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TM: Today is Tuesday, June 2nd, 2020. This is part two of a Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Charles "Butch" Farabee. My name is Tom Martin. Good afternoon, Butch, how are you today?

BF: Good. Fine, thanks Tom.

TM: Thank you. Butch, may we have your permission to record this interview over the telephone?

BF: Yes, you got it.

TM: Thank you. I apologize for the delay for not continuing this interview series, I just want you to know that. I think the last time we talked was, oh my gosh last year, back in April. So I'm a little late, but we were talking at the time about your three-month class at the Albright Training Center -- the *Introduction to Park Operations*. Can you tell me some more about what you learned at that class and about the instructors?

BF: Well, okay. I was 3 months there, there were roughly 42, 43, 44 participants. It was the first National Park Service next class, which means that it had some old timers that were brought back in to go through sort of remedial Rangers School, and then there were new people like myself who had very little idea of what park rangers were supposed to be doing, at least in 1965, so it was called *Introduction to Park Operations*.

The instructors were pretty much a class act. There was Frank Kowski, who was the director, and he had come into that position as the head of the Division of Training for the Park Service, and started this school at the Grand Canyon, and that went for, I think, five years at the Grand Canyon. I'm sorry, at Yosemite. If I said Grand Canyon, I should have said Yosemite. He started out in Yosemite. And then the school brought a whole facility, a very nice academy at the Grand

Canyon called the Horace Albright Training Center. So Frank Kowski was director, Howard Chapman was the assistant or the deputy director, Dave Karraker focused mostly on interpretation, Don Jackson was the Ranger that focused on Ranger Skills. There was Tom Thomas, who was also in interpretation. Between those five men, they brought in instructors throughout the 10 or 11 weeks. So during that time, we were exposed to a little bit of everything that the Park Service was supposed to be doing, not just park rangers, but what other people were doing within the Service -- planners, archaeologists, foresters, as well as the Ranger skills themselves, which were a little bit of search and rescue, a little bit of law enforcement. So, we're exposed to a whole gamut, a potpourri of things that were supposed to be useful to us when we went out into the bigger world of the national parks.

Now, some of these guys —about half of them —had already worked in other national parks as rangers, and they would probably go back to where they had come from. That is, as an example, they might have been at say Navajo National Monument in northern Arizona as a ranger. They were detailed or brought into this class for almost three months to learn some of the basics and then they go back out and the example I used was Navajo; and the other half of the class, guys such as myself, we didn't have an assignment, we did not have a park that we were going to go to. So we spent those numbers of weeks -- I actually have it here as July 5 to September 17, so however many weeks that is -- we were exposed to a little bit of this, a little bit of that, and the truth is it was so broad in content, there was so much that we were exposed to that we really, at least in my case, never really got a firm handle on anything. There were two women in the class, which was also the very first time that women were in this particular Introduction to Park Operations program, which had been going on at this point for about six or seven years in Yosemite. So these two women, one of them ended up getting married, right while she was still in this class and so she ended up, even though they spent all that money putting her through this program, she ended up marrying one of the other rangers and never was able to go back out as a permanent employee. The second woman, Elaine Hounsell, actually did go out and made a full, roughly 30-year career within the National Park Service.

TM: Do you think that the reason for bringing in the old guard you mentioned, the people that already had had jobs and had been in the service for a while -- was the intent to connect the new people with some old people in a mentorship way?

BF: No.

TM: Okay.

BF: I wouldn't say that at all, I would say that the first seven years or so from the time that started in Yosemite -- 1958, I think -- what they were trying to do was standardize the training among park rangers, and so the classes that were before me were all these people who are already in the Service, and they brought them in to expose them to some of the basics and for many of them, it was probably very elementary. But in my case, my class was the first to bring in new people -- I guess for one thing, they probably ran out of old people to bring back. That might have been part of it. But they also started bringing in the new people, again, such as myself. That was a long answer to your question. The answer was no.

TM: No, that was helpful, thank you. So, in 1965, am I still correct in assuming that an employee's duties could include being a planner or being a forester or being an interpretive ranger and a law enforcement ranger in a certain way with search and rescue, and sort of doing a little bit of all kinds of things. Is that right?

BF: No, not totally. I think I can recall the intent was to have all of these older guys -- or these old retirees if you will -- exposed to this whole broad list of responsibilities that the Park Service had, but not trying to teach them anything. I think it was to have them get a broader understanding of the whole Park system.

So when they brought in the new people like myself because I was brand new, right out of college -- they were just trying to expose me then to what the agency had to offer and what it did in lots of different places. Now this was before our rangers -- in terms of law enforcement and protection -- this is before they had that total responsibility. You know, we did not have the General Authorities Act [of 1970-- an amendment to the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 that required the entire National Park System be managed as a whole, and not as constituent parts.], that came about. So, now the intent was to just give people a foundation of the Service, and I just happened to be lucky enough to be in this first new intake group. Pretty much after that, they had this same three-month school for a number of years after this, and it was pretty much new people at that point, and they only did it once a year, if I remember right.

TM: So, in a way it would be just a general introduction to all of the things that the Park Service is responsible for and —

BF: Yeah, and that's the reason for the name, "The Introduction to Park Operations".

TM: Yeah, that makes sense. I would want to go through that as a new employee, that would make perfect sense.

BF: Well, and they did that for a long time and then budgets got into play and they started reducing the class back down, and it went from let's say 11 weeks to maybe 9 weeks, and then it went back down to say 6 weeks, so I think at some point after —let me think about this -- probably after 25 years or so. It was pretty wild, I think budget-wise, they just couldn't afford to bring people back for 6 weeks or 9 weeks. You know, 30 at a time.

But they had all kinds of really interesting things to be exposed to, you know -- one night we actually did some trapping of little mammals and stuffed them. I was 23, I think, and I was teaching that class, too -- and I think in this case it was a voluntary thing. You come in after supper time and we spent several hours learning how to prepare museum study skins. One weekend we went out and did an archaeological dig out at one of the first hotels in the Grand Canyon.

TM: Oh, near the Grandview?

BF: Exactly, exactly, out at Grandview. We worked on the foundation. For a day or two, we went out and dug fire lines. We had the foresters come in that knew a lot about firefighting to give us an overview of that. We would run out to —I guess it's not Hopi point -- some point where we would repel out and take a structure down and bring the structure back up. One time, I taught how to pack a mule, based on my experience at Sequoia & Kings Canyon where I was running trails and had six mules and I could tie a diamond hitch up and box hitch very well. So, I exposed classmates to how to do that, and you know, nobody expected anybody to walk away knowing how to tie a diamond hitch. It was mostly just to expose people to various things. You know, a lot of history.

If I remember right, we chose a park, and we would then give a program. We built slide programs and we had to give a program about that particular park, and it had to be a park that

we didn't —as a rule —didn't know anything about, so then we had to do some research and put things together. So anyway, it was a whole broad spectrum of a little bit of this, a little bit of that, and it was a nice overview and nice foundation.

But in my case, you know, when I left there and went to Glen Canyon, I thought I had been exposed to enough to be able to go out and do that job, but when I went out and started being a patrol Ranger on Lake Powell at Glen Canyon, the truth is I really had absolutely no idea what I was supposed to be doing. I didn't know anything about law enforcement and I didn't know anything... We had one week at the school where they brought in the FBI, a couple guys from Phoenix. Steve Pine, who's a very well-respected fire historian, and who was my fire guy when I was the assistant chief ranger at the Grand Canyon-- his father, Joe Pine, was one of the FBI agents that came up and he gave us a little bit about search and seizure, a little constitutional law. You know, some come-alongs, some takedowns, how to cuff people, and this was just during one week, and we went out on the firing range. I'd never fired a pistol at this point. I had a .22 rifle, but I don't think I'd ever fired a pistol of any sort. So we went out on the gun range on the South Rim and tried to qualify, if you will. Although we didn't have to qualify, I mean, that wasn't the idea, it really was just to expose us to how to use a firearm.

So, that was about one week and another week would have been on planning—they had a fake park that they made up, and you as a planner. I was one of the 40-some students, and we had to come up with ideas on how to make this park interesting to the visitor, what would be the attractions that we would try to get people exposed to. So, as I say, there was just such a variety of things,—but the end product was I really didn't know enough about any one of them to be any real productive person.

But one of the interesting things about Introduction to Park Operations was that partway through, we were to give our instructors -- particularly Frank Kowski and Howard Chapman--we were to let them know where would we like to be transferred to once we left. That only applied to about half of the class because half of the class were newbies and the other half would probably go back to where they had been at originally. So, when I was at the Bright Angel Lodge, at the very beginning, the very first day I was there, I went down there, just had supper, I think, and I ended up meeting this 18-year-old girl whose birthday was that day, and I put on the full 23-year-old hustle on her. She and her parents were camping at the South Rim for a couple of weeks or maybe 10 days or so, and I became fully enamored with her. She was going to go to school in Oregon at some little religious school, some little college in Oregon. And I knew that when they asked me where would I like to go, I really didn't have any real idea. You know, I think initially, I didn't want to leave the apron strings and I wanted to stay around Saguaro National Park, but at that point I knew —you know, they would not send me to a place like Olympic or Mount Rainier. That would be like dying and going to heaven, probably, for a hiker/camper like myself. But they might send me to a recreation area, so I was saying “Okay, this Grand Coulee Dam is half a day's drive from where she was going to be going to school.”

So, I thought I can outwit these guys. I will say that I'd like to go to a recreation area, which I'm sure that nobody in my class even thought about doing. Well, my —not a mistake, but what come to trip me up was that I — when we went on this five-day trip around the Grand Canyon, we went to Glen Canyon, Zion, over to Las Vegas-Lake Meade and back. When I got to Glen Canyon up to Wahweap -- I don't think I'd ever been at that spot before -- and having grown up in the desert, I had a thought in my mind and I expressed it to somebody, saying, “You know, this isn't too bad here.” And somehow that thought got back to the instructor, and they put two and two together, recreation area and he likes the desert, and so rather than going to Grand Coulee -- which is Lake Roosevelt National Recreational Area -- rather than send me there, so I

could be closer to this young lady, they sent me to Glen Canyon at Wahweap. So, these guys were a heck of a lot smarter than I was apparently. That's how I ended up going to Glen Canyon at Wahweap.

TM: Before we open that door up. What else can you tell me about people you mentioned? Don Jackson and Tom Thomas and Howard Chapman and those people.

BF: Well, all of them -- Frank Kowski, Howard Chapman, Don Jackson, Tom Thomas, Dave Karraker, were all sort of old school. I think, Frank was probably the oldest. He might have been in his early-50s to mid-50s perhaps, but he'd been around. He started out in Yellowstone, I believe, had been a field ranger, had been very successful, had to come up through the ranks, and then ultimately he ended up being the Regional Director for what was then the Southwest Region, and then he went to Sequoia National Park and Sequoia and Kings Canyon, where he retired, I believe. All those five men were sort of old school, and when I wrote my second book on National Park Rangers, I dedicated it to those guys as being —I'm trying to remember how I phrased it, but I think just sort of old traditional Park Rangers. And —you know, that's how they grew up in the system. Jackson was a little bit younger than the others, I guess. But between the five of them, they had quite a history. They'd been in lots of national park areas. They've been around the block, so to speak, on a lot of different issues.

And they were all very good mentors. They were very willing to take a young person like myself under their wing and try to expose them to the good things that the National Park Service had to offer, and there are several other men in that class like myself who basically had never worked as a ranger at these places. So, I think that —you know, Frank Kowski, I still have on a pedestal. He probably had his rough edges that I don't know about, which is probably good because I don't really need to screw up my image of him, I guess. But you know, those five guys were very important to me in my early career and I relied on them down through the years and eventually I ended up working with Dave Karraker when he was at Yosemite. So, I don't know how much I have to award them, but I do know that they were very important to me early on in my career.

TM: Nice. So it sounds like one of the really good things about this Introduction to Park Operations program was that it connected new employees with people who could become lifetime mentors or career mentors.

BF: Yeah. I mean, there are several of these guys that went on to do very good things. One that comes to mind real quickly was a man by the name of Don Castleberry. Don had been in the service probably six or eight years at this point, and he went on to become a regional director for the Midwest region, and he was there for quite a few years. As recently as February, I visited with him when he came to Tucson. He and his wife. And so all through my career and even afterwards, there were a number of people such as themselves that I stayed in contact with and who would help me, and on occasion I suspect I helped them as well, in terms of answering a question or taking care of an issue or "What would you do in this case?" kinds of things. And a number of these people I've remained in contact with. Even though I've been retired 20 years now, I still am in contact with some of them. So, it was an interesting group of people. A number of them went on to do very well for themselves, became superintendents of various parks along the way. I was looking at the picture of Don Jackson when you said Don Castleberry, and it doesn't take much to get me confused anymore, I guess.

TM: Well, no worries, you and the rest of us. Okay, so it sounds like another part of this introduction was an assignment to your first job.

BF: Yeah.

TM: And so did you report then to Glen Canyon right after the class?

BF: I did. I'm trying to remember a little bit, but probably we graduated, stopped on say a Friday, and Monday morning or Tuesday morning I was reporting in at Wahweap at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. So, I had just a couple of days, weekend maybe in between, really.

TM: And the recreation area was brand new at the time, wasn't it?

BF: Yeah, it was. I think they closed the diversion tunnels in 1963 and started filling it in '63, and I got there in the fall of '65, roughly the last part of September.

TM: But the Recreation Area wasn't implemented when the gates closed in '63. It took another year or so to get that all official and going, didn't it?

BF: Yeah, I have to go back, Tom, and look at the different authorities and dates.

TM: But you would have been right on the ground floor there.

BF: That's correct.

TM: So, take it from there. What do you remember about that? You show up in the fall of '65. What were your lodgings like, what was your assignment?

BF: I can remember driving over there -- I'd been there I think one time perhaps, driving over to Page and then out to Wahweap. I remember it was a rainstorm, and as I was driving over there someplace between Cameron and Desert View, I ran across some Navajo people in a car that had a flat tire, and I ended up laying in the mud, changing the flat tire for them, and so when I got to Glen Canyon I'm all muddy. I can remember that. When I reported, there were about six or seven patrol rangers at Glen Canyon. If I thought about it, I could probably come up with some of the names. But when I got there, I was assigned a little trailer -- it might have even been an Airstream -- that was a small version, it wasn't more than 20-some feet long if that, it had one bedroom at the end, a little kitchen in the middle, and just a little front room at the other end. It was on blocks and it was in what is now probably old, but at that time was a brand-new Wahweap campground. And they had just planted oleanders and some not tamarisk, but some other little trees. I had this little trailer in the campground at Wahweap, and that was my home away from home.

So, the Superintendent, his name was Gus Muehlenhaupt, and his entire background in the Park Service was as a planner, or much of it was anyway, so when he went to Glen Canyon and he really had little, if any, real field operational experience, as it would prove out over the next -- I mean, I wasn't there very long, I was there from September till March -- but as it would prove out, his inability to manage ended up pretty much forcing the Rangers that I was working with to want to abandon ship. I mean, they have no interest in staying around. He was a poor superintendent, poor manager, and I think he's probably deceased by now.

Over the time that I was there, the six months I was there, roughly, probably four or five of those Rangers found other reasons to leave. One went back to graduate school, one transferred to the Forest Service. One quit. And in my case, I really had no idea what I was supposed to do as

a patrolman. Even though I had one week -- one, big time week of law enforcement experience, I didn't know how to run the patrol boat, so one of the Rangers took me out for a part of a day and showed me how to run a patrol boat, so I'm zooming around Lake Powell on a boat that I pretty much know nothing about.

TM: And the lake is far from full at that time.

BF: Yeah, that's right. It was like probably close to 400 feet below the high level that it got to eventually. Which, in many ways was really quite neat because I had the opportunity of exploring some of these little tiny, narrow slot canyons taking that patrol boat, which is a 19 foot -- I think it was called Inland Seas. It was a steel-hulled boat, and I think it was an inboard-outboard, if I'm not mistaken. The lake has, of course, covered over all these little canyons, and so one of the reasons I had such a good time in some ways is that half of my job ended up being to live up at Rainbow Bridge.

So, I went up there pretty quickly, probably within the first several weeks of being assigned at Glen Canyon. I'm now living on a houseboat, right off the main channel of the Colorado River. At that level, the lake wasn't a river, I mean, there was a lake by this time. But it was very narrow, and the crests were -- the crests now that are about like 50 feet higher, were probably 400 feet at that point. And so I lived on this little houseboat which was about the same size as my little trailer, and I still have the little trailer, and I lived up there. My job was to just patrol, and at the time, I really didn't realize I was doing exactly what I was supposed to do, which is be the eyes and ears of management. I was supposed to contact people, talk to them and then, in theory, enforce the regulations like fishing or something to that effect, but the truth is I really did very little of that. I did a lot of contacting, but I don't think I ever issued a citation, and I'm not sure I even knew how to write a citation, had it been deserved. But you know, living this little houseboat, it really fit into my sense of adventure and exploration.

All these little multi steps which the Anasazi had carved 1000 years ago -- I did a lot of exploring. But also, because my responsibility was also Rainbow Bridge, which came into the system in 1910, I think -- my job was to go out there, and on many days, there was absolutely nobody there. And there's all that, it was all in the wintertime. Lake Powell had not been discovered. People from Albuquerque and Phoenix and Salt Lake and wherever, now that's very commonplace, of course, but in those days, there were very few people that would come over and go fishing. There were some locals that did of course, but there were probably a fair number of days in the winter time when I might not see anybody else on the lake. And I'd be driving around out there--in those days, we did not have a heavy-duty uniform coat. So, I had an army parka that had some sort of collar that was close to what the park service uniform was like. And I had a down sleeping bag and so half the time I'm inside the down sleeping bag driving around on this frigid lake, and you know in many ways it was really a kick, but it was also frustrating. I just didn't think that I was doing what I was being trained to do then. I wasn't really mature enough to understand that I was doing exactly what I was supposed to do.

TM: Right, interesting. Did you get a chance to meet Art Green?

BF: No.

TM: Okay.

BF: Not that I recall. Well, actually, when I think about that, wasn't he like The Godfather of Lake Powell with the tours?

TM: He was running tours into Glen Canyon from Cliff Dwellers Lodge in the 50s, and saw what was going to happen, and he ended up staking out a bunch of land there which would become the Wahweap Marina and was building that complex out before the waters showed up.

BF: Well, you know, I'd like to say that I did but I don't. I'm not so sure I really remember that.

TM: Okay. Who else did you work with or meet at that time that you remember?

BF: Let me think about this. Well, a couple of the other rangers, one was Grant Peterson, who was one of the rangers that quit, went back to graduate school and then he was brought back in and he ended up retiring after a long time, he was a superintendent at Picture Rocks National Lakeshore, I think it is. Al Scidenkranz was an interpreter. They were both rangers.

The chief ranger was a guy named Dwight Hamilton, and he was sort of an old school ranger himself, sort of like Don Jackson had been and Dave Karraker, etc. So, he was the chief. Ed Mazzer, was a district ranger. There are several others I'm just trying to picture in my mind. One of the things that I'm really grateful of having experienced was, I think it was the very second time the Park Service hosted a scuba diving class, and it was the first time at Lake Powell at Glen Canyon. So, a man by the name of Harry Wham, who was a one of the early dive instructors -- he lived in Las Vegas and his day job was, he owned a piano bar somewhere around the strip, probably right off the strip someplace, and he had a little chorus in there, the Whamettes. Harry Wham was a very colorful, sort of was on the margin of being legal in some ways. People were already starting to smuggle dope in from Mexico, etc. But he and Jim Brady, and Jim Zrank, would fly up from Boulder City, Nevada, to Page and they'd land at Wahweap, there used to be a little strip at Wahweap. It's now where the maintenance yard is for a company, the concessionaire, the house boats there I think. But there was a dirt strip there, and they flew up once or twice a week, and they put us through a 40-hour scuba class. The fun thing in this case was that the class had been in session for almost half of the 40 hours, but that's when I show up, I sort of show up halfway through. When I was in high school, I was essentially an all-state swimmer in freestyle. I was very cocky, very comfortable in the water, and at this point, I'd actually brought a scuba tank and the regulator and what have you. And this other guy and I taught ourselves how to dive in the local pool that we were lifeguarding at, so I had some exposure to this technique, or not technique but this technology. Well, so I got there halfway through and Harry says "Well you know, I'll let you just sort of sit in and watch but I can't graduate you, if that makes sense." And I said "Well, okay." So, I went out with the one the first day that I could, and pretty soon after he had assigned these guys to go do something, he comes over to me and he said, "Well, let's see what you can do." And because I was so comfortable in the water, he pulled my mask off and did a few things to see if he could get me to be panicky. And I was comfortable enough, he says "Well, now we know. I think we can just put you into the middle of this."

So all of a sudden, I've skipped the first —I don't know, 15 or 20 hours of his class, so ultimately, I ended up graduating with everybody else, receiving a certificate. And it was the second organized dive class that the Park Service put rangers through. The first was at Lake Mead, by the same guy, and the reason I mentioned that is just a couple of days ago, this other guy and I have written a book on the history of National Park Service diving, and we just got it. I just got it in in the mail. I think I got 60 books on my floor that I'm supposed to sign and then send back up to Denver back to the Submerged Resources Center, and they will mail them out to different people. So you know I have some familiarity with the history of the Park Service diving program. But that was one of the real benefits, I guess, of that time at Lake Powell, And

then living on a little houseboat and being up there by myself and being allowed to explore, that was really quite a nice thing.

TM: Yeah. I guess when I think of Lake Powell and Wahweap, I think of fueling boats, and the trouble with fueling boats is gasoline has a way of vaporizing and going where it doesn't get blown out into the air and if there was a spark somewhere, well things ignite. Did you experience any sort of boat fires over just the six months you were there?

BF: No —no I didn't. When I was at Lake Mead, I did see that a number of times, but at Lake Powell no. The sort of houseboat that I lived on, there were three house boats there and they had a little tertiary sewage system —you know, a dump station, basically. And there was a little gasoline pump and they would bring up the gasoline from Page —from Wahweap, and there was a maintenance man and his wife who would be on duty for 10 days and off for 4 -- they lived in Page, and she would maintain the gas when a boat would pull in to get gas, she would take care of that and do that. You know, credit cards were sort of brand new at that point, take the money -- you know a couple of times, I think I probably filled in for her when she wasn't around, but they had a gas station for boats, right next to my house boat. And you know, maybe on a real pretty weekend there might be 10 or 15 boats that would come up, but when the weather would change and when it got, like, in December, January, February, when the weather wasn't very good, there were hardly any boats up there.

But I had no training on that kind of emergencies. It was really all seat of the pants learning on my part. And I guess in some ways that was kind of a fun thing, but because of the superintendent Gus Muehlenhaupt, who probably —you know, personally was a nice person. I never got to socialize when I was a GS-5 and he was probably a GS-13 at that time. And so our paths really never crossed out other than to say hi and probably being introduced to him, but I do know that his policy and his managerial style was not very good. But my mentor Frank Kowski at the Grand Canyon at the training center, I used to go over there a couple of times on a weekend and —and sort of whine, probably sleep on his couch and whine and gripe about what was taking place at Lake Powell, and the second or third time that I came over and was whining. He also knew that some of my peers, Grant Peterson being one, Ed Brask was another Ranger that went to the forest service. There were like say four or five of my peers who were very unhappy with what was going on at Lake Powell. So, my mentor, Frank, I can remember him picking up the phone when I was there, and he called the regional director in Santa Fe, who I think was Dan Beard but I'm not sure about that. He called and said "You know, we're not sending any more new people to Glen Canyon until they figure out what's going on." And so they ended up not taking any new people back to Glen Canyon because of my whining about what was taking place there.

But he had enough foresight to say "You know, the name of the game for park rangers, meaning somebody like myself who was brand new, is gonna be law enforcement." Now I knew this and what brought him to that conclusion, I have no idea. But he said "You know, the name of the game is law enforcement for the future." Over time, I confided that my father in Tucson was a medical doctor, many of his patients were Tucson policemen, and that the chief detective —the head of the detective bureau, whose last name I forgot -- but they were eager to have me join the Tucson Police Department because I had a degree, I was single, I was young, I was healthy. You know, I was at least average intelligence, so I looked like pretty good material for them. And so Frank Kowski knew this and said, "You know, if you want to leave the agency, I will bring you back if you want to, within three years." Since I had not been working as a permanent for more than a year, you have to stay in the federal government for a year before you have lifetime reinstatement rights, but if you work for less than one year, which is what I

was—I'd only been working six months-- he could get me back within three years, so I left Glen Canyon and joined the Tucson Police Department, and at the end of the three year time, Frank got hold of me and asked me if I wanted to come back in. And so they created a job for me. They wrote a position description, because at this point now I've been to the Tucson Police Academy. I spent two and a half or more years as a patrolman, and I was one of the very few people in the Park Service, when I came back in, that had professional law enforcement training.

TM: Before we leave Glen Canyon, I'm curious with that 19-foot boat, how far up lake did you get?

BF: Well, the farthest I ever got really was Bullfrog Basin. That's sort of a minor interesting story -- while I was living on this houseboat at Rainbow Bridge, which is about—I don't know, roughly halfway up to Bullfrog and Hall's Crossing -- one of the things I was supposed to do I think every week, I would go up and I would check some weather instruments that were either on the Bullfrog side or the Hall's Crossing side, check some instruments, and I could probably take up the paper and change the paper around because the weather station had that kind of instruments in it. And I recall going up there and—you know, I wasn't under any kind of time constraints. I was supposed to be there on say a certain day and change the paper perhaps on a certain day, so I could explore going up and going back, but when I got to that big basin, Hall's crossing and Bullfrog area, I looked around and I told myself, "Jeez, I don't want to ever be stationed at a place like this." And of course, now it's all grown up and there's all kinds of facilities there, you know, an airport and a good pay strip and a lot of amenities. But I can recall in 1965 or maybe the early spring or winter of '66, saying, "I do not want to go here."

TM: Well, it would have been very crude. There would have been a little—what, a little floating Marina kind of thing?

BF: That's right. On the right side was a wooden back with 55 gallon drum. And that's where the Rainbow Bridge walkway was as well, they had this walkway built on top of these 55 gallon drums, and you would tie up to them. And if you're really adventurous, some people would launch boats up there. At least during the winter, they didn't have the ferry. I can't remember the history of the ferry but I know it's still currently working now. That would go from one side to the other. There was a ranger station there for part of the time, and that's the reason I would go up and take care of the weather station for him and probably do some other things that I don't really remember, and I know that I went to both sides. If anybody was around that had any official reason for being there, I would stop and say hi and that sort of thing.

TM: Did you boat into San Juan at all?

BF: I did, but not very far. I went a little bit above the big basin. I guess they call it maybe Bullfrog Basin. Well, wherever both Bullfrog and Hall's Crossing are, you know, I went above that a little bit, but I didn't have the capability for getting gasoline, and so I never spent a night out. I never explored in that fashion. My explorations were mostly between Rainbow Bridge and say, Page and Wahweap.

TM: Okay, and that was sort of day trips, limited to a tank of gas.

BF: Yeah, exactly— but, you know, when the canyons that I would go up, I got to the point where they were times that I would turn the boat off, and I would be pulling myself up these slot canyons by hand. I got to —oh jeez. There's a real famous alcove up there.

TM: Music temple?

BF: Yeah, Music Temple. I got to music temple before it went underwater. There's a big arch that I have a photo or maybe even a movie of me taking my boat underneath that arch. Now that arch is under 300 feet of water. It's in some of the old books on Lake Powell when it's filling up, it was pretty famous for its time. I was there. I've got photos of these big alcoves and huge alcoves, like Redwall Cavern and on the Colorado. I'd take my patrol boat inside there. It's really pretty neat in some ways, but there are some downers to it as well. It's pretty isolated, and I didn't mind the isolation particularly but going back and forth, it was two-and-a-half-hour boat trip from my little houseboat down to Page,

TM: Right, and that cut off that they got going now. That would have been high and dry...

BF: No, that didn't exist. We had to go all the way down to the main channel and come out of Wahweap.

TM: And then up.

BF: Then up, exactly right, and it was all pretty much in the channel and I think Last Chance Bay, and some of those big bays that I guess they take for granted now did not exist or were just minimal in those days. And you know at a full speed, two and a half hours from Wahweap Ramp all the way up to Rainbow Bridge.

TM: Wow, were the tours going that winter? Was there a tour boat coming in once a day?

BF: I don't know about once a day. No, you mean up to the bridge?

TM: Yeah.

BF: No,—I can't say they say didn't ever do it, but they were pretty minimal though, it wasn't very often.

TM: Right, it was winter. I mean, it was offseason, that's for sure.

BF: Yeah, there just wasn't that kind of traffic in those days.

TM: Okay.

BF: When I was living on a houseboat at Rainbow Bridge, it was a mile and a half walk from this little plank 55-gallon drum little mooring spot. Mile and a half up to the bridge -- I have an interesting story about Rainbow Bridge if you want to hear it.

TM: Yes please.

BF: When I was in Tucson, I did a lot of skydiving. And I took my equipment with me up to Page and just had it there, my parachute, my reserve and helmet and whatever. But I also climbed to the top of Rainbow Bridge, there's actually a way to do it. It's not all that hard.

But of course, nobody knew where I was. My job is to be available and hike up and down that little trail and work around the water. But the first time I climbed to the top of the bridge, I thought, "You know, maybe I could parachute off of here." And I can't remember exactly what it is but it's only about 250 or 60 feet I think, from the top of the bridge to the bottom, and in those days there was a little stream. I have a movie of a beaver still on the stream, and it was all rocky, you know just a little gorge. Of course when you go up to the bridge today, you'll see that the lake went up underneath it at one point -- but in those days there was nothing except a little stream. So I got to the top of the bridge and I thought, "You know, I could probably parachute off of here." There's a procedure and it's pretty common now, but in those days it was pretty novel, and —

TM: Could try to fill your chute with air.

BF: Yeah.

TM: And then step off.

BF: When I was jumping here in Tucson, it was called a shopping bag jump and we would stuff the canopy into a brown paper bag. And we go out of the plane and just throw the canopy out as we were exiting the aircraft, rather than pull a ripcord.

TM: On a cliff edge, in theory you could kind of spread your chute out and let it catch some air, maybe fill up a little bit and then you could step off. I don't know, I'm talking right out my tail end because I don't know.

BF: And you're pretty close to being accurate, but what you're not taking into account is you know you need a little more space with it. With the old parachutes, you need more space than 250 feet. And so the second time when I went up there and I had my equipment, I realized when I got up there and sort of really assessed what the heck I was doing, I realized, "You know, I'm going to kill myself. It's not gonna work." And even though I was 23 years old, I did have a little bit of wisdom, at least enough to say, "I'm not gonna do this." I didn't have enough wisdom to not even consider it

TM: Right, but you didn't do it.

BF: But I didn't do it and I could have easily been the first base jumping fatality in the Park Service.

TM: Well, you would have been ahead of your time for the ultralights, what do they call those things? Paragliders or whatever those things were. They stand on a cliff or those things like up over their heads all fully geared up and they just step off the hillside and off they go.

BF: Well —and that's specialized equipment. I didn't have that kind. Mine was just a plain old parachute.

TM: Not having been invented yet I would assume.

BF: Yeah, that's right, I think that's right, but you know, I lived through it, I guess. Fortunately, I didn't actually jump because I probably would have been killed. Or even worse, probably just broke my neck for the next 60 years.

TM: Right, right. Interesting. Is there anything else you'd like to bring to the conversation here now about those six months you spent at Lake Powell at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area?

BF: I need to think about that for a second. You know, I broke an ankle while I was up there. I cracked an ankle, it was Thanksgiving, and it was a terrible day. You know, the reason I broke the ankle was that my boat was tied to the houseboat at the little Marina at Rainbow Bridge, was tied there. The boat was bucking up and down and I got under the boat and my foot caught halfway between the edge of the boat and the gunnel, and the little floorboards —the wooden floorboards. And I cracked the ankle. It was really storming and the maintenance man and his wife were there and we put ice on it, and I realized that I'd done some damage to it because I had already broken my ankles, each of them once before. So I had some sense as to —you know, this is not a good thing. So late in the afternoon, I went out, and I had two lifejackets on, and the waves between these cliffs were like five and six footers. Pretty good size waves for that channel. And I motored all the way down to Page in order to get to the hospital.

TM: To Wahweap or Autumn.

BF: Autumn, that's correct. And I was dating the secretary of the maintenance office, and her family had invited me over for Thanksgiving supper, but I told them I couldn't do that because I was stationed up over the Thanksgiving weekend at Rainbow Bridge, and then all of a sudden I show up on crutches at her house, with Thanksgiving supper. But going down that channel with those big waves, wearing two life jackets, and this heavy coat on -- if I'd gone overboard, I would have died of hypothermia if I didn't drown right off the bat, and it was one of the most — for me it was one of the scariest things I've ever done. If I'd had half a brain, I would have just taken a bunch of aspirin and spent the night at least at my little houseboat, and then gone down the next day when the weather was nicer, but of course I wasn't smart enough to do that, so.

TM: Yeah, we don't think about these things.

BF: Well, when you're 23 you know you're indestructible. You know, nothing's gonna —you know. Well, I can parachute off of Rainbow Bridge, what the heck.

TM: Did your ankle require a cast?

BF: No, no, no, we just wrapped it and he said that “You know, baby it for a week.” I'm probably making it a bigger deal than it was, but there was a crack. I mean, they could see on the X-ray. And I babied it, I think they let me do some desk duty kinds of stuff around the main office.

That was one of the things that I recall being up there -- the isolation. It was a very novel experience being at that little marina -- it took two and a half hours to get there by boat. You couldn't drive there of course, it was maybe one of the most isolated spots in the lower 48 states. You know, you could drive to Hall's Crossing, you could drive to Bullfrog, and both of them are pretty isolated, there's no question about that, but in order to get to Rainbow Bridge, you couldn't drive, you had to take a boat, and it was like two and a half hours, a gas patrol boat going fairly quickly. So I think it's one of the most isolated spots, certainly one of the most isolated spots in the Park Service in the lower 48 states.

And if something were to go wrong, you know, there were no helicopters. While I was there for the six months I was at Glen Canyon, there were probably one or two drownings. I never got

involved with any of that kind of emergency operation. You know, in many ways it was pretty mundane, which is probably good because I did not have any real experience or training to handle much of that, it would just be seat of the pants common sense.

TM: So Butch, I've got a question about Wahweap. Today, there's a big kind of hotel. I guess it is a restaurant and a ramp, and the ramp is a giant wide concrete thing that goes to the North Northeast down into Wahweap Bay. But that's with full pool. When you were there, how did that ramp work? Do you remember?

BF: I don't think that ramp has changed too much. It was asphalt, I think, and it was real wide as you say, very wide.

TM: Right, and it just went forever, all the way down that hill side? Is that?

BF: Yeah. You know, I'd have to look at the real specifics to make a real generalization, but it was a large ramp, and because the water was several hundred feet lower than it is today, I'm sure that they move that ramp up and down, but if you were to drain Lake Powell, I would venture to say that that's almost a runway for an airplane to land on.

TM: Okay, except it's at a steep angle going down,

BF: Right, yeah. It was that big. It was really wide.

Part of my job, on occasion, whenever I was stationed down at Wahweap itself, was to do boat checks, and I knew that I was supposed to check for a paddle and a whistle and lifejacket and whatever else, before people can launch. So I did some of that, and interacted with the public and I'm sure that I gave any number of wrong answers because people would ask me about the conditions on the lake or where to go and that sort of thing. I was so new that I don't know that I necessarily lied to people, but I'm sure that I probably fabricated a few little things, because I just didn't know. I just didn't have the experience.

TM: Yeah, you did the best you could.

BF: Well yeah, I don't know that was all that great, but I don't think anybody ever accused me of being a total idiot anyway.

TM: Well. I doubt that.

BF: I don't know. It was a good experience and, I certainly don't regret having gone there. I really loved exploring in those side canyons.

TM: This was interesting because what it seems to have done, and please correct me if I've got this wrong, but it seems as though, it gave you a little bit of understanding about what working for the park service was so much so that you came back.

BF: Yeah. Well, I came back. I mean, I know what you're gonna say, I'm jumping forward. But because I didn't really want to live in a city, you know, Tuscon wasn't that big, but it was still a city. And I wasn't mature enough or had enough life experiences to know about buying a house living out in the country kind of thing. And one of the beauties of the Park Service is that there are a lot of places that are pretty remote, wilderness kinds of settings, which are very attractive to me. In retrospect, it would have been fun to have been able to explore that part of Arizona

and southern Utah before the lake was filled. All of those slot canyons and side canyons. That would have been a real treat for me.

TM: Did you get a chance to get to Lee's Ferry, were you stationed down there at all during your 6 months?

BF: I was, actually. I went down there, and a ranger that was living down there -- I don't remember who it was -- went away for several days. I went down to Lee's Ferry and because I was single and I was pretty mobile, I just took a sleeping bag and probably threw it on his couch or something. But my job was to help manage the fishing. They weren't launching boats over the wintertime down there, if I remember correctly, but I did go down and help out for a number of days at a time.

TM: What do you remember about Lee's Ferry at that time?

BF: Part of it is colored a little bit by having been there so many times since.

TM: Right, yeah, yeah,

BF: You know, I might have a hard time sort of separating things out. The Ranger that had been there, Phil Martin, died, and his brother was in the class that I was at when I was at the training center at the Grand Canyon. Jim Martin—his brother died

TM: In a canoeing accident, wasn't it hypothermia?

BF: Yeah, he died of hypothermia.

TM: Yeah.

BF: I went out with Jimmy to help find a tombstone -- Phil is buried at the Grand Canyon. So, I'm trying to think of who the Ranger was that was there. I just can't remember who it was.

TM: His name is on the tip of my tongue. I want to say McDougal but I don't.

BF: Oh I know, yeah yeah yeah, I think you're right. I think you're onto something there. Yeah, I think you're right, Tom.

TM: Goes by Mac.

BF: Yeah, I think you're right.

TM: Nice guy. Yeah.

BF: I don't know that I got to know him very well, because one, Lee's Ferry would respond to the Grand Canyon National Park more than it did to Page I think in some ways.

BF: But, you know, it was such a novel time, and, you know, the Navajo interaction with the people was all new to me. I've never been around a culture like that before. And I was just doing things by the seat of my pants, trying not to offend too many people. But it was an interesting time. Your question was about what I recall about Lee's Ferry itself -- I think there were just several trailers, I don't know that there were any houses yet. Just trailers. You know, there were

fishermen that would launch and go upstream, principally up towards the dam. If you go downstream very far you get into some rapids you don't want to get into, which is where Phil died, actually, I think. And there wasn't too much traffic, I guess that they wanted a presence down there and maybe it was a big weekend or something. I just don't recall, but I remember being stationed down there, or having to fill in for several days. I don't have anything really glaring at me about that.

TM: Okay. Well, maybe this is a good time to wrap up part two.

BF: Okay it's gonna take a long time Tom,

TM: Well, I'm not short on time, are you short on time?

BF: I got nothing else to do these days.

TM: Okay, well then I'm a happy guy. Well, this will be the conclusion of part two Grand Canyon oral history interview with Charles "Butch" Farabee. Today is Tuesday, June 2nd 2020. My name is Tom Martin and Butch, thank you so very much.

BF: Well, my pleasure Tom, you know.