ring around the lake as it dropped. But I went back...

TM: Let's hold off... If we can hold off a bit on these comparisons back and forth, because I know that you're going to end up back at Glen Canyon working for the Park Service. This is good stuff, but hold that thought. The last question I had about Glen Canyon, in 1963 you're there with Elliot Porter, he's going to write a book titled, "The Place No One Knew." My research has led me to see there were an awful lot of people that actually knew the place. It wasn't that Glen Canyon was unknown, it was more that it was like the Tennessee Valley Authority. This change is going to happen like it or not. Was there any discussion at that trip, meaning Reclamation had passed the, I mean the Colorado Storage Act, there were a number of legislative pieces that had fallen together in the 1950s. Now the dam was being built, the gates were closed, I believe in March, so the water was coming up. At that point can you talk a little bit about what David Brower and Porter were saying on that trip?

BC: What they were doing, what?

TM: What they were saying, what they were thinking about on that river trip?

BC: Well, you know, I really can't read their minds. I know they were despondent over what was happening and I think probably frustrated and were looking at additional judicial things that could at least prevent or slow the filling of the reservoir. The Rainbow Bridge National Monument and the flooding under the bridge became quite a controversy. For many years... When I was at Glen Canyon, I remember they had set a limit on how high the reservoir, I don't remember what the exact elevation was, but how high the water could come. It couldn't go...could not go under the bridge. That changed when I was at Glen Canyon. That was kind of the rallying cry for a while. Of course they were afraid of water inundation and eroding the buttresses on the bridge and having it collapse.

TM: Right. How did that trip change you when you got back to San Francisco? We were talking, you said you were a sophomore in high school. Did that...was it...hey, you're a sophomore in high school was it just "that was a fun trip" or did it affect you in one way or another?

BC: Yeah, I think it affected me a lot. I became active at least in finding out information about environmental things that were going on in the country and in the Bay Area. I remember attending several...went to a wilderness conference in San Francisco right after the Wilderness Act was enacted.

TM: 1964, passage of the Wilderness Act.

BC: Yeah, and those types of things. I think I probably things I wrote in school in classes probably reflected my interest in environmental issues and those types of things.

TM: Okay, and then it sounds like your next outing heading east off into the eastern desert, was to Havasu the next year?

BC: Went to Havasu the next year. I found out that the local YMCA was going to Havasu Canyon. I didn't have a real, I guess, a real...any knowledge of Havasu other than I'd seen a few pictures, looked like a pretty place. It was at the Grand Canyon and I had this interest in the Grand Canyon. I went down and asked if I could go on this trip. I hadn't been one that had been in their club or anything very much, but I talked my way into this trip. We were able to go to... I think it was a 2-day drive there. I remember we

slept in a park in one of the towns, must of been Kingman or something, overnight and then the next day we drove up. Got up to Hualapai Hilltop early in the morning and was still right about dawn.

Then we headed down into the canyon. My daughter, she's now almost 30 years old, she just went down to Havasu about a month ago. It's become the place to go. But when I was there it was still a little bit undiscovered and you would... After you climbed down into the canyon and hiked through the sand down all the way to Havasu, you got there, you went into the local store, the general store there, and you paid your whatever it was. I think it was \$7 or \$8 to cross the reservation. Then we went down to the campground. It's a couple miles down to the area between Havasu and Mooney Falls there where the campground was. That was actually, at that time, and even when I worked at the Canyon, that was Grand Canyon National Park. It was a real, kind of a crazy jurisdictional deal. They started out I think it was in the Coconino National Forest, then you go into the National Park, and then you go into the reservation, then they go back into the National Park.

So we camped out and it was just absolutely breathtaking. The color of the water down there was absolutely unbelievable. The contrast between the water color and the bright orange cliffs, it just takes your breath away. One thing I remember about it was it was in the spring again, March or April. The daytimes were beautiful, little bit cool, but at night it rained every night we were down there. It would just start raining. The first 2 nights, I slept out in the rain just in my sleeping bag and during the day I went over and put my sleeping bag next to the fire that they have there. Dried it out and was stupid enough to do it all over again the next night. The 3rd night someone mentioned that there were some caves across the creek. So I waded across the creek about time to get ready for dinner and everything. Half the group or more were over there in those caves trying to stay dry that night. So we slept in the caves during the night. We made 2 hikes while I was there. One was back to the Supai... Near the Supai Village there's a little Indian cemetery there.

TM: Yes, up Carbonite Canyon, that's right.

BC: Yeah, and you can hike up to the side of that...onto the slickrock and up and you end up on the cliffs above Havasu Canyon. You can hike for miles there.

TM: Right, top of the Redwall.

BC: Yeah, on top of the Redwall. We hiked down about as far as Beaver Falls, maybe a little bit further. Then another day... That was the main activity of the trip was to hike to the Colorado River. Climb down through the caves and the cables and chains and whatnot there, down to the base of Mooney Falls. Then make a, I don't know, half dozen or so crossings of the creek down to the mouth of the creek. That was a really interesting experience. I remember my clothes turning kind of blackish from the travertine, I guess, in the water or maybe it was just from the dirt and not changing my clothes. I'm not sure what it was. Anyway, got down to the mouth of the creek and so interesting to see that turquoise blue water mix in with the brown of the Colorado River. Lots of more quicksand there at the mouth of the creek.

TM: Did you notice a bunch of fish at the mouth there in the blue water?

BC: I did not, no. They may or may not have been there, but I don't remember. Is that something you've seen?

TM: Yeah, more recently. That's why I'm asking. I thought, hmm, I wonder if that's an artifact. If that's a recent event.

BC: Yeah, I don't know. It's nothing that I noticed at the time.

TM: Okay.

BC: So that was a really interesting experience. One of the really crazy things that happened is the leader of the YMCA group, he was an older man, he had been down there many, many times and...

TM: His name?

BC: I don't remember his name, it's been so long ago.

TM: Okay.

BC: But when I worked at the Grand Canyon, I spent about 2 months in a ranger capacity down at Supai, because it was still a National Park. My first trip in, I'll never forget, I walked...I was just down below/slightly below the village walking along and who should come walking up the trail but this YMCA leader. [laughter] The roles had changed a lot, this was about 5-6 years later. We got to talking and he said, "You know," he said, "this is my last trip." He said, "It's changed so much." He says, "It's not like it was when you were down here." He said, "There's just so many people now and the..."

TM: This would've been 1969?

BC: "...the trash and everything is just getting terrible down here." Just the numbers of people. The atmosphere of the place had changed an awful lot.

TM: That was 1969?

BC: No, I'm guessing...let's see...'69...yeah, it was. It was 1969, because it was fall. Let's see. Let me think again. It might have been the spring of '70. Because it was... I think it probably was the spring of 1970 because I... What had happened is the... They had a spring on the wall there of the canyon where they got fresh water. There was a Boy Scout troop that went down to Havasu and they all got sick. Now, whether they drank creek water, you know, or whether the water from the spring was contaminated, I don't know, but they put a chlorinator on the spring or iodinator, I guess it was. They had to have that serviced all the time so that was the reason that I was going down there, to be sure that the water supply was healthy so the campers could drink it.

TM: Let's hold that. Again, if we can hold the discussion of when you're in the Park Service in Havasu Park. Because I'm going to want to ask you, I got a couple names of people working for the Park and what were your duties at the time. There's going to be a whole much more discussion about that. But just you walking down there with a backpack with the other YMCA group that you weren't really connected with, led by this older gentleman who knew the place really well. I'd love to know his name and what his history in there was. What else do you recall from that '64 trip? Hiked down to the river, hiked along the top. Do you remember the ranger, the name of the ranger there in '60, '64 that was on duty there?

BC: There wasn't a ranger. There wasn't... I didn't see any Park Service presence down there. There was no... When I was down there later on, there was a tent and then later there was a little wooden cabin of sorts. Bit no, there was nothing down there. You went through the village, you paid your \$7-\$8, you hiked down and sort of free-camped around. There were no picnic tables, I don't believe. Well, I guess

there were, I guess there were picnic tables. There were just very few of them. I think we just had one for our campsite there. I think they had outhouses down there at that time. But it was pretty primitive.

TM: Okay...but beautiful.

BC: Beautiful, but primitive, yeah. Which goes together sometimes. [laughter]

TM: So you're a junior in high school at this time?

BC: I was a junior at that time, yeah.

TM: So you've been in Glen Canyon in '63, down to Havasu in '64. I can just think as a student in your teens that these would be fairly...the word I'm looking for is...they could be fairly powerful parts of forming your life.

BC: Well, sure. Obviously. I was really into environmental issues and I practically lived to hike, I mean at that time. I mentioned earlier that I had joined the Sierra Club and that sparked a lot of interest in environmentalism but also just getting out. I know I really struggled in high school finding, and that's always fascinated me, I just struggled to find somebody to go with me on a lot of these things. So that was one of the benefits of the Sierra Club, that you had instant friends by going on these different hikes and stuff. But I really did have trouble finding people to go with me. I finally got about 3, 2 or 3 guys that I could call up on a Thursday night and plan to do something on a Saturday or something like that. Mostly it was backpack. A couple of backpack trips I got people to go with me and hike something. Mount Diablo. But I did a lot of solo hiking and stuff.

TM: In '64? '65?

BC: Throughout my high school career there, from about the end of maybe my freshman year to my senior year and then on into college.

TM: Okay. Did you do any other adventures that you recall in 1964, '63/'64, '65 as a senior then in high school? Any other adventures that strike you?

BC: I'm trying to remember when I went to... I think I went to the Trinity Alps but that was a summer. That was more summer, not springtime. I went to Yosemite. Hiked up into the Little Yosemite one year, up in that part of...above Nevada Falls in Yosemite.

TM: Was that solo or with others?

BC: That was with another kid that came along. I had this friend named Donald Holm, H-O-L-M. He and I did a lot of Yosemite stuff. We did a lot of day hikes around. Up Yosemite Falls, across to the North Dome, down to Snow Creek and back around past Mirror Lake. I remember doing that one. And going up Glacier Point and down.

Then, let's see. We did do, with another friend from high school, a guy named Scott Stewart, he and I did a high Sierra trip. We went from Tuolumne Meadows up to Glen Aulin and way around to a place called Return Creek and Crescent Meadow...not Crescent Meadow...Matterhorn. I think it was Matterhorn Meadow, something like that. Then we ended up down at a place called Pate Valley down on the Tuolumne River. I remember running out of water. It was really hot, it was like in August. We ran out of

water about halfway down this 3,000-foot descent, or whatever it was, down switchbacks and when we got to the Tuolumne River we just we threw our packs off and just submerged ourselves in the river to try to cool off and get something to drink. Then we hiked on up Waterwheel Falls and all that area back up to Tuolumne Meadow. That was a big adventure.

TM: Nice and this was '65?

BC: Probably '65. I was probably at least a junior or senior when we did that hike.

TM: Okay, and still without a car. How would you guys work out transport?

BC: Good question. [laughter] I think my parents dropped us off. I remember my dad took us up to the...in northern California there at the Trinity Alps. He dropped us off at this trailhead. We basically said, "Well, we'll see you in a week," and we took off. We managed to take the bus back from northern California back down to the Bay Area there, back home. But when we came down, this was with this friend Don Holm and I, we came out of the Trinity Alps and onto the main highway. I don't know how far we walked to get to Weaverville, but it was a really hot day. It was way up in the hundreds I remember and we're trudging along the road with our backpacks on. People are whizzing by in their cars and this guy stopped. He was a real old man, probably my age now, and he said, "Would you boys like a ride?" We said, "Of course!" So we got in the back of this car, and it was an old car, like something from the '50s or something or even older. I remember him driving into Weaverville and it was really unsettling because he kept talking to us and looking back over his shoulder at us while we're having this conversation as we're streaking down the road. As we were going into Weaverville, here goes the Greyhound bus to the east. That was the one we were supposed to be on. So we had to spend the night up in the chaparral above this service station that was also the bus station.

I remember laying in the sleeping bag and some types of bugs falling on our faces all night. Mosquitoes galore. It was really an awful night. Then we had to wait the entire day to get the eastbound bus and we... I guess, the bus wasn't due until the next day, that's what happened. We went down and there was a guy at the station. He was a shoe salesman, traveling shoe salesman. We were talking to the Greyhound driver, excuse me, the ticket agent, and he said, "Well, this guy's going down to Redding, maybe you could hitchhike a ride with him." So we said, "Well, okay." That sounded like a good idea to me and my friend. So I sat in the front seat, passenger seat, and my friend sat in the back. This guy drove like a maniac down the highway. We were scared to death as we went down the hill. I remember we went around a curve and I was kind of cramped clear up against the door and he says, "There's no brake over there, sonny." [laughter] We just kept going. We finally got into Redding. We didn't know exactly where the bus station was and he got really mad at us. I thought, "This is really getting creepy," so I said, "Just drop us off." We eventually found the bus station and got home, but it was...

TM: Yeah, the adventures in the wilderness are much more tame.

BC: Oh boy, yeah. The wilderness was tame compared to the ride down the mountain, that's for sure.

TM: So a week-long backpack as a high school senior, that's pretty good. You were still in Scouts, active in Scouts at the time?

BC: I probably was still a little bit, just tangentially, I think. I wasn't doing too much at that time with them I don't believe.

TM: And then, so as a senior in high school were you thinking, "I'm going to go to college and I'm going to...you know, I want to study a certain topic?"

BC: Well I was... Like I mentioned earlier, at about the age of about 9 I decided I wanted to be a Park Ranger. That seemed like a great thing. I was always interested in natural history and those types of things and the sciences. You always had this thing called "college prep" in high school, so most of my classes were academic. Yes, I knew I was going to go to college. I mean, that was...it was kind of a given. My mom was kind of the academic one in the family, as far as my mom and dad. My dad was the mechanical wizard. I didn't take a lot of shop classes and stuff like that, which I kind of regret now that I have to maintain a house and stuff like that. Although I'm pretty good at home repairs and stuff because I worked for the Park Service for 33 years.

Anyway, I remember my senior year I had to go in and see a counselor. I really didn't know what a counselor was and I still don't know what they do in high school, to tell you the truth. This was a woman. I went in and she was supposed to help me come up with a decision on where I might go school or those types of things. I remember she said, "Well, where are you wanting to go?" My mom wanted me to go to Cal Berkeley because she had gone to Cal Berkeley. She eventually got her degree, her Master's Degree, from Cal. In fact, we were going to Cal at the same time. I'd see her on campus and hide behind the bushes and wolf whistle at her or something.

TM: [laughter]

BC: It was really funny to see your mom on campus with you. Anyhow, to get back to what I was talking about, this counselor, says to me, she says, "Well..." She looked at my academic record and everything. She says, "I don't think you're smart enough to go to Cal." I said, "Oh?" She thought I should go to Diablo Valley Junior College. I thought, "Well, I don't want to go to Diablo Valley Junior College." So I went ahead and applied at Cal. I got accepted there and academically I did fine. But it's always been surprising to me why she was so discouraging. But that's life, you know. Everybody... [laughter]. So anyhow, I generally grade-wise and those types of things, I usually did really good in certain subjects and I did average in others.

TM: What was your declared major?

BC: Well, I started out as forestry and then, I had mentioned earlier, went up to this Forestry Camp in Northern California, got sick, had to drop out. After I dropped out, I got a job with the California Division of Highways as a flagman and also as a truck driver interviewer. That was an interesting job. That was all in front of the Oakland Coliseum. We were building an overpass there.

TM: What did you do as a truck driver interviewer?

BC: [laughter] Well, the truck drivers would come in and you would get up on the running boards of the truck and say, "Hi, I'm so and so and I am supposed to interview you." You'd ask them how many loads they'd done that day, how many hours they'd been working, I don't know, a bunch of questions that the Division of Highways want to ask you. I'd gotten this job because this Donald Holm, who was my hiking buddy, his dad was an engineer for the California Division of Highways. He was the head engineer of this project, so it's the old thing: not what you know, but who you know type of deal. A bunch of crazy stuff happened with that. I was talking to these truckers and most of them were fairly gruff anyway, guy says, "I was interviewed on the last job!" He puts it in gear and takes off and I'm racing down the highway on the running board of this 18-wheeler. I had to jump off in the dirt. So that evening when I finished work

and went into the office there, I just kind of casually mentioned this to the chief engineer that was my ride home anyway. He was not very happy with that driver so I think he got canned or something. But, you know, it was a pretty serious deal. I could've got killed, I guess.

TM: You bet, that's right. Wow.

BC: [laughter] I kind of lost my train of thought as to what we were talking about.

TM: This is your first year at University of California there in Berkeley. Your major was Forestry but as you mentioned they had summer camp and you got sick there.

BC: Then I decided, well, I've got two more years before I graduate so I've got to find some sort of degree to come up with. I ended up getting a degree in geography with kind of a minor in biology. That was what I ended up with as far as a degree. I thought, well, I can always teach school or something or it can't hurt me, after all I do have a degree. [laughter]

TM: Yeah, that's right.

BC: So I ended up going to work at Grand Canyon right after I graduated. I had one more quarter, I had to go back and finish up school.

TM: So let's talk about your university training a little bit. You mentioned that you... We talked before we started this interview that you ended up in ROTC and this would be during the late '60s in California. What was that like?

BC: Well, my dad... The Vietnam War was raging at the time. You could tell by all the protests and everything else that were going on, too. My dad suggested to me, he said "Why don't you get into ROTC, because it's better to go in as an officer than as an enlisted man." Which was good advice. My dad always had good advice. He said, "If you don't like it after a semester or so you can drop out, drop the course." So I went into the ROTC program there. There was a lot of polishing of brass buttons and keeping your uniform looking good and lots of parading around and marching. Then there were classroom things, they held it in the gymnasium, in classrooms in the gymnasium. It was okay, but it wasn't something that I wanted to do for 4 years. So after a semester or so, I went ahead and dropped out of the ROTC program. But walking across campus, with all the anti-war people and everything, I don't remember anybody ever really giving me a bad time. You probably got a few looks, but no one ever said anything negative or anything like that. They did burn down the Navy ROTC building when I was there. Then of course there were all kinds of riots. I think that was my freshman year I did that.

TM: These would've been the Oakland riots, is that right?

BC: Oh boy, there was more than that. There was always protests, you know, on a daily basis. But there was some real serious riots. There was the one where they marched from the Cal campus down to the Oakland city line and had confrontation with the Oakland PD and all. Then later on...

TM: Did you participate in that? What were your thoughts of kind of what was happening there? You certainly were interested in environmental awareness and in lands. You want to work for the Park Service, it's been an inspiration for you, and all of this turmoil is happening around you.

BC: I had several thoughts. One was my parents were paying for me to get an education at Cal. That was one of my thoughts. I was kind of insulated somewhat from a lot of the riotous activity that was taking place because most of my classes, even in forestry, both forestry and geography, were on the north side of campus. It would be nice and quiet there and there'd be something raging in the Sproul Plaza. The whole Vietnam experience was very confusing to me as to why we were over there, what we were doing, and seeing all the images on the national news and everything. I really wasn't very politically active. I was more thinking about, I want to get a 4-year...get through college. I want to be able to go out, get a job, and have a family. Those types of things. And I do want to work for Park Service, Forest Service, BLM, one of these agencies. That was my goal. My goal was never to get involved in the politics of the time. I really didn't think much of that.

TM: All right. So how is it that you came to be employed by the Park Service?

BC: My last year, as a senior, before I graduated, the year before being 1969, I took a first-aid class at Cal. I think that was helpful to me. When I was in high school, I had taken a career day...been involved in a career day. I wanted a mentor that was involved in the Forest Service or Park Service, BLM, some environmental...excuse me, some agency that is in the outdoors there. They didn't have anybody. They took me and had me go with a guy who had a lab where they made allergens for different kinds of things. Like if you're allergic to grass, they would synthesize some kind of liquid that you could use to desensitize yourself against that. They said, "Well, this was the closest we could get of being an out-of-door thing."

TM: An allergen chemist, yeah, okay! [laughing]

BC: Allergen chemist. The guy kept apologizing. I said, "It's interesting. I've got allergies anyway so this is still interesting to me." After that was all over, it had been a month or so, I got a phone call at home from a guy that lived just on the next block over. He was the father of a girl named Caroline Bradshaw. She was in my graduating class at Pleasant Hill High School where I went to school. He introduced himself. He says, "I work at the U.S. Forest Service in San Francisco at the Regional Office," and he said, "They told me that you had wanted to talk to somebody about that on the Career Day and unfortunately I couldn't participate in it at the time." He says, "I'd be glad to talk to you. Are you available now?" I said, "Sure." So he came over to my house. We stood in the backyard talking about jobs in the Forest Service. One of the things that he said that was really critical, and this was the way it was at the time, they didn't have JobsUSA or anything, he said, "You have to have your application in by..." I think it was the 15th of January or something like that. Even when I was hiring people years later, I would get calls in the spring when people think that jobs are going to be available and you should've applied 4 or 5 months earlier. So that was a critical piece of information. I remembered that when I was a senior in college. I put in applications at two Parks. I put in one at Grand Canyon National Park as a Seasonal Ranger and then I put in one at Sequoia/King's. I got accepted for both, but the Sequoia one came after I had already had accepted the Grand Canyon position. I still remember, I was in the kitchen of our house and I got this phone call. The guy says, "Hi. My name's Richard McLaren," he says, "I'm the Chief Ranger at Grand Canyon National Park." He went on and he talked and he talked and talked. I don't remember very much of what he said, except he said, "Would you like to be a Seasonal Park Ranger at Grand Canyon?" and I said, "Yeah, of course."

TM: Cool!

BC: So it was really a...

TM: Was that the spring then of '69?

BC: '69 yeah, I started. The call came probably I'm guessing in mid-May to late-May. My EOD date, or the day I could Enter-on-Duty date, that I had put down was like the 15th of June, so it was quite late in the season. I'm speculating that one of two things happened. Either someone bailed on them or they came into some extra money and they were able to hire me. Dick McLaren was really a great guy. He was very calm. He was an old-time Park ranger. He was the Chief Ranger at the time at the Park. He was just a real gentleman. Years later, I remember going to Rocky Mountain National Park for some training. The training was at McLaren Hall and there was a picture of him and his two brothers, Fred and Burt. It was really cool to see that. I remember him telling me one time, "Bob," he says, "I've never been out of the National Parks more than 2 weeks at a time. I've always lived in a National Park." 'Cause his dad was in the Park and then he was second generation Park Service. A lot of things happened with his position later on. We can go into that later if you want.

TM: Yeah, it'll be good to know who was assigned to what, that you recall, as you go through your recounting. So Dick calls and says, "Do you want the job?" You say, "Yes, please."

BC: Absolutely, yeah.

TM: Your EOD is the 15th of June. How did you get to the South Rim of Grand Canyon?

BC: Well, there were a couple other things maybe I could talk about first.

TM: Yes, please.

BC: First of all, I had to get a uniform. In those days Albert & Ferguson was one of the big... There were two suppliers of uniforms. Albert & Ferguson was in Merced, California. I was going to mail order stuff and my dad said, he says, "Heck, I'll drive you down there. We'll drive down to Merced and you can get fitted in the store." I thought, "Well, this is great." So we drove down one afternoon and just showed up. It was kind of a little...a small store. It was surprising they were a supplier for the whole Service, but I guess the Service was smaller at the time, too. But got all fitted up. They hemmed up everything. They actually sewed everything up right there, you know.

TM: Just tailor made it. Wow.

BC: It was tailor made. One of the things that happened is we got ready to choose a tie. He says, "Now do you want the clip-on tie?" I said, "No, I want a regular tie." He says, "Are you sure you want a regular tie?" I said, "Well, what do you mean?" He said, "Well," he said, "in the type of work you're doing in a big park like Grand Canyon," he said, "somebody might just grab that tie while you're talking to them in their car and drive away." [laughter] I said, "I'll take the clip-on. I'll take the clip-on tie!"

TM: [laughter]

BC: So he knew enough about issues that were going on in the Parks at the time to make that wise decision. So then to get to the Grand Canyon, it was an interesting thing that happened. I had a 1959 Volkswagen beetle. It was sea mist green just like the Park Service painted everything practically. A little different shade maybe. I had it parked in the underground garage near my dormitory at Cal. You know, I didn't drive the car every day. I might drive it weekly or something like that because I walked everywhere around the campus. I go out to get my car and I start looking and I look and I look. I looked

for several hours and I could not find my car. I knew where I'd parked it. It wasn't there. It had been stolen. Now I don't have a car to get to Grand Canyon so my dad loaned me his 1964 or '65 black VW bug. We took the front seat out...or the passenger seat out, and then I put all the junk in there I thought I would need for a summer and away I went. Just this morning I was looking at some photographs here. I have a photograph of my granddad at the Grand Canyon. He and my mom... The car was found in San Francisco. They had stripped a bunch of stuff out of it but it still worked. So they drove that VW back to the Grand Canyon and exchanged it for my dad's VW which they drove back to the Bay Area.

TM: Nice.

BC: This took place in probably...I'm thinking in July...late July when they found the car. That was kind of an inauspicious beginning of my career at the Canyon there.

TM: Well, you had a good-fitting uniform and that...

BC: That's right. And you know, I made \$2.36 an hour so all that money went to keeping that uniform in good shape. I would go over to the Fred Harvey laundry and I would have them wash and press my shirts. We had to wear... The uniform was awful to wear on the South Rim, because it's 85 maybe even 90 degrees up there during the summer. We had to wear the heavyweight wool pants, dress pants, with the Corfam Oxford shoes. Then a long sleeve shirt and the felt premium beaver hat. Then we had an "Ike" jacket that we wore for evening or when it started to get cool. So you were in a Class A...oh, and you had to have your tie on...in a Class A uniform all the time and it was in un-airconditioned patrol cars going around. So it was pretty awful. I think because I had to go through it throughout my career, I kind of insisted that my people when they wanted to wear shorts, I said "Well, you can wear shorts in the Black Canyon or when you're on a patrol boat." I did let them wear Levi's. [laughter]

TM: So do you remember the Fred Harvey laundry, there was a woman working there named Mary Hoover?

BC: That name sounds familiar, but I don't know anything about her. Yeah.

TM: Of course, Buford Belgard. These were people that were running the...

BC: Yeah, Buford Belgard, uh huh.

TM: ...running the laundry. Who else did you make friends with that first summer there?

BC: Mostly the seasonal rangers that I worked with...

TM: Who were they?

BC: ...and then some of the permanent rangers. There was a group of permanent rangers that were actually intake, intake rangers. They had just gone through the training center. They weren't necessarily new to the Park Service, but they were new to being permanent rangers.

TM: So they had gone through the Albright...was that still at Albright?

BC: Albright Training Center.

TM: Okay.

BC: Mm hmm. Albright Training Center.

TM: Because this would...hang on, I'm going to jump in here and ask for some clarification. The Yosemite...is it the Yosemite riots. This was... The Chief Ranger at the time, I believe, was a guy named Richard Marks...

BC: Mm, hmm.

TM: ...and I can't place that year-wise. Was that...this was...

BC: That was '71, I believe.

TM: Okay, so it's coming up. It hasn't happened yet.

BC: It hasn't happened yet, no.

TM: At this point then, as a ranger, you mentioned being in a patrol car. Can you talk about the duties in that summer of 1969, the duties of your job?

BC: Yeah. Of course I started on the South Rim rather than Phantom Ranch. I was on the South Rim for that first year. From June 15 to about the 1st of November was the period of time I worked. I had a bunch of... It was still kind of very much a generalist position. I started out... Probably one of the best jobs I ever had it was called Rim Patrol. They had to cancel that part-way into the summer because they didn't have the funds to continue to do it. But what you would do, you had the task of walking from like Maricopa Point back all the way to Yavapai Museum. That was kind of your area of patrol, but mostly from the Bright Angel trailhead over to Yavapai. 'Course, most of the activity really was around Bright Angel Lodge, the El Tovar Hotel and all that area. You just marched up and down there. Was kind of a meet 'n greet type position. There were lots of lost kids. Any issue that came up in the lodges, first aid or...

TM: Answered questions.

BC: Yeah.

TM: Pointed out geographical features.

BC: Yeah, you were just sort of almost a naturalist, but still you were supposed to be enforcing rules and regs and any kind of life/health/safety issues that came up you could deal with those. That only lasted about 2 weeks.

TM: [laughter]

BC: Then they kind of ran out of money, I guess. I might have gone on one more pay period or so. Then I worked the entrance station for a while. That was pretty brutal. It was fun in that you got to greet people and you got a lot of crazy questions and all that, but you inhaled all of that carbon monoxide all day. I remember going home with just absolute splitting headaches and they... Hopefully design of entrance stations is a little better nowadays where they have some kind of positive pressure in there to

keep all that out of your nostrils. I had lots of unusual contacts at the entrance station. It was a fun job, if you let it be a fun job.

TM: Tell me about it.

BC: Well, I had questions like...you'd have questions like "What time do they light the Canyon at night?" or "What kind of uniforms do the cattle guards wear?"

TM: [laughter]

BC: I had a guy come in one time and he says, "Where's the Dip?" D-I-P. I said, "The what?" He said, "Where's the Dip?" I said, "Do you mean the Canyon?" He says, "Yeah, the Dip." I said, "Well it's ahead." At this time, the entrance station was right where the service road is that goes to the hospital clinic. It wasn't out where it is now. So I said, "Well, it's one mile ahead." And he said, "Well, which side of the road's it on?" I said, "Don't worry, you'll know it when you see it." [laughter]

TM: Wow. Can you describe that building for me, because this was, as you mentioned, this was up what's called Center Road.

BC: Yeah, Center Road now.

TM: And it was just where today's high school and school are. It was right near that intersection, I guess, of Albright. The Albright Training Center had been built, but new. So how far were you from the Albright Center?

BC: Oh probably... The entrance station was on the main road right where you turn at Center there, I guess you'd be turning to the left. There were 2 buildings. One was sort of a permanent structure that was...it was 2 rooms and it had a small bathroom, as I recall. Let's see...did it have a bathroom? No, it did not have a bathroom. [laughter] It had 2 rooms. One was the contact area and then the back room was where you could kind of get away for a few minutes if you had to count money or those types of things. And then the other booth was just a single kind of a box.

TM: So there were 2 lanes then?

BC: Yes, there were 2 lanes and then they had this sort of guardrail set up in front where they had metal posts into the ground to kind of protect the buildings from oncoming traffic and also separate the lanes. The buses would go along around the far building and then cars and even motorhomes could come through between the two buildings. The main building was used most of the time. One of the funny things they had is they had this safe in there. This thing was huge, I mean, it must've weighed a thousand pounds and had a big steel door on it. When I first got there they had a pistol in there in case we got robbed. Then someone realized they have this pistol in there but they've got people that are not trained to use it. A lot of the people that were working the entrance station probably never shot a gun. So they thought, "That's probably not a good thing." So they took that out after a while and we just used the safe for what it's usually intended for. To put the remittances and those types of things in.

TM: So I'm just thinking about that now. If you did need to go to the bathroom, down Center, if you walk down Center the gas station was down there. Is that right?

BC: Well, that's quite a ways down, yeah.

TM: That was a ways down, okay.

BC: The entrance station's at least a...it's almost a mile, or half mile anyway, from the clinic...

TM: From Park headquarters...

BC: ...and then the high school and all that. It was probably a mile.

TM: ...where the store was. Alright, so it's a ways out. Okay.

BC: It's quite a ways. I don't remember what the bathroom situation was. [laughter] I think there was a little outhouse in the woods there or something that we used.

TM: And you were responsible for your cash drawer, which in later years would become quite the issue.

BC: Oh, yeah.

TM: People needed to be financially responsible for large amounts of money.

BC: That's right. There were some shenanigans going on. We had one man, I won't tell you his name, he was the lead fee collector and he told us...he said we were to take money. They had an old vacuum cleaner in there and it had a bag in it. So if we had an overage, he told us, "Take the money from the overage and put it in that vacuum cleaner bag." You had the inner and outer bag, you put the money between the two bags. You know, we were kind of dumb and thought, "Well, that's a good idea." Then use that money. If you had an underage, then you could take the money and make sure your receipts balanced out and then you didn't have to fill out a bunch of other paperwork and stuff.

TM: [laughter]

BC: The only problem that I heard was happening is that the amount of impress cash, so to speak, would disappear. This guy finally...

TM: Yeah! The janitors at night that would turn on the vacuum cleaner would go, "Hey, look at this!"

BC: [laughter] Look at this! Wow. But eventually someone found out that he was skimming the till, so to speak. I think he went jail for it. That was a year or two later. Might have been even after I left. The buildings were...they were kind of a desert pink color, horrible looking color they painted them.

TM: Oh wow. Were they part of the Mission 66?

BC: Another thing that would happen... What was that?

TM: Were they a part of the Mission 66 construction?

BC: They could've been, but they weren't very big. They weren't very large buildings. They were quite small.

TM: Did you have a door? Would you walk right out to the people or were you sitting on a chair and spun around through the window?

BC: We had a window. We had a window, yeah. Then the exit door was on the outbound traffic lane side. So if you actually had to go out and talk with somebody outside, you had to go clear around the building. But one of the interesting things that would happen is that the...well, there were two things. One is that in those days we let foreign tourists into the Park for free.

TM: Oh!

BC: If you were from a foreign country, you got in free. It was some sort of promotion that either Grand Canyon Park was doing or the Southwest or Western Region was doing or the National Park Service was doing as a whole, I don't know. Anyway, we let all the foreign tourists in. Of course, nowadays we're paying the price for that, because they love the Parks almost more than the Americans do. As far as crowding, that's who a lot of the folks are. Then another interesting thing what happened is the Navajo Indians or other Indian groups would come into the entrance station. I always remember they would come up...and there were several of them...I saw them repeat it several times, the same group. They would stop at the entrance station and they would not look at you. They would look straight ahead. You would say, "\$7 please," and they wouldn't say anything, wouldn't move. You'd say, "\$7 please." Then finally, I'd say, "Oh, go on in," and they'd take off. They were people that were using the Park as an access, probably to go to Cameron rather than going the longer way around.

TM: Well, also weren't there Native Americans living in Supai Camp at the time, which was...

BC: Well, they were, but they would have stickers and stuff on their cars. These were unmarked cars so they were just... They might have been visiting. Of course if you were a visitor to someone who lived in the Park, you'd didn't have to pay to enter the Park anyway.

TM: Right.

BC: You do have a communications problem with foreign visitors and sometimes with American Indians.

TM: I see. Okay. So this was... It was only a couple of weeks into July that you were sent out to the entrance station, is that right?

BC: Seems like that. Yeah, I was at the entrance station at least several tours. I was also doing both daytime and nighttime...well, I didn't do nighttime patrols until a little later on. I did a lot of campground...also had campground patrol. I liked that. You got to talk to a lot of the people. You'd get the campground organized, get people out of the dirt and onto the asphalt pads and whatnot. We had a few people that were problematic. I remember we had one guy that was... He had taken a cable and hooked into the electric system on one of the bathrooms and had a lightbulb in his tent.

TM: [laughter]

BC: He was kind of a violent individual and they were trying to catch him with the... I remember we went over to his tent and we found the lightbulb but couldn't find him. Then he showed up at the camper service and he was jumping over the turnstile or whatever to get in to take a shower without paying. The Fred Harvey manager called on him and we finally took him to jail. So we finally... Then we went over and disconnected his electrical system. [laughter]

TM: What do you recall about the jail at the time and the judge at the time?

BC: The jail was located down near where the old warehouse and the paint shop and the farrier – the blacksmith shop – was. It was a little small building. It's still there, I saw it here a few weeks ago when I was up at the Canyon. It was just a 2-room affair. Had kind of a foyer area that went clear across the building and then the jail cell was on the right. It was just a single cell. It was painted this awful green color. I think there was a little desk with a light out in the foyer area and then the cell itself was pretty spartan. It had a toilet and a little bed and that was about it and lots of graffiti on the walls. I think there was one window in the jail cell. It was barred up. I guess it was after I left, they had a guy break out of there. His buddies came, they broke into the blacksmith shop, got some tools, went over, took the screen off of the window, and broke him out. Eventually they were picked up in New Mexico or something and returned to the Park. They got time served or something like that. It wasn't... but we weren't very happy about it.

There was a United States magistrate... Oh boy, trying to remember his name now. We called him Mumbles I remember, but I can't remember his real name. [laughter]

TM: Did he mumble?

BC: He mumbled, yeah. Later on there was a Justice of the Peace, Morell Roberts was his name, and he handled state cases. We were all, later on after you got trained a little bit, deputized by Coconino County so you could write a state ticket and go before the Justice of the Peace. For most of our cases, though, we went before the U.S. Magistrate.

TM: What else do you remember about Mumbles?

BC: [laughter] Well, he had a larger nose, it was very red, and we always accused him of being an alcoholic. It seemed hypocritical that he was passing judgment on drunk drivers when he had a serious issue himself.

TM: Well, or did he just have a red nose? [laughter]

BC: He was still pretty fair. He didn't favor necessarily one side or the other. I had several cases before him and I was pretty satisfied with the judgments.

TM: Okay. I mean, it's interesting because it would seem as though... How did his housing work?

BC: Well, he lived in Park housing, had a wife and daughter. I don't know how they... There was probably just an exchange of money between agencies, the judicial department...

TM: Between the Department of Justice...

BC: ...and the Park Service, I'm guessing. 'Cause there were a lot of people that lived in Park housing over the years that weren't Park employees.

TM: Right. And certainly you guys would've been working closely with him, and the offenders were sort of a revolving door, if you will, of just people that would come and go.

BC: Yeah, pretty much, although probably the biggest problem that you have is that the majority of the violators were concession employees. We had the most trouble with concession employees. The most serious offences were usually with concession employees.

TM: Okay.

BC: So that's something that's kind of forgotten, I think. You think of the Park visitors being the bad guys where it really is a lot of problems with concession. Part of it had to do with the hiring practices of Fred Harvey and probably others in that they don't pay that well and they get people that are just transient anyway. You show up and you ask for a job and they'd give them a job. Could be a dishwasher or something. The way they would handle it is that people would go down to the Fred Harvey general offices, they'd get a fingerprint card, they'd come up to the District Ranger Office and then we would fingerprint them. That was another one of my jobs. You would fingerprint individuals and then they'd send those cards off to the FBI. Then they would come back, sometimes it wasn't a very fast process so it might be a month or more. Then you would get the rap sheet on some of these people and there were some really bad actors. I remember one we... Ken Hulick and I were out patrolling late at night and this guy... We're sitting at the stop sign at Center Street, or near there where we could observe the stop sign, and this guy blew through the stop sign and we stopped him. I think Ken wrote him a ticket. The guy had been convicted of manslaughter and all kinds of bad stuff. So there were really some bad people. Now, as a general rule, they weren't, but there were always a few in there that were not good people.

I got ready to go over and get a haircut one time my first summer, I remember. My boss said "Bob," he says, "Your hair's getting too long. You get your haircut on your next days off." I said, "Okay, where's a good place to go?" He said, "Why don't you go over to the Bright Angel Lodge? There's a barber over there, his name's Chet. You can get a haircut and you'll be all fixed up." "Okay." So I go over to the Bright Angel Lodge on my day off and I go to the barbershop and the barbershop's closed. So I go to the main bellhop there and I said, "What's the deal with the barbershop? Why is it closed?" They said, "Well, the barber found out the sheriff was after him and he split town." So I had to go to Williams to get my haircut. I got a terrible haircut, came back, and my boss said, "Oh, you look great, Bob."

TM & BC: [laughter]

TM: Oh, my gosh.

BC: Another job that I had that first summer we were talking about, was the midnight-to-8:00 shift. That was really brutal for me. I've never been one... Like 10/10:30 I like to go to sleep, get up early. That's kind of my biological clock. But I had to work midnight to 8:00. Your job was to go to the South Rim District Office there, which is the big log building near the old Babbitt store and post office. I think it's a little community center maybe now, it's kind of a crossroads across from the Bright Angel Lodge.

TM: It's still a ranger operations. Actually they may have moved out...

BC: Yeah, ranger operations. That's also where the U.S. Magistrate and the Justice of the Peace had their offices there, was in that building.

TM: So hang on a second. Let's talk about just locations and geography for a minute here. The Park headquarters for many years was that log building. Across the street from that, to the west, was the Babbitt Store, the general store.

BC: Right.

TM: Just further west of that was the post office.

BC: Correct.

TM: So then eventually the post office became the Magistrate's courthouse.

BC: Uh huh.

TM: And the administration the Park headquarters was moved over by the Shrine of the Ages, that area. When you were there in '69, what was still the lay of the land? Where was Park headquarters?

BC: The Babbitt store was in the location that you mentioned and the post office was functioning. A parking lot in front of both of them.

TM: Right next to it.

BC: Then across the street was the...they called it the South Rim District Ranger Office. That was the downstairs and then upstairs there were a couple of rooms that we used or rangers used upstairs. Then there were basically the courtrooms for the Magistrate and the Justice of the Peace in that building. Then the Fred Harvey office... I'm sorry what?

TM: So Mumbles would have been in there. That was his office up there?

BC: Mumbles was up there, yeah. And Judge Morell...let's see, what did I say his name was? Morell Roberts was there.

TM: Is that M-O-R-A-L Roberts?

BC: M-O-double R-E-L, I believe. No one R. M-O-R-E-L-L, I believe and then Roberts. I don't know why I can't remember the Magistrate's name, but I can't.

TM: Well, maybe we'll talk again and you can.

BC: The rest of the residences and stuff were up kind of to the south, the high school to the southwest there. The maintenance shop...

TM: So the Park Headquarters...

BC: A lot of it's very similar. The training center is across from the maintenance yard. There were a series of apartments. That was where I first lived, was in the training center apartments because they weren't being used by the training center at the time and the Park would use that as housing.

TM: They were 2-story apartments and you were probably one of the upstairs or downstairs apartments on the far...

BC: I had an upstairs apartment, yeah.

TM: ...west end, far west wing there.

BC: Right. Then later on in the fall, when the trainees arrived, I moved to what was called a transa home. When I drove by a couple weeks ago it wasn't there anymore. It was kind of a modular trailer-type affair. They had 5 of us in it, 5 guys in there in this little thing. We all had different jobs. Some of them were

trail crew, some of them were something else, and I was a park ranger so we would get up at different hours and everybody would gripe about everybody else getting up and making a lot of noise.

TM: Making noise, yeah.

BC: It was crazy. Then later on I moved up to Hermit Circle to a little apartment. That was all just within that one season there. I had three different places in one season. [laughter]

TM: Wow. The Hermit Circle apartment, that was a huge step up. It seems like the Albright apartments were better than a trailer but the Hermit Circle apartment was better than Albright.

BC: Yeah. That's right.

TM: Moving up the line.

BC: It was pretty, it was nice nice, it was comfortable, but it was very small. When you pulled the hide-a-bed out, there went your living room. It was gone. They weren't huge, that's for sure. But anyway, I had this...we were talking about this midnight-to-8:00 shift. Do you want to get back to that?

TM: Yeah, yeah.

BC: That was really a hard job for me because I'm really am not good at the all-night stuff. I can go till 1 or 2 in the morning and am okay, but then it gets really brutal. One of the reasons they had night shift is that they had another shift that really went all night. I think they had a 1:00 till 1:00 and then they had another one that went... I think there was a break there and then someone came on early like at 6:00 or something. There was a break in time so we didn't have 24-hour road patrol unless there was something going on, obviously. Then the ranger would stay out. But they also had a thing called a fire phone. They had this big Claxton under the desk of the ranger that was on duty there. If someone called in on the fire phone, this big Claxton went off and it would just make you bounce off the ceiling. You were then instructed, if that happened, there was a call list and you would call various people. We'd get the fire brigade out and deal with whatever was going on.

TM: So this was sort of dispatch, as well.

BC: You were sort of a dispatcher, yeah, is what it amounted to but there was not a whole lot of dispatching going on after about 1:00 in the morning or so. Then if something happened... I remember Vic Viera one time, he had a drunk that he'd stopped over by the Superintendent's house. He knew the guy and knew he was going to have trouble so he called me as backup. So I locked up the building, put the fire phone on... There was a switch you could turn to put it into someone else's house. I drove over there and helped him drag this guy to jail. That happened several times where I had to lock the building up and go out. It was usually... If it happened during that window where no one else was on then if you felt it was serious enough, you'd lock the building up and go out. We had a lot of drunkenness there and stuff, both drunk drivers and then people passed out under cars. Rowdy behavior in the bars and those types of things we had to deal with. We even got called out to Tusayan to assist out there with the County and stuff on occasion. The midnight-to-8:00 was really hard for me. I remember, I couldn't sleep during the day and I would go for 2 or 3 days with little to no sleep and then the third day I would come home and crash. When it would get to be...I'd set my clock. If I got home at 8:30, I would set the clock for 8:00 that night. Then I would wake up, shut the clock off, reset it for like 11:30 [laughing]. Then wake back up, put my uniform on, grab a bite to eat, and go back to work. It was really... I just wasn't good for

that type of work. I remember we had troubles getting new hires. They had several times where they, particularly in the spring, the fall and the spring, where people were supposed to show up for work and either didn't show up or showed up and left. Myself and a couple other guys kept having to pull midnight-to-8:00 shifts for it seemed like forever there.

The other jobs I had that first summer were to go on patrol. Usually you patrolled the village, the south entrance. We went out to Duck on the Rock, I think that's where the district boundary was with the Desert View District. You would just drive around, and you know, get out and check the lodges and check viewpoints. You could go out on the what we called the West Rim Drive at the time, I think it was called Hermit's Rest Road now.

TM: That's right.

BC: We would go out there on occasion, but we were kind of told don't go too far out on the West Rim Drive, because if something happens in the village...

TM: You can't get back in time.

BC: ...you're the only one on, it's going to take you forever to get back.

TM: It just seems like a terribly difficult job to stay awake at. There's not much happening, and you know...

BC: Oh, the midnight-to-8:00 job was. It was brutal. Had one guy would put a... He had a big fire poker and he'd put it against the door and then go into the... They had a little rescue cache off of the lobby there and he'd go in there and sleep. The District Ranger got wind of that and one night he comes in, opens the door and this big fireplace poker falls to the floor...

TM: Falls to the ground. Right.

BC: ...and the guy comes sleepily walking out of the rescue cache. You can imagine what the end result of that was. [laughing]

TM: Oops.

BC: The District Ranger was a guy named Vernon Ruesch. He was...

TM: How do you spell Vernon's last name? R-U-S...

BC: R-U-E-S-C-H, I believe. He transferred to Alaska after the first like month and a half that I was there and the Assistant, there was an Assistant District Ranger... Oh boy, I thought I'd never forget his name. Nick Nicholson was his name. Nick Nicholson was the Assistant District Ranger. He then became the Acting District Ranger. The thing about Nick was he liked to put notes up, memos. He would write memos about everything. He wouldn't talk to people, he'd just put memos up. So you had to check the... He'd even change the schedule.

TM: Oh my gosh.

BC: He'd change the schedule. If you were on your days off and you didn't call in you might get in trouble for not being on duty because he'd change the schedule on you. It was difficult to work under him. [laughter]

TM: So Bob, what I'm going to do right now is, I think, let's wrap up Part 2. Because we've been at this a little over an hour and a half. Amazing how time flies. I got a ton of more questions for you about Nick and about Ken Hulick and the guy that hired you, as well.

BC: Dick McLaren.

TM: Dick McLaren, thank you very much. So if that's all right with you, let's look at doing a Part 3.

BC: Sure, sure.

TM: This is great. Is there anything else you're like, "Wait a minute, I want to finish that story," or are we good to wrap up for Part 2?

BC: Well the only other thing would be other employees maybe that were around that first season.

TM: Absolutely.

BC: These three intakes I had talked to you about. There was a guy named Carl Douhan.

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

BC: D-O-U-H-A-N. There was a Jim Cutler, and there was a...last name of McCloud. These were all ranger intakes that were sort of permanent, getting ready to be reassigned to other Parks. McCloud ended up...he was the only one that didn't go on to further Park Service. He quit, because I guess he didn't like his second assignment. Someone always told me he always was sort of dreaming about getting paid in sunsets and riding off into the sunset or something. This wasn't quite his cup of tea when he finally...

TM: Yeah. Well, let's talk about Carl and Jim as well when we pick this back up again. Also Nick and Vernon and Dick as long as Ken.

BC: And there was another. Jim Vukonich was another park ranger that was there.

TM: Well, also Warren Miller...I'm sorry, not Warren Miller...Warren Hill would've been around at the time and possibly Von der Lippe? Do those names ring...

BC: Warren Hill became the River Manager when they went to the management system.

TM: Right. And of course, Superintendent Lovegren. So there's a number of people that I'm like, wait a minute, I want to ask you about a lot stuff. Let's wrap this up now and we will pick this up at another time. So hold the line for a minute. This is the end of Part 2 Grand Canyon Oral History with Bob Cornelius and today is May 31, 2018.