

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society

Interviewee: Charles "Butch" Farabee (BF)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Butch discusses his time working for the Tucson Police Department

Date of Interview: June 3, 2020

Method of Interview: Phone call

Transcriber: Amelia Nomura

Date of Transcription: September 8, 2020

Transcription Reviewers: Sue Priest, Tom Martin

Keys: James Garner, Tucson Police Department, police academy, mafia, Joe Bonanno, Linda Ronstadt, Frank Kowski, Sequoia, King Canyon, law enforcement

TM: Today is Wednesday, June 3rd, 2020. This is Part 3 of a Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Charles "Butch" Farabee. My name is Tom Martin. Good afternoon Butch, how are you today?

BF: Well good Tom, thank you.

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

BF: You've got it.

TM: Thank you. I just realized I had never asked you, how did you get the nickname Butch?

BF: Well my answer to you is I do not know. I was called that as a kid even into the lower elementary, perhaps first grade/second grade. I asked my mother and she couldn't remember.

TM: When you would meet people, in high school or in college you meet somebody new, would you put out your hand and say "My name's Butch"?

BF: Yes

TM: So it was just ingrained in you?

BF: That's correct

TM: Neat, that's fun.

BF: Now officially, of course, it's Charles.

TM: Did you go by Charles or Chuck sometimes or was it just Butch all the time?

BF: If a teacher was calling on me it might be Charles. I actually can't remember if any of the teachers ever called me Butch. They may have, I don't remember that.

TM: Ok. Well, we wrapped up Part 2. You were a new ranger, your first assignment at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, sounded like a pretty amazing job and you're just about ready to transition to the Tucson Police Department. Is there anything else about Glen Canyon you want to bring into that part of your story?

BF: Yeah, one thing I thought about after we got done talking was one of the things that we did as rangers, and of course I didn't know anything about this, I had to go with another ranger who maybe

was my senior by about a year or so, but we went out to Warm Springs, I think it's Warm Springs Canyon, something to that effect, Warm Creek maybe, on the northern edge of the lake to see how a filming was going with James Garner and Sidney Poitier. The movie is called *Duel at Diablo*, this was in '65. They were filming it out there. If you ever see the movie, which I've seen a couple times, and it's a fair movie, you'll recognize the landscape around that part of Page. Pretty desolate, spectacular in many ways but devoid of any vegetation kinds of places. I went out there with this other ranger and I'd never even been on this road let alone knew what to do talking to this production company. When we got out there James Garner met us. A delightfully nice person. Very cordial, very welcoming, very interested in the fact that we were in park ranger uniforms. So when we went out there, of course we were in a marked four-wheel drive truck anyway, he took us under his wing and spent the next at least two hours including having a catered lunch. And those guys don't mess around, they were having steak probably and all the attachments that you have when you have a steak lunch. We sat in the sand in the shade with this other ranger, myself, and James Garner. He explained what was taking place and at that particular moment he didn't have to be on camera so he was telling us what was going on, and the plot, and who all these people were and what they were doing, and that sort of thing. I thought that was very nice and to this day, although he is deceased of course, to this day I have a very warm spot in my heart for James Garner. He was just a true gentleman as far as I was concerned.

TM: Very fun!

BF: So anyway, that's it.

TM: That's nice, thank you for bringing that in. Very neat. You had mentioned that it was kind of a hard job working for Gus Muhlenhaupt, the superintendent, and that Grand Canyon, Frank Kowski had mentioned that you kind of had a three-year window if you left service to come back in? Is that right?

BF: Yeah. The way it works if you're a permanent federal employee, which I was, if you worked for more than a year before you separated from the federal government then you had lifetime reinstatement. If you separated less than a year then you only had a three-year window in order to come back in. That's not to suggest that you automatically could come back in. Somebody would want you and you'd have to apply for the job and that sort of thing.

TM: So that clearly wasn't enough to keep you in a position for a year.

BF: No, although I don't know that I truly understood the three-year window aspect of it anyway. I mean, even though I went through this school I was a newbie in many ways but I was pretty unhappy there anyway. Whether I would've survived that part of the year or not I'm not sure anyway.

TM: Did Tucson Police Department offer you a job out of the blue? How did that come about?

BF: A lot of my dad's medical patients were policemen including the chief of detectives. I tried to remember his last name and have forgotten. My dad talked to him. He died before this all took place but this chief of detectives was a good friend of the family, at least of my parents. I was able to contact him. I'm sure I did an informal interview with him and then I did a formal interview and I went through the lie detector test and I took the physical exam. I don't know if I took a written exam, probably I did. The fact that I had a degree certainly didn't hurt me. The academy did not open up until August and I actually resigned in March so I had a window of however many months that is, five or six months, before the police academy would open up. So no, I think it was a little bit

of both. This chief of detectives knew that I was antsy because my mother had been talking to him, I'm sure. But I also reached out to him, I suspect, as well.

TM: Okay, what did you do in those intervening months between March and August?

BF: He was able to get me a couple of little pretty much minimum wage jobs. I was a driver at Quebedeaux Pontiac here in Tucson for people that would bring their cars in and drop them off. I would be the guy that would take them home and pick them up. I did that for a while. I also spent part of that time working for Ashton Construction Company as a yard boy which meant that I took care of not so much their equipment but kept all of their barricades and just things that you would have in a construction site, building construction particularly, kept them in order. Hal Ashton, who was currently the president of Ashton construction, was I think learning the trade from his father. His father was the one that founded the company, I think. Hal actually was a school friend of mine. A fairly good acquaintance I think. We double dated a few times. So I did that until the academy opened up. So between those two...

TM: Okay, the academy is out on Silverbell Road north of Grant?

BF: Well it used to be, it's not there anymore.

TM: Was it there when you went through your training?

BF: Yeah. I guess I'm thinking we're talking about the same place now. It was the old city farm and the city sewage system was there. The main building for the academy was actually a... They refurbished the big holding tank where the sewage used to be. It was round, it wasn't a square building, it was a big cement building, and that's where we had classes. We'd go to lunch with the trustees at the city farm who were out there raising crops for their meals, I guess. I don't know what else they did with the food.

TM: They were growing cotton out there, too.

BF: Well they may have been, that I don't remember.

TM: I grew up real close to that place and used to just walk around there all the time so I know exactly where that is.

BF: Well, you know the range is right out there as well. That was probably the second time I'd handled a firearm I suppose.

TM: What type of didactic learning did you get there? What sort of classes did you go through?

BF: I think they were short of policemen at that time. This was in the fall of, August of 1966 sort of right before the hippie era but it was starting the social revolution that was taking place around the country that was just starting to get off the ground. Vietnam was sort of heating up a little bit. So, it was an abbreviated class. I think it was only about six weeks which in today's climate you would just be beginning at that point. But we took the basics. Search and seizure, self-defence, some constitutional law, procedures on how to do certain things. What was legal, what wasn't illegal, a rundown on various laws. I don't remember ever doing any driving to speak of. Well actually, now that I've said that I think that's wrong. I think we spent one full day, maybe, out at the airport on the tarmac someplace where there was some room. But nothing of any real significance, not compared

to the academies and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center today. I guess I don't have a finite answer for you. It was just the basics of police work, how to patrol.

TM: How many people were in your class roughly?

BF: Well, let's say roughly 25, and there were 3 of us that had college degrees. There were some guys that had been in the military. I think everybody completed it. There might've been one guy that dropped out.

TM: And most of them were your age?

BF: Yeah, pretty much. I might've been on the younger side a little bit but not by too much.

TM: So, you were 24 then?

BF: Yeah, I guess I was about 24 or going into it I suspect. I don't know that there were many guys younger than myself but there probably were some others of 23/24/25/26 bracket.

TM: What I was thinking about now was sort of the police beat in Tucson. There was a downtown, there was a university, there was a southside or Hispanic area, there was the east and north foothills upper class kind of territory, an old downtown barrio. Just trying to think about Tucson in 1966. This was before the early renewal came in so there were a lot of festivals of course. Cinco de Mayo, the Tucson rodeo. What was it like being on the beat there? Where did you end up, how did that work?

BF: Well the city was broken into... There was roughly 250,000 people living in the city limits. The police department had about 250, I think. Let me think about this. I think about 250 uniformed officers and about 60 or so detectives and other people related to that. The city, from a patrol standpoint, was broken into four zones, A, B, C and D. The city limits did not go into the foothills. I think Rodger Road would've been about the northern extent. You know, and the city historically sort of has a jagged boundary anyway, it's not a straight square or rectangle or anything. To the east it would have been roughly about Pantano might've been the very furthest east, then Kolb as well partially during that time. Then south would include the airport and then to the west would've been out towards A Mountain. So, the south and the west there was a lot of Spanish being spoken. I did not patrol very much of that very often. Most of my time was spent in B sector, which would've been 1st Avenue going north and south all the way to the east side of town, and then roughly from say Grant to 22nd Street which includes the university. I spend a lot of time in there. They would rotate every three months. You would shift from day shift which would be 8 until 4 in the afternoon or 6 until 2, depending, because they had a little bit of an overlap. Then they had an afternoon shift which would go say from 4 o'clock until midnight. Then they'd have a midnight till 8, or it could be 10 pm until 6 am, depending. So, they rotated that every three months. As much as I enjoyed all of them, I really looked forward to probably the afternoon/evening shifts because there was more action going on. I loved Friday nights and Saturday nights. I couldn't hardly stand waiting until going to work because there was so much going on as far as I was concerned.

TM: Like what? What was going on?

BF: Because of the darkness and the university, there wasn't so much major crime, a lot of traffic, but there was a lot of calls. Family fight kinds of things, some drugs, a lot of alcohol related kinds of things, vandalism. It was just mischief things. Not the heavy-duty things that these guys unfortunately have to contend with today by and large. We had our moments but... Then during that time for the nearly 3 years that I was on the PD, the last year and a half or so I was on what would

have been called in those days been called a felony car which was the only two-person car in the entire city at that time at night. In theory we were the 1st to go in on an armed robbery in progress or a burglary in progress because there were two of us in that car. But the truth is we spent a lot of time downtown making drunk arrests. We would average, this is the honest to goodness truth, 6-10 every night. Those were only people who were passed out in the front of the bar. In those days there were a lot really small, seedy little bars. They weren't high end and they weren't fashionable. They were places that you would not want to go in with a date and sit around and drink. They were not necessarily a super rough crowd, it was just that the people that went there were serious drinkers. We wouldn't arrest the guy unless he was passed out in the doorway. But it was just the unknown. Lots of vehicle accidents, particularly the afternoon. If you got on at 4 you for sure gonna to go to a couple of car wrecks. Many of them were pretty minor but some of them were significant. I loved the unpredictability. I loved the first responder mentality. I would never made a good detective because I don't have the patience for it but I really did like getting into the first responder mode, I guess. It wasn't so much the red light and sirens, it was just the life and death or at least response to these potentials.

TM: I want to ask you about that because today when there's a call typically there's a fire truck rolling, there's an ambulance rolling, and there's law enforcement. It seems back then that... Were you the one that would assess the situation and call an ambulance or a fire truck depending on what happened and you would be much more responsible for being a first responder.

BF: Yeah, yeah, you're 100% correct. First of all, the ambulance service was really just the end of the era where it was throw and go. It was a mortuary car, a funeral car almost. Nobody had any training. I probably had as much as anybody, it was advanced first aid. There were no paramedics in those days. That didn't come around until the late 60s, and not in Tucson but elsewhere. When you would arrive occasionally there would be an ambulance dispatched because whoever was reporting it...this was pre 9-1-1...but whoever was reporting it might say there's a serious injury you're gonna need an ambulance kind of a thing. There might have been somebody dispatched. The fire trucks never went unless you asked them to and that was only for spilled gasoline kinds of things. You called in the rest of the support team, mostly. That was fun. You would get to call... I can remember some of the ten code which was... A 1050 was an accident without injuries, and then a 1051, let me think about this, I don't remember. But a 1052 would've been an accident with injuries and then a 1053 was a fatality, a known fatality which when you got to that serious then there'd always be a sergeant and some senior patrolman there probably helping out for sure. I guess that's the reason it was partially fun. You never knew what was gonna happen. On a Friday night and a Saturday night it was nonstop stuff. You were going to things all the time. If you were working until midnight often times you would be held over because you would be in the middle of some incident, a family fight of some sort, and you just couldn't walk away from it. You'd have to finish off whatever it was. The same was true for an accident. Often times, though, if it was a bad accident and we were getting close to quitting time somebody would come out and relieve us and sort of take over. But you'd end up being responsible for the paperwork generally.

TM: Two questions come to mind, did you get overtime if you were still working an incident at 10 o'clock when your shift ended and you didn't get out of there until 11 or 11:30 or 12?

BF: No, I don't think so. I don't remember that. The only way that I really remember making any extra money was off duty. There was a sergeant or a lieutenant that was the contact. Working in the rodeo parade, as an example, they didn't necessarily have officers working that that were on duty, they would have officers working that they were off duty. A better example would be Friday night high school football which I worked a fair number of. And, of course, I wasn't much older than the seniors in high school. I'd be out there and you really were there just for the presence. You'd walk

around and let people know that you were there but you'd also wander through the parking lot and underneath the grandstands and try to knock off some of the underage drinking. I think we started out at something like \$3 an hour. If you had some whizzbang kind of a skill or maybe you were a supervisor that might be a little different, but generally you'd make I think \$3 an hour.

TM: Okay. I did want to ask you about paperwork. You're busy on Friday and Saturday nights sort of going from one event to another to another, how did you keep up on that paperwork?

BF: That's a good question. Mostly you would take care of it in between calls. For a minor fender bender that you might've caught at say 5 o'clock in the afternoon and then you sort of get it cleaned up... The process was a heck of a lot faster and not nearly as professional as it is today. But at 5:45 you might be sitting in the parking lot because it was mostly done with a pen and there were certain forms, you would fill in these forms. You make a diagram and if you cited somebody for whatever, running a red light, then you'd make some notations about why you came to that conclusion. You would let the dispatcher know that you were available but you were doing paperwork and if he could give the call to somebody else, then that's what would happen. Often times you would be caught partway through your paperwork and you'd have to go to the next incident. In between incidents and you didn't have any paperwork, you might work traffic. I'm a little surprised by driving around Tucson these days, and maybe it's just the numbers of policemen that are out there, but we worked a lot more traffic than I seem to see these policemen doing today. I also worked in an area, Speedway would be one with the local hangout for the teenagers, which not too many years before I was hanging out there as well. Johnny's would be one of them at Tucson and Speedway. Speedway got its name because of people driving up and down it. That didn't stop, it was the drag on Friday nights and Saturday nights. You'd let people know you were around, you'd be in a patrol car and make traffic stops for speeding. There was a lot of bad driving, actually, in those days.

TM: Without a radar gun how would you know how fast people were going?

BF: You would end up clocking with your vehicle. There is a provision in the Arizona Revised Statutes, ARS, that was for reasonable and prudent. So if you saw some kid, mostly kids/teenagers, squealing out of a driveway or a parking lot onto the main road like Speedway, then there's a provision for reasonable and prudent. It would be a judgement call on your part. I think I took pride in the fact that I was not a hard ass. I was willing to give people the benefit of the doubt. I wasn't officious. I tried to put myself into the golden rule kind of mentality. Not strangely, but there weren't many officers out there in those days that were very eager to talk to kids who would run stop signs with their bicycles, but I would do that. This was sort of pre-muffler or pre- what am I trying to say? Where the car doesn't smoke as much today as in those days.

TM: Emissions, yeah.

BF: Emissions, there you go. There was a lot of that. That sort of offended my environmental sensibility, which is the reason I got into the Park Service to begin with. So I did some of that, where my peers that wasn't anything significant to them. Somebody threw something out the window and I actually witnessed it, including cigarettes, that always irritated me, I guess, I would stop. I wouldn't necessarily give them a citation, but I would give them a written warning. One, it was a legitimate way to make sure they had a driver's license. We never checked for insurance, that wasn't an issue in those days, but registration. I really enjoyed it, I almost did not go back into the Park Service I was having such a good time. I enjoyed the uncertainty, the not knowing what's gonna take place two hours from now. I enjoyed that and I enjoyed the first responder mentality.

TM: Was there an adrenaline component to that?

BF: Oh yeah, for sure.

TM: Can you speak to that a little bit?

BF: Well, you're sort of catching me off guard here Tom. I've always been interested in sort of pushing the envelope. I did a lot of skydiving, I did a lot of serious caving. I taught myself how to scuba dive and this was way before anybody else was really doing it. I even did a cave dive in Onyx Cave having zero training. I was in some ways a mother's worst nightmare. I enjoyed that sort of adrenaline I guess. I think the uncertainty... I don't think that running a red light and sirens was that big a deal to me, but there is a component where once you turn on the siren, not so much the red light because you would use that quite often just to pull over a car, but if you were going to what would now be a code 3 kind of a response to say a vehicle accident with potentially life-threatening injuries attached to it, or a house fire perhaps something like that, then once you flip that siren on your adrenaline goes up whether you like it or not. Maybe I'm probably giving myself too much credit but I like to think that I actually approached some of that in a pretty professional mature way, even though I was only 24/25/26 age bracket.

TM: I was thinking about, today we call it PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder, and back then there wasn't a great concept of that though that's an assumption on my part. I could be totally wrong.

BF: Right, no you're right.

TM: It seems as though young kids could handle that a little better than some of the older kids, but again that's an assumption. It's an issue that rangers working for the national park have to deal with, just like law enforcement officers in Tucson Police Department deal with.

BF: Well yeah, I think that's a good observation. All of your observations have been mostly right on. In this case, it wasn't quantified or qualified and it didn't really have a name, PTSD. I guess in the war it might be shellshock or something like that, but that never seemed to affect me while I was on the police department. It was something that was really, really, uppermost when I was in the Park Service working on a lot of fatalities, a lot of major injuries, far more than I ever saw in the police department. I suspect if I were in some kind of a unit that dealt with child abuse or sex trafficking or that sort of thing, which they didn't have much of in those days anyway, but if I was with some group that did a lot of that I suspect I would've had some PTSD kinds of effects. I really didn't get exposed to that much that was so terribly bizarre and gross. When I was first being interviewed for the police department, they had a whole bunch of black-and-white photos, if I remember right, a whole stack of some of the more grizzly things. People being burned up and cut in half by a train, something that's pretty gross. One of my interviewers was, "So what do you think about this? How does this affect you?" It wasn't anything that I would look away from but I'd give them an honest answer and say, "This is not very nice but I can handle this easily enough."

TM: I just wanted to check, one of the things that came to mind is staffing level. If you're staffed up enough... You mentioned a city of a quarter million with 250 officers and 60 detectives, versus a national park that might have a million visitors going on 5 million and a tenth that staff or less. I'm just trying to think about the adrenaline and the adrenaline fatigue that can happen with the Park Service, and I wonder if it's a staffing issue. I could be totally wrong.

BF: No, I mean you've got pretty good intuition on this. When I was working, particularly in Yosemite and the Grand Canyon for 16 years roughly, there were any number of nights, particularly in the summertime in Yosemite, I mean we worked 20 hours a day. Never got paid for it because we knew

that the night shift or the day shift needed some help. I'd go home, have supper and go back out. My PTSD manifested itself in that I got divorced. I mean I was ignoring my family, I was ignoring my wife, and not intentionally. I guess I assumed that she knew I loved her. Why else would I get married? But that's how it affected me. That's really been a major thing in my life was that and the way I handled that. I did not have my priorities lined up correctly. But a lot of when I was on the police department, I wasn't married except for the last half a year or so. There was a big difference between the Park Service and what you did as opposed to being on the police department. The Park Service of course, in theory at least, is more multifaceted. You know you did SAR, EMS, law enforcement, search and rescue, resource management stuff. Depending on the size of the park and the complexity and the impact by the visitors you could work doing a lot of stuff in one field, say law enforcement, or you could do a little bit of everything which is the real attraction for me. But on the police department your principle job was you were in law enforcement and that's what was expected of you.

TM: Its interesting, thinking about increased duties and responsibilities with decreased staff in the Park Service whereas with the police department there were more staff and you were very much confined to one job.

BF: Yeah.

TM: Okay, interesting. Thinking about the Tucson Police Department, were there any events that happened to you during that time that you're proud of how things worked out? Or not?

BF: I'm not trying to pat myself on the back but apparently I was pretty well respected because they made me what would be today a training officer when I still had a year and a half to go. In many places I'd still be a total rookie. But apparently, I showed enough common sense and handled whatever I was faced with in a legitimate manner. One of the things that comes to mind that is probably the most interesting, I guess, over time was as you probably may remember Tucson was the home for Joe Bonanno. His son Bill lived here and Joe Junior lived here. But it was also a "vacation" if you will, quote unquote, spot for the mafia. Joe Senior had told his counterpart Mafioso chief that he was done, he was getting out of the business, and he hadn't been put away in prison forever and ever or anything. He ended up having a home on Elm and Tucson Boulevard, I think. Pretty close to Elm, maybe Lee and Tucson Boulevard. I think the University Hospital is there now. Some of these guys, like Pete Licavoli would be one that I can recall, they'd come out and they might've had a home here in Tucson but they were back in New York City or Chicago wherever they did their Mafioso stuff.

All of a sudden, maybe about the second year in, there were these unexplained bombings of bowling alleys, of not saloons but bars, sort of high-end bars, places that people would go to dance. Little nightclubs I guess is a better way to phrase that. The vice squad here for the Tucson PD could not figure out who was doing these bombings. Now, nobody got hurt which was sort of strange in itself, but the bombs were set off such that it seemed like somebody had intentionally kept from hurting somebody. There was no explanation, but the thought was that it was the mafia trying to extort money or get involved in businesses around Tucson. So the head of the vice detail and intelligence, I think they had those combined, they went and they got about 12 or 14 of just non-descript policemen out of patrol, people who'd never become too visible. I was certainly one of them. I was young enough and new enough that nobody near me. I mean, I hadn't ruffled anybody's feathers to speak of. They took this group of a dozen policemen and every day for six weeks for roughly maybe 14 or 16 hours every day we followed in unmarked cars. There was a system where we would go out to the airport and we'd end up driving away in a grey Buick station wagon from Hertz or somebody. There would be several of us per shift and we'd work 12 hour days, we worked six days a week. Our job was to follow Joe Bonanno Senior, Joe Junior, Bill Bonanno, Joe Senior's bodyguard, I think his

name was Pete Notoro, Pete Licavoli. Anyway, we ended up following probably maybe 8 different individuals. I think initially at the beginning of the shift we might be assigned to go watch this guy. The idea was to see if we could find them doing anything that would lead up to somebody having their place blown up. We spent six weeks doing that.

I got pretty good. You'd end up going to watch somebody, say Joe Senior. You'd park 2 blocks away and you'd be slouched down in your car just like on TV looking in the rear-view mirror to see if somebody came out of that driveway. If they went someplace then you'd end up following them a block or two behind. I got to the point where I could do that pretty well. You'd run red lights if you had to. You did it safely but you still were trying to stay on the tail of somebody. We didn't find anything. Nothing happened except about week number 5 perhaps. This other guy and I, this undercover, no plain clothes I guess is a better word, policeman and I were in this car and we pulled in behind Bill or Salvatore Bonanno who was the oldest son for Joe Senior. We were several blocks away but these guys weren't dumb. They knew that they were being followed they just did not know who was following them. We ended up watching and all of a sudden he goes to the trunk of his car and he takes out a rifle and we could see him load it. We knew it was a loaded, or at least we thought it was loaded, and he starts walking towards us. Now again, he does not know who we are. We could've been some rival mafia guy. We're not sure what to do. We don't know if we're supposed to blow our cover and approach him or if we're supposed to get out of there. So we chose to get out of there. Of course, this was reported and we went to the lieutenant, I can see his face but I can't remember his name. They ended up getting a warrant, it must have been a misdemeanor warrant, aiming a loaded firearm or something like that because these guys didn't know who we were, for one thing. So, we got a warrant.

Gus and Andy's on Oracle, which was a pretty prominent, nice restaurant and probably had a bar in there as well, we were told that Joe Senior and his son Bill were gonna be in there. They wanted to serve this warrant so they got the cameras in there, they got the news people to come in. Because I was one of the two that had the gun pointed at me I served the warrant on Bill and arrested him. I never had to go to court so I suspect it was either they took care of it by a fine or something. But the fact is that nothing ever happened. That was the biggest thing that happened in that surveillance thing for six weeks. Well as it turns out, after I left, this was like a year later perhaps or maybe not quite that long but close, it turns out an FBI agent, or at least a retired or ex-FBI agent, was the one planting these bombs. He had put a bomb on the back wall of Joe Senior's home, which as I say was roughly Elm and Tucson Boulevard, and blew the wall out. Joe Senior runs out there and was able to get the license plate of the car that's speeding away. He reports it to the police and they end up finding this guy. I guess, apparently, he was trying to start some sort of internal mafia war. Now I don't think he was off his rocker, he might've been. That was a pretty significant time for me, for about six weeks.

Well, after I retired, roughly say 2002 or -03, there was a multi-page, I mean four page not just columns but four-page, story on this particular incident. Sort of a 40 years ago this weekend kind of a story. It really revealed a lot of things that I didn't know anything about surrounding this whole incident. I could probably go and if I was really patient enough I could probably find it. I'm sorry that I didn't keep those news clippings from that story cause it really was pretty impressive as to the extent of what was taking place and I only saw one part of that picture. So that was one of the more interesting things. I never got shot at. I pulled my gun on a number of times. Not so much on anybody but walking into an open door in a business. You didn't want to go in if you didn't know what was going on.

TM: This was when an alarm would go off?

BF: Yeah, not even then, there weren't that many alarms. It was just that you'd be patrolling and be 3 o'clock in the morning and you'd go by a group of medical offices and sometimes you'd even get out. There were no handsets, the only radio you had was in the car. So, we would check out and say we're at such and such medical office and we're gonna be on foot checking doors and looking at windows and that sort of thing, which we did a fair amount if it wasn't busy. In order to occupy your time, you did that sort of thing. So, as I say, I never shot anybody, never got shot at, I never had any of the TV kinds of things that you see.

TM: That's probably normal for most police officers, is it? A normal job. I'm not sure if this is something you want to talk about but I am curious. Who did you meet and get married to?

BF: Her name was Anne Hathaway. I met her while I was going through the police academy. It was a blind date. She was a freshman at the U of A. We dated for about 3 years and then her last year at school, her senior year, we ended up getting married. Let me think about this. The last several months, maybe the last semester, I had been accepted to go back to Lake Mead as a park ranger, but I asked the Park Service if I could postpone that for what would amount to another semester so that she could finish school and us not be separated. She was born in Douglas. Her dad was a border patrolman and a Tucson policeman but he ended up being an engineer for United Food Company in Costa Rica. He built bridges and railroads and things like that. She's the mother of my 2 children.

TM: Nice, okay. You guys met early on when you came to Tucson and you were in the academy.

BF: Yeah, so that would've been like August or so of '66 or September of '66.

TM: It sounded like gosh, you're married, you've got a wife, you've got a job you like, how did Lake Mead reel you in?

BF: Well, for one thing, when I was a patrolman I enjoyed the field. I loved, as I say, Friday nights and Saturday nights particularly, but I just liked the excitement. I enjoyed the adrenaline. I enjoyed the uncertainty of all of it. But I'd look around and I knew that I didn't want to do that forever. I wasn't necessarily trying to be chief of police but I did look around and I'd see all these young sergeants and young lieutenants and I became a little discouraged thinking holy moly, at some point I'm gonna want to be out of the field and perhaps become a supervisor and work my way up the totem pole a little bit. I got a little discouraged by looking around. My squad sergeant was Pete Ronstadt who ended up becoming the chief of police.

TM: So, Pete Ronstadt of Ronstadt hardware and Linda Ronstadt family?

BF: Yeah, her brother. I haven't told you about dating Linda Ronstadt yet have I?

TM: No, so I'll put that on a list of questions to ask.

BF: Well I make it sound better than it was. We only went out one time. Her brother Pete, who ended up becoming chief of police for Tucson, was my squad sergeant one of the times. You didn't have the same squad sergeant all the time, they sort of rotated it around. But I'd look around and here were these guys that were young and I thought, you know, my upward progression is not gonna be that good, maybe. That was part of it. I always wanted to get back into the Park Service as well I thought.

TM: Well you did, okay.

BF: They wrote a job description for me because of my experience and my training which was by today's standard was pretty minimal but in those days was more training than any other park rangers had.

TM: Yeah, and were you in touch with Frank Kowski. Did you guys stay in touch?

BF: Yeah. So Kowski, at this point he is the regional director meaning that he oversees 30 or 40 National Park areas. In this case he was in Santa Fe in the southwest region and he oversaw Lake Mead. We stayed in touch and he asked me... He always told me if I ever wanted to come back in let him know, because he offered me a job after I quit to begin with when I went back on a trail crew. I'm probably confusing everything right now. I was only out of the Park Service for about three or four months. Oh, I forgot to mention that. I was only out of the Park Service about three or four months and I went back to work on the trail crew that summer.

TM: Ok, so hang on. I kind of asked you about that summer of March where you left Glen Canyon and then August when you started the academy, so it was a little stunt on trail crew that summer of '66?

BF: Yeah. I screwed that up for you, Tom, because I mentioned Quebedeaux Pontiac, I mentioned Ashton Construction Company, but I forgot to mention that I went back to Sequoia for several months, became a trail foreman and ran a trail crew. Because of my experiences on horseback and my experience as a packer I was a pretty good commodity so they asked me to come back a little bit earlier and help open up the trails in Sequoia and Kings Canyon. At that point when I first went in there Kowski was the superintendent of Sequoia and Kings Canyon.

TM: Oh nice, okay.

BF: I was just arrogant enough/cocky enough that when I reported to duty as a labourer in the maintenance department to build trails, even though I was a foreman, if you will, because I knew a little bit about the Park Service I asked my boss, I said, "Who's the superintendent here?" "Oh, a new guy by the name of Frank Kowski." I very quickly, and this is the honest to goodness truth, within the next breath I said, "Well let's go up and say hi to Mr. Kowski." He looks at me like who the hell are you? I can't recall if he remembered that I'd been with the Park Service as a permanent at one point or not. We end up, or at least I end up going up and walking in the door, and Frank was like old home week.

TM: Oh fun!

BF: He was very eager say hi and he offered me a ranger job working out of Cedar Grove. I'd have my own stock, my own horse and my mules, and I'd roam around the backcountry. Some rangers would have died and gone to heaven had they been offered that kind of a position. I appreciated the gesture but I said, "You know Frank, I appreciate it, I thank you very much but I want to see how this police stuff is gonna work out for me." Because he's the one that recommended it to begin with. He's the one that said the name of the game for the future is law enforcement for rangers. So, he understood that and he said if you change your mind, or something like that, in the next couple years let me know. At the other end of that summer, or that three-year period, he was now the regional director and he had a job written for me at Lake Mead as basically a higher patrolman, I guess. They wanted somebody who could take care of themselves on some of these isolated lonely roads in Nevada, which in those days had no upper speed limit. You could drive as fast as you wanted to and you're right close to Las Vegas. You've got a lot of drunks and a lot of bad wrecks. They wanted somebody who had some police training so they wrote a position description

specifically for me to incorporate my experience on the police department and my training. I'm only guesstimating but I bet you there weren't more than a dozen rangers around the entire National Park system, of course it was a lot smaller in those days, but there were only a handful of rangers that had any kind of true law enforcement training. There might've been a couple of guys that had been on a higher patrol or a sheriff's department and had done sort of like me, but we were pretty rare.

TM: I just want to get a time stamp in here, this was before the Yosemite riots is that right?

BF: Yes.

TM: It is really interesting to see that Frank was aware of the need for a different type of park ranger, a law enforcement ranger. He saw that.

BF: Yep. Even to today, I'm 77 years old, I occasionally think about that and think I don't know how he knew that.

TM: What do you speculate?

BF: I don't know, I can't tell you. I know that he thought that law enforcement might be important but not necessarily sort of the wave of the future if you will.

TM: I'm just gonna run with something for a minute and tell me what you think. He was a career Park Service guy and he would've started in the 30s. He would've seen the population growth, he would've seen the visitation growth, and he would've seen the changes in the culture of the country. So he could've seen that need coming. He did see it coming, I'm just not quite sure why. Huh, interesting.

BF: Well I mean he had some maturity. He had some perspective like you say.

TM: Yeah, he saw it coming.

BF: He's the one that was my godfather, if you will. Where did we get off the track here?

TM: Well, let's take a look at the time. We've been talking for a little over an hour. Maybe this is a good time to wrap this interview up with finishing out Tucson and heading out to Lake Mead.

BF: Let me give you one more thing about the police department.

TM: Please, please!

BF: That undercover detail, or that surveillance detail, I was on on one occasion I followed Joe Bonanno Senior's bodyguard who I think his name was Pete Noto. He lived at Beverly and Speedway roughly. I was out there and I parked several blocks away so that my car is facing the other direction. I'm not even facing into the house, I'm facing into the mountain and behind me is where this guy lives. I see Joe Junior's car drive into the driveway and along the way while I was on the police department but before this took place, I actually met Joe Junior and sat down and had drinks with him. I don't drink but had Cokes with him at I think it was the Blue Note.

TM: Yeah, the Blue Note on Speedway.

BF: Yeah, on Speedway. I had a mutual friend that I think introduced me. It wasn't like I went to hobnob with any of these guys, it was almost accidental. I met him several different times so he knew me by my face. Maybe he remembered my name, I don't know about that. But anyway, I'm sitting on Beverly facing into the mountains and behind me a couple blocks away is this guy's house. All of a sudden Joe Junior comes driving down Beverly. He's left this guy's house, this bodyguard's house, and he's on his way someplace. He passes by me and I see him coming and I slouch down into the car so that in theory trying to play like I knew what the heck I'm doing. He drives by and he honks his horn. I don't know that he knew it was me but he did know that it was somebody that he wanted to let them know that he knew that he was being followed. I've always chuckled about that. I think Joe Junior ended up dying in prison. Bill, the oldest son, the one that I ended up arresting for pointing a gun at us, there's a book by Gay Talese called *Honor Thy Father* and that incident is mentioned in his book. It's a biography of Bill Bonanno. So, okay I'm done with that one until I think of something else.

TM: Okay, very fun. We'll pick up getting the job and heading out to Lake Mead after Ann finishes her semester at the U of A on the next interview. With that, this will conclude Part 3 oral history interview with Butch Farabee. Today is Wednesday June 3rd, 2020 and Butch, thank you very much.

BF: Okay, well you're welcome.