

**Transcription Grand Canyon Historical Society**

**Interviewee:** David Huizingh (DH)

**Interviewer:** Tom Martin (TM)

**Subject:** As an eleven-year-old in 1958, David recalls riding horses into Supai, AZ, with his father. David participated on a Sanderson Brothers River Expeditions trip in 1972, a Salt River boating trip in April of 1978, a Grand Canyon river trip starting at Whitmore Wash in 1979, and rowing his own boat through Grand Canyon in 1981.

**Date of Interview:** February 22, 2020

**Method of Interview:** In person at Tom Martin's house

**Transcriber:** Kiana Cook

**Date of Transcription:** February 18, 2021

**Transcription Reviewers:** Tom Martin

**Keys:** Supai, Arizona; Havasu Falls; Navajo Falls; Mooney Falls; Rio Chama; Sanderson River Expeditions; Frontier Expeditions; Main Salmon River; Middle Fork of the Salmon River; Salt River; Whitmore Wash; Randy Chamberlain; Pat McCormick; Tom Fife; Dan Dierker; Brian Dierker; Flagstaff, Arizona; Richard (Dick) McCallum; Grand Canyon Youth Expeditions (Expeditions); Tom Scott; Tempe, Arizona; Rogue raft model; Campways rafts; Miwok raft; River Runner boat; Avon Pro raft; Diamond Creek; Lake Mead; Separation Rapids; Pierce Ferry; Quartzite Falls; Chet Bundy; Tony Heaton; Soap Creek; Pete Bolton; Chris Sheafe; Horseshoe Bend; Central Arizona Paddlers Club; Jim Calvert

TM: Today is Saturday, February 22nd, 2020. This is a Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Dave Huizingh (DH). This is a Part Two interview. This interview is conducted at the home of Tom Martin and Hazel Clark, and my name is Tom Martin (TM). Good morning, Dave. How are you?

DH: Fine. How are you doing?

TM: Very good. Thanks for carrying on with Part Two of this oral history. David, yesterday, after we finished Part One, you sent me an email about an amazing trip into the small village of Supai in the bottom of the Grand Canyon in 1958. Can you tell me that story now?

DH: Yeah. I thought of it later. It would have been—given a more complete response to the question about my experience camping growing up and early exposure to the Canyon and river running in general. And, while it doesn't relate to river running per se, it was a pretty significant event, and I'm surprised I didn't remember. It involved my father, who was on a mission board of the church that we were attending at the time, and the members of the board were invited to take a horseback trip down into Supai to visit with a small mission chapel and a facility that they had there that they were operating. And each of the people that were invited from the board were allowed to bring one guest. And, so, I got to accompany my dad on that trip. So this was 1958, and very little prior outdoor wilderness or camping experience, and so it was quite an eye-opener.

TM: How old were you?

DH: Would have been 12—13—no, wait. Let's see—'58? My birthday is in November... Eleven. I would have been 11.

TM: Had you ever ridden a horse before?

DH: If I had, it would have been on the order of a pony ride at a carnival or some such.

TM: Okay.

DH: No—really no meaningful experience riding horseback prior.

TM: What do you remember about that?

DH: It was pretty revelatory, actually, because I'd not been down into the Canyon previously. And, whereas it wasn't, you know, from the South Rim and the usual place folks are first exposed to the Canyon, it was, in a way, that much more valuable because it gave me a chance to go into an area that very few people were visiting at the time. And, yeah, the horseback experience itself was something memorable because I hadn't spent—I spent almost no time on horseback in any form prior. So, anyway, we rode horseback down in there with Indian guides and visited—I don't remember too much about the visit to the mission facility or chapel. What I remember most is the opportunity I had with several other boys near my age who were also accompanying their dads to hike from Supai down to the falls. And I'm not sure if it was on that trip or my next following trip, but there was an opportunity in that timeframe that I had with them or with some others to camp right at the base of Havasu Falls when that was still an option. I rode along—there was a grassy area right at the base of the falls to—as you first came down into that area. And, anyway, it was great. It was beautiful. We had a great time. And, you know, the falls and the Canyon were something—I—the water that was down there was—that was my first encounter with water in the Canyon, really, in a meaningful way. The horseback ride down in had been down the dry washes, and there hadn't been any water. And we really didn't see the creek until we got down below the village, of course, when you come to the first encounters to creek-side and then Navajo Falls and then Havasu Falls. And we didn't go down below into the base of Mooney Falls but got a pretty good exposure to that whole area. It was amazing. So, yeah, that was a real eye-opener.

TM: Dave, I'd actually like to ask you about the church.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Can—that building was built in '48. Do you its history of how it was built?

DH: I do not.

TM: Okay.

DH: No, I don't know—I know very little about the history of the mission.

TM: Can you describe to me what you remember about that building in 1958? Did you even look at it, or did you just get swept away with the kids and off you went to...?

DH: No. No, no, I looked at it, and I'm sure we must have attended some kind of meeting there at some point, but my memories of that are much less distinct than all the rest of the trip, the horseback and the falls and the trails and...

TM: Okay.

DH: That was the part that really stuck with me.

TM: Did you meet any of the Supai children? Did you make any friends with them?

DH: No. No, unfortunately. I hadn't thought of it that way, but that would have been an opportunity too. And, no, we didn't. That would have been cool. But, no, we didn't have that opportunity, as I recall.

TM: And, then, did you camp out there? Did you spend the night there, or was it just down and then out for—a long day trip? Or was it an overnight?

DH: It was—as I recall it, it was an overnight, which involved the opportunity to camp at the base of Havasu Falls. But I might be confusing that with the next following trip that I made down there, which was several years later with friends, backpacking, where it was still an option to camp there, and we did.

TM: What year was that, that you came back?

DH: Not sure.

TM: Okay.

DH: I'd have to try to suss out my records and see if I could figure that out. It would have been probably mid-'60s.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah, when I was at ASU.

TM: All right.

DH: Best guess.

TM: Okay.

DH: There's a possibility that it happened while I was in high school, '60-'64 timeframe, but most likely, it was after that.

TM: Okay. And do you remember anything else about the ride in, the ride out, the drive there, the drive home?

DH: Yeah. On the ride out—[laughs] I don't know if this was intended, but the other boys and I kind of got into a little bit of not exactly a race, but we decided we were going to go a little faster than we had on the way in. And, so, we were—the horses had a—I don't know what the pace would be, canter, trot, gallop—not a gallop but, I mean, we were moving horses faster than we had been. So that was pretty exciting, but then, when we arrived at the base of the switchbacks, the Indian guide who—I forgot, he preceded or followed us, because he was aware of what we were doing and said that, well, as a result of the pace the horses had been at up until that point, we got to hike out [laughs] rather than ride horseback to the route, to the rim. So we kind of sheepishly dismounted and hiked up the switchbacks, and so... And that was a good experience too, because it was a little dose of reality on what it is to hike in and out of the Canyon.

TM: Nice.

DH: So that was great.

TM: Nice.

DH: Good stuff.

TM: Excellent. Before we leave that, anything else you remember about that trip in 1958? Time of year—was it summer? Was it fall, spring?

DH: Honestly, don't remember.

TM: Okay.

DH: It would not have been... It wasn't cold. It wasn't bakingly hot, so best guess is it was a spring trip.

TM: All right. Okay.

DH: And there was plenty of water in the falls, so, yeah.

TM: Nice. Nice.

DH: Would have been a spring trip, I'm pretty sure. But, yeah. That was very memorable. That was the one and only experience that came close to that that I had with my dad in that kind of context until many a years later, when I developed some experience running rivers and I took him and my son on the Chama for an overnight trip.

TM: Nice.

DH: And... That was probably—I don't remember intervening experiences involving him and the outdoors, but that was kind of a bookend, in a way, to have invited him on the Chama and brought my sons along as well. That was fun.

TM: Indeed. That sounds wonderful. What year was the Chama trip?

DH: Oh, wow. Not sure. Probably late '90s.

TM: Okay.

DH: There again. I mean, a lot of these—

TM: So a 40-year timespan.

DH: Yeah.

TM: As a child, with your father—

DH: There you go.

TM: —to journeying with your father and your children.

DH: Right.

TM: Nice.

DH: Right. Yeah, I hadn't gotten him on a river at any point. I hadn't journeyed on a river with him at any point in between. But he was getting to an age where, if we were going to do it, it had to happen soon. Plus, my kids were then old enough that they could come along.

TM: Nice.

DH: So it was a good point in time to make that happen.

TM: Wonderful.

DH: Yeah.

TM: That's a wonderful journey. Then, let's move forward in time to 1972 and something else we talked about yesterday that we wanted to review at the start of this interview today, which is discussion of the lifejackets that you wore in 1972 on your Sanderson River trip through the Grand Canyon.

DH: Right. And, as I recall it, both then and in the 1976 Salmon trip with Frontier Expeditions, and definitely on the 1978 Salt trip and Middle Fork trip, in all cases, I was wearing the old-style, orange, kapok-filled Mae West lifejackets, some of which had been creatively decorated with various petroglyph-style notations by my friend Randy on the lifejackets that he supplied for our trips on the Salt and Middle Fork. Really weren't aware of what other kinds of lifejackets were available at that point, so we made the best of it with those. Not the comfortable jacket ever invented, but they served the purpose.

TM: This is Randy Chamberlain?

DH: Yes.

TM: Thank you. So tell me more about those jackets. What were they like? How were they built? What do you remember about them?

DH: Just—I remember them just being really bulky, and... Yeah, no problem with the flotation. They were great in that respect. We ended up one time or another in the water playing or whatever, and the flotation aspect was great. And the pad behind the head served a purpose. It seemed to keep you up out of the water. And the fastenings on them, though, as I recall, the way they were fastened involved at least one point where there was a knot tied or a bow or whatever, a strap, versus a snap-type fitting with a strap adjustment. So that was interesting. That was a little problematic, I thought. But, anyway, that's what was available at the time to us, so that's what we used.

TM: And did you ever have a—these are sort of heavy, duck-cloth-covered plastic bags—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —filled with kapok—

DH: Right.

TM: —which is a seed off of a tree in Africa. And, if that plastic shell got a hole in it—

DH: Oh, yeah. Then it became soggy and fairly useless.

TM: And did that ever happen to you? Did you ever—

DH: No, not to me, but, you know, I was aware that it was a possibility. Saw some jackets that had been damaged and lost their benefit.

TM: Okay.

DH: So...

TM: All right. And, then—so, then, starting this interview off, moving forward, you mentioned a series of river trips: the Sanderson trip in '72, the main Salmon trip in 1976, and then the Salt River trip in 1978, which we talked about—in April of '78.

DH: Right. First weekend of April, in fact.

TM: When you came off of that April trip, '78, it sounded like you were ready to buy a boat or get into boating.

DH: I was ready to think about buying one, definitely. I think the thing that sealed the deal for me and motivated me additionally to do it was the Middle Fork trip a little later that year, in the summer of '78. And that was involving some of the same folks that had been on the Salt, principally organized by Randy Chamberlain again. And a couple of his employees who had been on that trip that I had become friends with were also on the Middle Fork trip. That would be Pat McCormick and Tom Fife. They were both employees of Randy at the time and his business. And there were a few others as well. One fellow whose name I wish I could remember—I think I—yeah—drawing a blank. I'd have to research it. But there was a fellow who was an acquaintance of some of the others who was a salesman for IBM at the time, fairly affluent guy, very successful salesman for large systems with IBM, computer systems, who had all his own gear and boat and so forth and had gotten into it on his own. I don't remember the circumstances of how he got into the activity, but... I ended up riding with him in the Middle Fork rather than with some of the other people that I knew prior to the trip. We had a get-together, get-to-know-one-another meeting at his house in Scottsdale or Paradise Valley, one or the other, prior to the Middle Fork trip. He had had some sort of a spinal fusion surgery in the past and couldn't straighten himself completely, was pretty competent at the oars but somewhat of a small guy and not super robust. So what I've always thought of as a consequence of that was a couple of things that happened to us [laughs] on the Middle Fork involving going where maybe we didn't want to go on the boat. And, of course, I was new enough to the activity that I didn't feel like I could really speak up or suggest that I take over for him or an alternative that might have avoided what—you know, a couple of whoop-de-dos that happened. But, anyway, it was a great experience. He was a good guy. I enjoyed spending the time with him, and I was kind of basically his crew the whole way down. And that was fun. It was a learning experience as well. We ended up going sideways over... Ah, there's a fall... Trying to remember the name of the falls.

TM: Rainie Falls?

DH: No, no, that's on... Yes. Yeah, I think it was. I'm thinking Clavey, but that's elsewhere. No, Rainie Falls. I think it was Rainie Falls. There was a drop in the center and a sneak on the right, and everybody else ran right and... Jim and I—that was his first name—Jim and I ended up going over the drop sideways [laughs] and staying in the little hydraulic there for a few beats before, eventually, we were able to pull ourselves out. We each got on an oar and got ourselves popped out of that. And then, again, there was another rapid near the end of the trip, one of the last rapids. It was a very technical, rocky kind of run. And, at the water level we were at, there were numerous exposed rocks, and we ended up wrapped on one of those mid-river. And now I'm remembering that Dan Dierker was also on that trip, and he was one of the guys instrumental in helping get us unwrapped and off that rock at the time.

TM: How'd you do that?

DH: He ended up taking a throw-rope. I don't recall whether we tied two together or it was just one longer rope, but he ended up wading pretty far out into the river channel, which happened to be shallow on river left, where we were. If I looked at a map, I could probably remember the name of the rapids, but... And he was able to get up onto a rock that was basically a third of the way into the channel and throw us a line from there, which eventually we were able to tie off and... Don't remember too many of the other details, but I think a third person came out to—it might have been Dan and/or Anne on the rope, in some fashion, and joined us. And I'm pretty sure we ended up just deflating one side, inflating one of the tubes to the point where the current effect was on the boat was imbalanced and eventually would pull on the rope and got us off.

TM: Nice.

DH: So, yeah. So that was kind of the last event on that trip, the last noticeable event, and it wasn't long below that before we got to the confluence with the main Salmon. That was kind of the coda on the trip.

TM: So it sounds like a lot of good learning experiences there.

DH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, very much so. And the cool thing was—I've always thought of the Middle Fork—well, say it differently. I've always thought that within the group of friends that I typically boated with, pretty much all of whom got their start on the Salt and had to go off their experience on the Salt, we were extremely fortunate to have had that kind of a place to go to learn the skills that we could then transfer to running other rivers. Because, to my mind, from what I remember from my trips, the nature of the rapids and the average gradient on the river and several other characteristics on the Salt were fairly similar to the Middle Fork. There were a certain number of—depending on water level, of course, there were a certain number of technical rapids in both. I believe the average gradient on the—over the course of the entire run on both is right around 27 feet per mile.

TM: Okay.

DH: So—you know, whereas there's a certain amount of pool and drop and whatnot, overall, the nature of the rapids and the rate of current flow and even the size of the river, depending on the flow, was comparable enough that the Salt turned out to have been a really good place to learn some skills that then transferred to other rivers.

TM: Sorry. So the Middle Fork was a good place to learn?

DH: No, Salt.

TM: The Salt was a good place to learn because of its similarity to the Middle Fork.

DH: Along with the fact that, at that point, there were no permits required to run the river, so we were free to run it whenever conditions were right, and as a result, in some cases, made several trips a year in the spring.

TM: Okay.

DH: And, so, that background that carried over into running other rivers was pretty keyed, I thought, to our being able to do, you know, as well as we did on running other rivers.

TM: Which is basically to learn to read water.

DH: Sure. And also to navigate, boating skills, everything that goes with—rigging, you know, safety, mutual awareness, separation between the boats, gear that we chose to buy and use. And the involvement on the Salt also was... The mutual involvement on the Salt is what ultimately led to the establishment of the Central Arizona Paddlers Club.

TM: Okay. So, before we get there, though—

DH: Sure.

TM: —we're still kind of in 1978. And I'm going to take this very slowly, step by step.

DH: Sure.

TM: Did you notice a difference between the Middle Fork and the main Salmon?

DH: I wasn't on the main Salmon—well, I was in such a different mode on the main Salmon. Yeah, generally, I would say, on the main Salmon, you know, broader river, higher flows, somewhat different kind of rapids, less technical, average gradient was—and, subsequently, looking back, I would have compared the Salmon more so to the Grand Canyon, maybe, given the nature of the rapids, the volume of water, the average gradient on the river—more of a pool or drop situation, maybe. I'm not sure the best way to characterize it but, in my mind, the Salmon relates more to the Canyon, whereas the Middle Fork relates more to the Salt in terms of similarity and skillset that applies.

TM: And do you remember how long that Middle Fork trip was?

DH: I think it was six nights, five or six nights.

TM: Okay.

DH: Most likely, yeah.

TM: And three boats or four boats?

DH: On that trip? Probably four. Yeah. I think one of my friends, Pat McCormick, by that point, had gotten his own boat and brought it along. At least four boats, I would say.

TM: Okay.

DH: I think we were at the limit on group size or close to it. And, at the time—

TM: Did you have that orange Riken, was it?

DH: It was a Rogue, actually.

TM: Rogue. Okay.

DH: It was an orange Rogue. And, yeah, that was along. The fellow that I rode with also had one of those. I think that was the basis for the choice of the Rogue by Chris Sheafe. He got his, I think, partly based on Jim's experience and having gotten one of those himself.

TM: So you had a couple rafts and a paddleboat? Is that how that worked on the Middle Fork? Or did the Rogue have a frame that...

DH: I don't think we had any—we ran any of the boats as paddle rafts on that trip.

TM: Okay.

DH: If we did, I don't recall it. I think it was the case that they were all rigged with rowing frames.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah, which would have suggested we had a smaller group size, and we probably did.

TM: But it would also make sense, being six nights. You need food and—

DH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

TM: —you know, carrying gear and overnight camping. And it rains up there and...

DH: Sure. Yeah. Yeah, it was a whole different approach. If there was a paddle—if there was any amount of paddle rafting on the trip, I don't recall that. Pretty sure we didn't do that.

TM: So you were on this boat with this gentleman named Jim. Did you ask him a ton of questions at that time about, "Where'd you get this?" and "Where'd you get that?" and...

DH: Oh, sure.

TM: Okay [laughs].

DH: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah, at that point, it was, you know, anticipating that I would want to get more involved in this. I was, you know, quizzing everybody and... So, in terms of river—variety of river experience and skills and whatnot, the go-to person there was Dan Dierker.

TM: What do you remember about Dan?

DH: He was a rock [laughs]. He brought a lot of experience and skills and physical ability to both trips and really contributed a lot and helped us out, really knowledgeable about techniques of river running and just everything. He was a key guy to have had along on boat trips.

TM: And he lived in Flagstaff? Or did he live in Phoenix at the time?

DH: He does. He and his brother, Brian, both live in Flagstaff.

TM: Were they living in Flagstaff then in '78?

DH: Yup. In fact, I remember—and I think this is accurate. I ran into Brian last year at the Sprouts in Flagstaff here, got a couple phone numbers for him and Brian and talked to him a little because I had a real distinct impression of the house here, the family home, Dierker's home where we met on the way up to the Middle Fork trip and rendezvoused and picked up Dan. And I thought I could even—sidebar, this is kind of a sidebar, but I thought I could possibly even remember it, based on my memory of it back in '78. And, so, I drove through one of the nearby neighborhoods, and I thought I had it picked out, and I actually confirmed that with Brian. It was at 423. [laughs] That was the family home.

TM: Nice.

DH: His dad was a doctor who worked—a lot of his time, I think, was up on the Navajo reservation. He was—there was—he had a practice that involved administering to them as well as whatever private practice he had in town here. And, so, yeah, Dan and Brian grew up here. I'm not sure what the family connection was with—and I think I have the name right—Dick McCallum, didn't he run Grand Canyon Youth Expeditions, used to have a stone house and shop on Beaver, I believe, called Expeditions?

TM: That's right.

DH: And that's something else now, but we would always stop in there when were in the area to look for new gear and ideas and whatnot and talk. So, yeah. That was great. That was—Dan was a really important connection for us at that point.

TM: Nice. So, in '78, after that Middle Fork trip, did you go ahead and then look to put a boat together?

DH: I did. And, in early '79, there was a fellow named Tom Scott who was involved with another fellow named Rich. I don't remember Rich's last name. I believe they were both employed by a company in Tempe, a real estate development company. I think it was Universal Homes, something like that. And Tom, as I recall, had been along on the Middle Fork trip, and Rich came along on a trip in '79 that we'll talk about on the Grand Canyon. And Tom had an older Miwok, a Campways Miwok raft that he was interested in selling so he could upgrade to a new boat. So I ended up buying that from him. That was my first boat. I bought it in... I think I bought it after the Whitmore trip in '79. And...anyway.

TM: Okay. So, in '79, you're thinking about getting a boat. You've met Tom Scott and this gentleman named Rich. I want to check in with Patty first. Were you talking with her about, "Hey, we should get into this boating" or was this something that...?

DH: For sure.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah. I mean, it was—in fact, one of the things that helped sell the notion that, "Hey, I'd like to go do this. It might be a little risky, but I'd love to give it a try. It's a great opportunity" and so on and so on was the notion that, "Hey... And having done that and ultimately gotten some equipment and skills, this becomes something that we can do as a family."

TM: Fun.

DH: "And, looking to the future, I'd really like to pursue that." So that was part of the thing that helped her accept the notion that it was okay for me to go off and, you know, engage in something that neither of us had really done in the way that we did on private trips on those rivers prior to that.

TM: Okay.

DH: So... Yeah.

TM: So, before you bought the boat in '79, you did another river trip?

DH: I don't recall whether I bought the boat from Tom before or after the Whitmore trip in '79. I think it may have been right after that, and that boat may have been on the river for that trip, with Tom running it.

TM: So let's talk about the Whitmore trip. Where is Whitmore, and what river do you access from Whitmore?

DH: Right. So Whitmore is the name of a—I believe it's a side canyon on the Grand Canyon, on river right at, I believe, around mile 170, somewhere in there—180? Not sure.

TM: Little bit, 185, 186, somewhere in there, but never mind.

DH: Yeah. Sounds right. Sounds right.

TM: Yeah. Yeah.

DH: Yeah. I'm not sure. But—

TM: Below Lava Falls, and—yeah.

DH: Yeah. This was a trip that was organized by Randy Chamberlain. And he had done this once or twice prior, and he had arranged with—he had his van pulling a trailer to bring the gear into Whitmore trailhead area, as close as he could get and had hired a wrangler who brought some mules in to carry heavy gear. And participants, including the guys who served as boatmen on that trip, were flown in via single-engine aircraft and landed on a dirt strip just above the inner gorge at the Whitmore trailhead. So everything came together there, and the heavy gear was loaded on mules. The lighter gear was carried by the trip participants down the trail, and all of that brought down to the river and assembled for our trip there, starting at that point.

TM: How many up and downs on that trail did you make?

DH: Either two or three, carrying gear. I think three.

TM: And that trail's about a mile and a quarter long. It's a stock trail, so it's not super steep. But what time of year was this?

DH: I... Good question. I want to say later on, toward the end of summer, just because I remember the experience of bringing the gear down as being really hot.

TM: Hot [laughs].

DH: But that may have been—that would have been a consequence partly of the cliff face there being a dark basaltic rock, a columnar basalt, I believe. And, I mean, the heat—you could feel the heat coming off of that during the day. So, that being the case, and then considering, you know, the trail gradient, the gear we were carrying, the number of trips we did, I remember this being a really, a really, you know, demanding, hot, intense slog of a, you know, way to convey the gear to the river. So, on that basis, I would think it was towards August. But it's possible it was earlier in the year. It was the only trip I did that year? Or not. Let me think. I think I may have done a Salt trip in the spring that year as well. I can't be sure about that. I did just enough Salt trips that sometimes they kind of run together in memory. And I think it's—yeah, I think I did do a Salt trip in early '79 as well. I only got to do two trips that year, the one on the Salt, if I did it, and the one on the—from Whitmore down on the Grand Canyon, because I had a work assignment that took me out of the country from first of November in '79 through May of 1980.

TM: Okay.

DH: We were overseas. My wife and I and the kids were overseas and didn't get back to the country until end of May. So I didn't have other river running opportunities going into and through the spring of 1980, which was a high-water year. So there were some missed opportunities there. I didn't get back until after that. And then, at the end of May, after a month home, I went back by myself to Hong Kong for the month of July and didn't get back from that until August.

TM: Let's back up. Wait—

DH: So I pretty much missed all the river running opportunities in 1980.

TM: Let's back up to 1979, the Whitmore Wash trip.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Were you a passenger on that trip? Were you going to row a boat?

DH: I rowed. Yeah.

TM: You did?

DH: I rowed one of the rafts.

TM: What did you row—which boat?

DH: Good question. Good question. I think it may have been Tom Scott's boat. I think we had that along—the Miwok, the old Miwok that I eventually bought.

TM: How big was that boat?

DH: Between 13 and 14 feet, actual nominally 14 foot. This was back when Campways was still the company on making boats. Campways named their boats for various tribes. Shoshone—what else? Apache? Don't remember.

TM: Hopi?

DH: Hopi, yes, definitely. Yeah. Hopi, Shoshone, Miwok, possibly one other.

TM: Yeah, they were good boats—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —for their time in the day. So tiny little boat, Whitmore Wash—how many people on that trip? Do you remember how many nights, roughly?

DH: Probably two nights.

TM: Okay.

DH: And, on the order of—one, two, three... Roughly 10 people. Eight to 10 people.

TM: So I have to ask why didn't you come in at Diamond Creek? Whitmore's at, I don't know, I'm going to say 185 just for fun. And 95, 205, 215, 225, 40 miles downstream is a road—

DH: Right.

TM: —that comes to the water's edge.

DH: Yeah. Yeah. I think that was probably—there were probably at least two reasons why that was done—well, three. One was it fit with previous experience that Randy had in putting trips together in that mode, in that spot, for the sake of taking clients down the river.

TM: All right.

DH: And second was it, of course, added that 40 miles onto the trip. It made it a longer trip.

TM: Okay. Sure.

DH: And, for a lot of the participants, especially the clients who had not been on a river before, that was—you know, it didn't involve maybe as much whitewater but, by and large, it was just extra time on the river. So it expanded that for them, and they enjoyed it.

TM: Makes sense.

DH: And also—and this is speculative, but I would have thought that—since I found out after the fact what I kind of suspected before the trip, which is that we really should have had a permit to do that and did not. Had we gone in at Diamond Creek, it would have been a little more obvious that we were a group that was not permitted and... I don't know, at that point, if we would have had to have had a permit from the tribe to launch from there. I think we probably would have, and there may have been a cost factor.

TM: Not from the tribe, but you would have needed a permit from the park—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —to launch at Diamond.

DH: Yeah. I don't remember what the particulars—I don't know what the particulars would have been in that year, at that point for the sake of launching in terms of permitting requirements or anything like that. But I kind of assumed that that, you know, may have been a factor in the decision to go in at Whitmore. I don't know why his—see, I don't know when his first trip was that he went down Whitmore. I think the one I went on, '79, was probably his third time doing that.

TM: I take that back. There is possible there was a five-dollar per person fee—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —to go down that road. But that money would have been—

DH: Well spent.

TM: —well spent—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —and could probably cost less than paying the packer to get all the gear down to the river with the horses.

DH: Oh, yeah. But here's another aspect to that, which is that Randy enjoyed adventures and doing challenging things.

TM: Cool.

DH: And he was born and raised in Kanab, Utah, and knew that general area pretty well himself.

TM: Oh, he would have known—I bet the Bundy family even, if that was Chet Bundy's family that was running the packing—or Tony Heaton that was out there at the time, and any number of them.

DH: Could be. I don't remember names of the folks that were involved in packing the gear down—

TM: Okay.

DH: —but very possible. I mean, he had a lot of family connections in the area going back. I think he was... His dad, I'm sure, was born and raised in Kanab as well. I don't know about his grandparents. But it was a Mormon family, and they'd been in the state for a very long time. And, you know, that probably contributed. Randy was—he's kind of a quiet-spoken, not very demonstrative kind of guy, but a bit of a sly wit and pretty adventurous back in the day and encouraged that in others, which is the whole reason that I got into running rivers at that point, because of his openness to bringing new folks and letting them be involved and, you know, telling them what he knew and employing them on trips. It was great.

TM: Nice. So this is the first time you're in charge of a boat.

DH: The first time that I had extensive experience rowing a boat, long stretches on the river, rowing. I think I probably shared the rowing duties on that boat with Tom Scott. I believe that was the boat we had, and it was his.

TM: Oh, okay. Okay. Ah.

DH: But, you know, he gave me opportunities, definitely, to, you know, learn some additional—have some additional experience.

TM: Because I'm backing up a little bit to the Middle Fork with Jim. It sounded like he was rowing and you were with him, kind of making sure the bow line was taken care of and that sort of stuff, making sure he had gear and whatnot.

DH: Yeah. He gave me opportunities to row as well.

TM: He did?

DH: Yeah, he did. He did.

TM: All right.

DH: But on the major rapids, he wanted to do it himself.

TM: Okay.

DH: So, yeah, I was along for the ride for those.

TM: Okay. But it sounds like, on this Whitmore trip, you got a chance to row a little bigger water and maybe a little more time on the oars or...?

DH: I did. Yeah, definitely.

TM: Okay. All right. And, then, there are a couple of rapids on that section from Whitmore down to Lake Mead. 217 mile comes to mind. 205 mile comes to mind as kind of the first—

DH: 201.

TM: 201? Okay.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Thinking of just some of the rapids along the way, what do you remember about any of that?

DH: I don't have distinct memories of individual rapids, and I would have probably not been the one rowing any of those. In a similar way to how things were on the Middle Fork, you know, the person who owned the boat mostly did the oaring and mostly wanted to run the larger rapids, so I would have been along for the ride on those, probably.

TM: Okay. Okay.

DH: So...

TM: And what else do you remember about that trip?

DH: Whitmore?

TM: The Whitmore trip, yeah.

DH: I remember one of the guests, Rich—I forget his last name—having had the opportunity to row and went over a little rock in midstream and flipped the boat. Yeah, it was fun. He ended up in the river. That was—he was—Randy had along with him on that trip the same, small raft, 10-foot Selway raft that he had had along on the Salt trip and run successfully down the Salt. And, so, he took that. That was along, and Randy would have been rowing that most of the time. But his friend, Rich, the big client guest, was given the chance to row and had a little adventure. I don't remember at what point. It wasn't very consequential. We got him up out of the water pretty quick. But it was fun.

TM: Cool.

DH: And the major rapids I remember less distinctly or individually, but... Yeah.

TM: 232 certainly comes to mind—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —as a low-water. It's a rapid of...you'd have to go take a look at it, but let me ask you about the water levels for a while, because this is '79.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Do you remember high and low fluctuations of the river?

DH: I don't. I don't. And, at the point where we got in, of course, the range during the—from high to low during the day would have been dampened out by the distance downstream.

TM: That's right.

DH: I don't recall... I don't recall the water being particularly cold, although I'm sure it would have been brisk. I don't recall what the—I don't know that we knew what the range in either river height or flow volume was from the high and low points during the 24-hour cycle at that point.

TM: Okay. All right.

DH: But it wasn't, as I recall, at particularly high water. I think it would probably be easy enough to go back and, if I could reconstruct the date, go back and see what the release records were.

TM: Yes. That's right. That's right.

DH: But, anyway.

TM: Nice.

DH: So...

TM: What else on that trip do you remember?

DH: Oh, well, of course the encounter with the river ranger who was waiting for us downstream as a result of a commercial group having passed by on the river as we were rigging our gear and studiously inspected what we were doing. They didn't stop and talk to us, but we kind of wondered whether they might not report what they had seen, and it turned out that, apparently, they had, so we got down—I think it was down around Separation Rapids. Just below Separation, there was a—we could see in the distance a motorized raft, a Zodiac, I believe it was, going back and forth across the channel, apparently waiting for someone, and in this case, us, to arrive. And then, when we did, they, you know, indicated that—asked to see a permit. We didn't have one. And, so, they ended up—I think the fine was 400 dollars a boat for having been down there without a permit, and I think the ranger was a little bit surprised by the fact that we had come in from the launch point where we did at Whitmore. So...

TM: Do you remember the ranger's name?

DH: No.

TM: Okay.

DH: No, I don't.

TM: Four hundred dollars a boat—did they cite the people rowing the boats or just Chamberlain as the trip organizer or...?

DH: Yeah, I don't remember—I know Randy was cited. I don't remember if others were as well. My guess was that each boatman probably was cited, each boat owner possibly. I don't remember exactly.

TM: Oh, okay. So you would have ducked that bullet—

DH: Oh, yeah.

TM: —because that would have been Tom and not you [laughs].

DH: Right. Exactly. Yeah, exactly. Right. No, it was—there wasn't any general, you know, citation of the group or individuals who were all involved. It was more limited and selective.

TM: Oh, interesting. Okay.

DH: As I recall it. Again, we're talking 40 years ago, so...

TM: Right. Right. So not the participants, but the boat owners.

DH: Yeah, or—and/or trip organizers, the ones who volunteered that they were the ones responsible for it, which Randy, of course, would have done.

TM: Yeah.

DH: He was unambiguous about that.

TM: So simply had to pay a fine—well, a hefty fine.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Four boats—that's 1,600 dollars in 1979—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —which is a good amount of money.

DH: I don't know—I don't remember whether or what kinds of restrictions may have been a part of the penalty for having done, that in terms of subsequent access to the Canyon and to the permit system—in other words, whether any of the people that were cited may have also had restrictions on their ability to obtain permits in some area following that as a result.

TM: Do you remember if Randy had to go to court at all? Did he...?

DH: I don't know. If he did, I don't know.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah.

TM: All right.

DH: That was—very shortly after that was when we were out of the country on that extended overseas work trip.

TM: Okay. So, after the interaction with the ranger at Separation, the ranger would have taken their motorboat and left.

DH: Yep.

TM: Then you went on your way.

DH: Yep.

TM: And where did you—do you remember where you exited the river?

DH: I remember it as being Pierce Ferry.

TM: Okay.

DH: I know that there was a... And here, I've got to say, I did another trip in the Grand with Randy 2 years later in 1981, and I know on that trip we had a fellow with a boat meet us at the top of the lake and in the river channel there where the water was slow and, you know, help us de-rig and pull the gear out to the takeout, which I recall as having been Pierce Ferry. I think there was a similar arrangement made in '79 with a boat to meet us and haul the gear out. And, likewise, I think the takeout for that was also Pierce Ferry.

TM: I'm assuming—

DH: I don't think that—sorry.

TM: Go ahead.

DH: No. I don't recall ever having taken out any other place than Pierce Ferry when we were on trips that went that far downriver.

TM: Okay. I was just thinking. I was assuming that the reservoir would have been fairly high in '79, but I'm not sure of that. And, so, you would lose the current. The river would disappear into the reservoir backwaters, and the current would stop.

DH: Right.

TM: And it was still 40 miles of flat water in the Grand Canyon—

DH: Right.

TM: —to exit the Grand Canyon—

DH: Right.

TM: —and then another so many miles, 3 or 4, to get to the first roadhead—

DH: Right.

TM: —on the reservoir.

DH: Right. So I have to assume that there was also a powerboat that met us on that trip as well, more upstream in the slow-water sections, and helped us de-rig to an extent and/or tow larger boats out to Pierce Ferry.

TM: And Randy had done that before, so he would have known how to make those connections.

DH: Sure.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah.

TM: All right.

DH: And he also organized the trip we'll get to that was in 1981 and organized all the, you know, the travel arrangements and the boat to meet us and all the rest of that in '81 as well.

TM: So Tom had this 13-foot Miwok. You hadn't bought it yet.

DH: I don't remember when I bought it from him. I think it was after the—it must have been after the Whitmore trip because I don't recall that I was rowing it as my boat. I didn't have the discretion to row whatever rapids I wanted.

TM: Did you buy it, then, just before you left overseas?

DH: Yeah. I believe that's the case, because I'm pretty sure I bought it in '79, and I'm pretty sure I did not own it yet on the Whitmore trip. Therefore, it would have had to have been purchased from him in between that and when we left the country in early November.

TM: Okay.

DH: So, in other words, I hadn't had a chance to do a whole lot with it. He had a rowing frame that came with it, which was fairly beat-up and old and, ultimately, I ended up replacing. But—

TM: Do you remember how much you paid for that boat?

DH: I don't know.

TM: Okay.

DH: No. A few hundred dollars, I don't know.

TM: Did it come with oars?

DH: I think he kept the oars to use for the boat that he was going to be buying.

TM: Okay.

DH: Because he ended up, as I recall it, buying something of a similar size and was intending to set it up in a similar way, and the oars were in good enough condition that they warranted hanging onto those.

TM: Okay.

DH: So I don't think the oars came with it—maybe a pair, but not spares and so forth.

TM: Okay. Not...

DH: So...

TM: All right. Because there's going to be some more investment in this, I can tell [laughs].

DH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

TM: As boats are. So 1979 to 1980—

DH: Right.

TM: —you're overseas. And then you returned in the spring of 1980?

DH: I was with my family overseas on the work assignment from the first part of November in '79 until mid- to late May in 1980, when the 4 of us came back. And, because of the project I had been working on, there was reason for me to go back solo for a follow-up trip. And, so, I did that in July, pretty much the month of July, 1980. So I was back for the month of June and then went back to Hong Kong for the month of July, returned here, and, you know, was home subsequently. That was my only lengthy overseas trip for the company I was working for at the time.

TM: Did you get on the river in June?

DH: No.

TM: Okay.

DH: No, I had no river trips. 1980 was a year without river trips for me.

TM: And, yet, you had a boat.

DH: Yeah [laughs]. Ironic.

TM: [laughs] That's tough.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Okay.

DH: But the purchase of the boat was an opportunity not to be passed up.

TM: So '80, '81, '82, '83, and then '90, '91, '92 were wet years, a little above the norm. There was a lot of water in the west and a lot of rivers to be run. You didn't boat in 1980, so you kind of missed the Salt season—

DH: Right.

TM: —then. But were you thinking about it for '81?

DH: Oh, yeah, definitely. I'm sure we did probably multiple Salt trips in '81, but the big trip that year was the Grand Canyon.

TM: I'm going to back up a little bit. So, at this point, just to be clear, in 1981, your experience with the Grand Canyon in a boat would have been 1972 with Sanderson and 1979 from Whitmore?

DH: Right.

TM: Just those two?

DH: Exactly.

TM: Okay. So let's now move to 1981. You're back. You have a boat. You're going to need to spend some money to get straps and ropes and—

DH: Right. Right.

TM: The straps probably weren't cam straps.

DH: Yeah, they were.

TM: Were they?

DH: Okay.

TM: Or were you doing hoopies? I mean, let's...

DH: I don't recall. I think I was with my boat—I was pretty much using the cam straps from the beginning, as I recall it. I don't recall...

TM: Were they hoopies? And, by hoopie, I mean, there is a tail—

DH: Yeah. The hollow nylon—

TM: —with a loop.

DH: Right.

TM: And then there's a buckle with a webbing on it that goes to a loop. And, so, you would hook those loops on things, and then you would have—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —a buckle going to a tail.

DH: No, no. I'm pretty certain it was nearly all, if not only the cam buckle straps, the nylon webbing—

TM: Okay.

DH: —purchased from probably Northwest River Supply.

TM: All right.

DH: I think they were an item by that point they were in business.

TM: Okay.

DH: Amongst the possible sources, I don't remember, which all were in business. I mean, actually—it's very possible that I had bought some already at that point at the shop here in Flagstaff, Expeditions—

TM: Okay.

DH: —whatever they were offering, because I was looking toward having the gear that I needed to be able to completely outfit my boat already, at that point, before I bought it.

TM: And you mentioned Tom Fife had a woodworking shop.

DH: Tom Fife was—along with Pat McCormick, were employees of Randy Chamberlain at the time.

TM: Ah.

DH: It's Pat McCormick who I continued to boat with and who had his own cabinet shop in Tempe.

TM: Thank you for the clarification.

DH: Sure. No problem.

TM: Did you go back to Pat and build a new frame for your boat?

DH: We did.

TM: Okay.

DH: And, fortunately, he had the skills to do it. And I was the flunkie, more or less, because I didn't have that, neither the skills nor the equipment nor the space nor the knowledge of materials and techniques, so...

TM: And was this '81?

DH: Probably spring of '81, because I'm pretty sure we did at least one Salt trip in the spring of '81, and that would have necessitated having better gear. It's possible I did one Salt trip with Tom's old frame. And, to the extent that I remember the sequence, it probably would have been an eye-opener that I needed a better frame, because it was a given that I did. And the trips in spring of '81 would have involved Pat as well. I think, by that point, he had bought himself a 14-foot—I think it was called a River Runner. It had a kind of a pointed bow and fairly flat back end, but 14-foot raft that he was outfitting himself. And, so, since our boats were a similar size, we ended up building very similar frames for them.

TM: Again, these were out of wood? They were—

DH: Yeah.

TM: —wood rectangles with pins and clips, as you mentioned yesterday?

DH: Yup. And he had a pretty good knowledge of materials and sources in the valley, so, as I recall it, the kinds of wood we used were... I think the side members may have been mahogany and the cross pieces some kind of, I don't know, possibly—is spruce—would that have been an appropriate choice? I don't recall. But anyways—

TM: It would have been heavy [laughs], but I think it—

DH: It was—yeah. They were heavy. They were definitely heavy, heavy and really high quality, you know, cross members and side pieces and then marine plywood for decking. And, then, the technique of assembly, he was more aware of it than I how to put them together, and he just did a really good job of assembling some really stellar frames that lasted us for years afterwards.

TM: Nice.

DH: In fact, I believe it's true that the original frame that we built together—and sidebar here. I digress a bit, but there's a video of—documenting the destruction of Quartzite Falls, and at about the 3-minute and 50-second mark, there's a sequence that illustrates the power of the falls, which involves a trip on which my boat was lying on the left side above Quartzite Falls. And the slack on it—there were two lines on the boat, one upstream, one down. Because it was so close to the cliff face, we had a couple of guys climbed up on top on the left side right above the left channel. And, as the downstream line attached to the front of the boat was being pulled through, the guys up above were pulling it to keep it tight and then throwing it down to the fellows down at water level, who then madly tried to pull up the remaining

slack that resulted from that and couldn't get it tight in time to keep the boat from the eddy, from the reversal. So they chose my boat getting completely thrashed in the reversal there. But the frame itself survived in good shape, so... Anecdotal stuff about the quality of the work that Pat did.

TM: Nice. Very nice. So this is 1981. You're back in the country, and you have a boat, and now you have a frame. So where did you go boating in '81?

DH: I... The Salt trips—I have to say upfront, the Salt trips in my mind kind of run together in terms of how many, which year, what time of year, who was along on the trips, but I'm near-certain I did at least one, if not two trips, in the spring of '81.

TM: Were you seeing—between '78 and '81, just 3-year period, were you seeing more people on the Salt, or was it still pretty quiet up there?

DH: Definitely more people, I would say, in '81 by the time we were boating that spring.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah, I would say without a doubt. Well, I, you know, the only trip I had to compare it to was that '78 trip, which, given the conditions and the time of year and how far previous it was, would have been a likelier—we would have seen other parties on the river that year on those dates. So...

TM: And, yet, the U of A team was right in front of you.

DH: Yeah. And, you know, of course, we didn't know that until we got off, but yeah.

TM: Right.

DH: Evidently, they were downstream from us and had no problem.

TM: So a couple Salt trips in '81 and then a Grand Canyon trip.

DH: Yep. And that was an eye-opener as well. That was a major step up for me in experience running the river because, based on our shared experiences up until that point, Randy was good enough to offer me the opportunity to row his 18-foot Avon, Avon Pro. So that's what I had as my personal boat for that trip. I rowed it the whole way through the Canyon. So that was my first time rowing the entire Grand Canyon, first time going through, traversing the entire run from Lees Ferry to—and that one I—I'm pretty certain, as I say, we got out at Pierce Ferry. There's a small chance that one took out at Diamond Creek, but I think we went all the way through.

TM: Okay.

DH: Anyway, so the boat was mine. I ran it the whole way through. And it was—I hadn't rowed a boat that size. I had never rowed, obviously, in those kinds of conditions before and never had the experience of being the sole one responsible to navigate. So that was a real threshold experience for me. Along with my first Salt trip, that was just amazing.

TM: Who was on the trip?

DH: Randy was on it. He had organized it. I ran his big boat.

TM: Was he the permit holder? Had he gotten the permit?

DH: I don't think so.

TM: Okay.

DH: I don't recall that he was. I would have thought that he may not have been eligible to have a permit at that point, based on the Whitmore trip. I really don't remember for sure.

TM: Paid the fine, went ahead—

DH: Yeah, so I don't recall who the permit holder was. It may—I think it was someone else. But he would have been an acquaintance of the person that was the permit holder and asked to organize the trip.

TM: Okay.

DH: So, at a minimum, he organized it, but whether it was his permit, I don't recall.

TM: And who else was there?

DH: Pat McCormick was along, and he had his 14-foot River Runner that he was rowing at that point. I don't recall whether I even thought about taking my boat down at that point, but having been offered the chance to row Randy's big boat, I took that up. And... [laughs]

TM: What was Randy rowing?

DH: I—that's a good question.

TM: I mean, did all the smart people say, "We're bringing the little boats. We'll give Dave this big gear-hauler [laughs] and let him go"?

DH: Yeah, It wasn't—I mean, it was partly a gear boat. It had quite a bit of stuff on it. But I also had two passengers at all times through the trip, so...

TM: Which increased, you know, the weight [laughs] of the boat.

DH: Increased the weight, increased the level of responsibility—"Oh my god, I got passengers," and... So, yeah. Yeah. Randy would have been in a smaller boat at that point. I don't remember what he was rowing. That's a good question. I don't think it would have been the Selway, the little, 10-foot boat, but he's the kind of guy that would have done that in a heartbeat. He would have enjoyed the challenge. So it's very possible that he had that little Selway along. Although, I'm pretty sure Tom Fife was also on that trip, and I can kind of recall him rowing a small boat on the Grand at that point on that trip. So... Good question, though. I think Randy probably had something else, more of a mid-size boat, a 14-foot boat, something like that.

TM: Do you remember the month of that trip?

DH: No. No. It was a summer trip, more or less.

TM: Summer. Okay.

DH: It wasn't early or late. It was definitely a warm-weather trip.

TM: And were there other trips on the water then?

DH: Oh, yeah. Lots.

TM: Okay.

DH: Yeah. We encountered a lot of other groups. So...

TM: What else do you remember about that trip?

DH: Couple of long days when we fell behind the pace. There were two days, one when we had to cover 28 miles and another when we did 32.

TM: Wow.

DH: Yeah. That was memorable because—oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah, I think the overall trip length on that was 13 days. Yeah.

TM: You were moving.

DH: Yeah. Yeah. So that—and that, in turn, suggests that we probably got out at Diamond Creek, but I'm not sure. I'm honestly not sure.

TM: Well, if you were going to the lake, you were moving [laughs].

DH: If we were going to—yeah, yeah, yeah.

TM: If you were going to Diamond, you were moving.

DH: Oh, yeah. Yeah, but no, we—I distinctly remember the first night. I think we camped at Soap Creek. And we got up the next morning. The boats were high and dry and sort of sitting on the rocks. So that was somewhat of a learning experience for us.

TM: And why did that happen?

DH: Due to fluctuation of river level from being so close below the dam. It was quite a wide range. I don't recall the flow rate, differences between high and low flow, but it was substantial. I mean, I think it was a range somewhere from 8 thousand to 20-some-odd thousand that we were seeing over the course of 24 hours at that point. And...

TM: So, if you came to camp on a high flow and the dam turned the water off—

DH: Right.

TM: —you might wake up in the morning and your boats were high and dry because the river had dropped?

DH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

TM: Okay.

DH: Oh, yeah. That's what—that happened to us a couple of times. So that was an eye-opener.

TM: What would you do then? Wait? Just a bunch of people grab the boats and drag them back to the water?

DH: Took some of the heavier gear off the boats and got—there were a pretty big group of guys on the trip. Randy himself was 6'4", 230, 240, a very strong fellow. So he kind of led us in a more or less of a group charge, like a... [laughs] In fact, I remember a moment where there was a few of us that had some differing amounts of experience playing football, so he had us all kind of, like, line up, facing the boat, and get down in a stance and go, "Okay, go!" You know, he'd run and charge up and hit the boat and barely budge it and then eventually got somebody on the back as well, dragging it a little bit. And we were able to get it clear eventually, before the water came all the way back up. But, yeah, it was a task. So, yeah, that was... [laughs] That was a learning experience. We did better downstream.

TM: [laughs] Yeah. What else do you remember about the rapids and about other trips and people you might have met and hikes you might have done?

DH: Oh, wow. Just the impressiveness of the rapids and the scouting that we did and... You know, I will say I'm pretty certain Dan Dierker was on that trip as well. Randy had been down with Grand Canyon Youth multiple times. I'm trying to remember who with previous Grand Canyon experience was on that trip. Dan may have been along. I don't honestly remember for sure whether he was or not. But we had enough people with enough experience that they knew where to pull over and scout and what to look for and what the normal runs would be as a function of water level. So we had pretty good direction on the start, and then, of course, we were on our own to execute. But we managed to do pretty well. I had some good direction on how to run the rapids.

TM: Good.

DH: That, combined with the forgivingness of the size of the boat—and I was in decent shape at the time, so I was able to move the boat as needed.

TM: Good.

DH: I didn't—I don't recall having had any major problems on any rapids, certainly never flipped any place. No hang-ups, no incidents that I recall. It was generally a pretty well-executed trip. I don't recall anybody having major problems in the major rapids. So, in that respect, it was great.

TM: And then you were able to compare the Grand Canyon with the Middle Fork and the Salt.

DH: Yeah.

TM: Technical rivers with rocks, where there were must-make moves to get around rocks or you'd wrap on them.

DH: Right.

TM: Grand Canyon, with a lot of water—much different.

DH: Yeah. But knowing—given that, you know, the direction we had on what the best runs would be under the circumstances and combining that with the skillsets that we had begun to acquire by that point in terms of, you know, maneuvering the boats, it turned out to be that we were able to execute the runs we needed in most all cases, so it was good.

TM: Nice.

DH: Yeah. There, again, the Salt was our learning river, always was, and the skillset transferred pretty well.

TM: Was that the last trip you did then in '81?

DH: Probably. Yeah, I don't think I would have done another one later in the year after that.

TM: Okay.

DH: I didn't tend to do trips after summer.

TM: Anything else about this river trip in 1981 that you remember or that's something you want to bring forward?

DH: Not in particular, just it was a great trip. It was a lot of really good camaraderie. It was a really good learning experience. All in all, it was relatively uneventful and a really nice opportunity to—I made some new friends on the trip as well. There was a fellow I boated with a few other times. Pete Bolton was along on that one. He had worked for many years—he started out working for Xerox as a salesman and eventually got into real estate work for Grubb & Ellis, got into a pretty high-level management position with them in sales, and subsequently retired from that. I believe he's working as a consultant locally, kind of a career coach for folks in those fields. Good guy. He had—oh, and he had also bought a Rogue inflatable of his own. He was on that '81 trip. I don't think he... I don't remember whether he had his own boat at that point or not, but he was definitely along—

TM: Okay.

DH: —as was Chris Sheafe. He worked for a developer in Tucson. Let's see... Yeah. There was—anyway, good group.

TM: Okay. Well, would this be an appropriate place to wrap up Part Two, in 1981? Because I get a sense that Central Arizona Paddlers Club is coming up.

DH: Exactly.

TM: Some more Salt River is coming up.

DH: Yeah. Very much so. Yeah, this is kind of the point at which—my next following trip, other than the Salt, was the Middle Fork in '84. And then my next Canyon trip was in '86. So, other than the Salt... I'm trying to remember what other rivers I was on during that period. There was probably a Verde trip mixed in there in that timeframe, '81 to '86.

TM: Okay.

DH: And may have been—I doubt it—actually, I have to look back at my records and diaries and whatnot.

TM: I did want to ask you was Patty on this Grand Canyon trip—

DH: Yep.

TM: —in 1981?

DH: Yep.

TM: She was.

DH: She was. That was her first major trip that we got to go on together. I think, except—excepting—I think she was also along on a Salt trip earlier in '81.

TM: In the spring?

DH: Pretty sure she came along on the Salt—

TM: Okay.

DH: —in '81, and that would have preceded the Grand Canyon trip.

TM: And did she buy into it as quickly as you did?

DH: Oh, yeah, hugely, hugely. She was always—I mean, from a certain point, with the exception of a couple of Salt trips, basically any trips that I was involved in, she was also along. And, as the boys got older, they would be coming along with us as well. That all pretty much went according to the extent that I had a plan for turning it into a family activity. It became that in kind of as early and progressive a fashion as it could be, given the ages of the kids.

TM: Okay.

DH: I took them down the Salt on their first trips, launching at Horseshoe Bend in...would have been probably...'86.

TM: Okay.

DH: '85 or '86.

TM: So that sounds like a good thing for Part Three, is '81 to '86.

DH: Okay. Sure. And that also coincides with the early days and formation of the Central Arizona Paddlers Club—

TM: Great.

DH: —which came about primarily to represent private boaters on issues and concerns on the Salt River.

TM: Great. Anything else you want to add into this about that time period that we've just talked about that you're thinking, "Oh, I didn't say, but I want to talk about"?

DH: Not really at the moment. As you can see, from what I've been saying, Randy Chamberlain was—I mean, I really owe him my starting my involvement in river running. I don't know that it wouldn't have come about in a similar fashion at a later point, but he was just so instrumental in all of this, including the Salt, the Middle Fork, the Grand Canyon, including Whitmore. I mean, he was—subsequent Salt trips as well.

TM: Nice.

DH: I ended up going as I had in the Whitmore trip, going along as a boatman on some other trips that he did. He was also very involved through his church with scouting, and he would take groups of scouts. I forget—Explorers? Is that a level in scouting?

TM: Yes.

DH: Right. He had an Explorer troop at his church that he was involved with that he would take down the Salt.

TM: Nice.

DH: And I went along on some of those trips as well, as a boatman.

TM: Great.

DH: So there were some great memories there as well.

TM: Was that in the '80s as well, '81 through '86?

DH: Don't remember the first time I did that with him in that mode with scouts. It probably was a little bit later—

TM: Okay.

DH: —after I had a little more experience with it. I don't know when he started doing that, for that matter—

TM: Okay.

DH: —when his first trip with scouts was.

TM: All right. Great.

DH: But, yeah, he did a few of those.

TM: Well, in that case, this sounds like a good place to conclude Part Two, a Grand Canyon Oral History interview with Dave Huizingh. Today is February 22. The year is 2020. My name is Tom Martin. And, David, thank you so very much.

DH: You're welcome.