

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society

Interviewee: Rosie Acosta (RA)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Rosie Acosta was born in 1931 and came to the Grand Canyon as a Harvey Girl in the 1950s. She worked for Harvey, then moved to the growing gateway community of Tusayan where she worked for many decades with Franz and Hannah Rotter. This interview was made shortly before she passed away in 2012.

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TM: Today is the 25th of February. It's 2:00 in the afternoon. We're in Flagstaff with Rosie Acosta. Rosie is going to tell us about her time at Grand Canyon. What year were you born, and where did you grow up?

RA: I was born in Lübeck in Germany in 1931.

TM: What did your parents do?

RA: My father worked in import/export. My mother, nothing. That's all I can do about mother.

TM: You have any brothers and sisters?

RA: No. I didn't have any brothers or sisters for a long time. But when I was 13 my little brother appeared.

TM: How was it that you made it to the U.S.? How did you come to America?

RA: Well, that's a long story. Well, I wanted to come to the states because I had an uncle and an aunt here. But my father put down his foot and said, "N-O, what language do you think they speak over there?" Well, first we had a school because I couldn't speak languages, or rather I refused to learn languages. No English, no French, no German, nothing. I was bad in all of my... My forte was science. All mathematics, chemistry, and all that I was taught but no language. So my father didn't think I could get out of high school. He said, "We can keep you another year but we don't want to for the simple reason that shows one thing: laziness, and lazy people can't learn quickly. If you wanted to, you can speak any language you wanted, but you are just too lazy to learn." It kind of was the truth. One of my teachers, I met her later on by accident when I was in the states at the Grand Canyon. She was a visitor at the hotel I worked. I checked the end of the name, sounded familiar, and my boss said, "Yeah, she's from the town where you are from. Do you know her?" Oh, oh, that's her. So we started talking. She said, "I told you so. You could learn it." Well, I did, but my father put his foot down. I wanted to come to the states. But he made one mistake. He said, "Now, if you want to go to England and learn English there, it's closer...but I'm not going to pay for you all the way to the states. In 5 minutes later you going to come

back.” So, I got myself a job in England. It was fun. I hired on as a maid. The people were really great and sooner or later I learned English. I went to night school and had a lot of fun going out with a lot of young people. I had for the time off, especially when the kids went to school because they went to boarding school. When they were there I could go and come and leave in the afternoon and evening if I wanted to, which I did and I went into town. They lived a little out of town. And I learned English.

TM: What year was this?

RA: That was from 1950 to 1956. Yeah, that was. I wanted to stay for 6 months. I stayed for six years. Time went fast, but it was a lot of fun and I loved London. I still adore London. But then I decided maybe it's time for me to go to the states. My aunt and uncle couldn't sponsor me anymore because they brought, in the meantime, all my other aunts and uncles over. So I did the same thing and hired out as a maid. One of those ones where you stay for a year. You get \$50 a month and you have to stay for a year, then you get your papers. That's when you get your green card. That was the worst year of my life. The people were kind of odd. He was a big sub-lawyer and she was kind of funny. She had to do every... It was a maid I could work as, but she had nothing. You not supposed to mention the name, but call it maids, kind of lazy. She had made a timetable. From 6:00 in the morning till 7:00 you clean the ice box, from 7:00 to 8:00 you clean the stove. So all through the day, every day, you had to make the beds, change the beds, all every day if they were slept in or not. Had to wash all the sheets and iron them. They had everything. They had one of those...everything was electric...

TM: Where was this?

RA: That was in Long Island. My year was up, and I said, “No, I'm not gonna stay.” She asked me to stay longer. The kids were great, but I had enough of that.

TM: This was 1957?

RA: That was 1956 to 1957. I was gonna visit my aunt and uncle in New Jersey, which I did once in a while on my day off. It cost \$5.60 for me to go from where I lived by the train and car and whatever transportation to go to New Jersey. They lived in Newark. I went there, got myself a job which I never took cause that night I made a mistake. My mistake was in the Port of Authority to land on the wrong floor with the escalators. Now, I just said it cost me \$5.60 from New York to Newark. They said go to the east coast, from the east to the west. \$56.80. Now that isn't that much. Ten times higher than \$56 so that couldn't be too far. I had no idea of distance. In that time people still got all dressed up to go by bus. Wasn't like it is now. So I told my aunt and uncle I'm going to Los Angeles. I'm gonna start there. I hated the east coast. I hated New York and that area. I didn't like the people so I didn't like that whole area. Couldn't be too bad on the other side. At the same time I had my job in England offered back to me, too. They wanted me to come back. No, I'm trying the other side. It's not too expensive. I had \$125 saved up. I'm going from the east to the west on the bus.

TM: For 56 bucks?

RA: For 56 bucks. I met a very nice young lady, she was going the same thing. We left on a Sunday. Can't remember if it was Sunday or Monday. Somebody asked the conductor, we had a conductor, when we get to Los Angeles? He said Thursday. Hardly entered my head. Wait a minute, that's days. It was 5 days.

TM: Day and night.

RA: Day and night. Sitting on the bus on and on. I stopped in Baltimore for a day or two and visited a friend. We went to Washington D.C. and saw a lot of things. Was an old friend I met on the ship coming over and he was stationed at Baltimore. So, I stopped there and then I went on. On the trip I made the biggest mistake of my life. We went the southern route and as I come from England, there is no bus, no color barrier. This white or colored, it didn't make any sense to me. One night we stopped at the Greyhound station for dinner. That was the filthiest place I'd ever seen. All the tables were dirty, food and stuff all over. Couldn't be that bad. There must be another place. We have 2 hours so I'll go walk up the road and see what happens. I came to a tiny little place. It said restaurant and fried chicken, never had fried chicken in my life, and welcome. Beautiful red and white gingham colored curtains, friendliest looking place. I walked in. Everybody stared at me, asked me to sit at a table and they will give me a menu to look at, but still everybody's looking at me. There was a tiny little fountain in the corner, soda fountain had about 5 or 6 stools. People turned around and looked at me. Had the best fried chicken I've ever had. I still can remember it. And grits and homemade bread and butter. It tasted wonderful, not like that filthy old Greyhound station. I remembered it, remembered this is the place. I don't know why they didn't have more people there. They had a clean table empty. It only had about 5 or 6 tables. It was a really small, tiny little room. Looked like a bottom floor of a house. Wasn't very much, but they were friendly. The tables were neat and clean. I paid my bill, I left them a good tip, and went back to the Greyhound station. People saw me walk in. They all looked at me funny. Then somebody says, "Don't you know you're not allowed to go to that place?" "What do you mean?" "That was for colored people only. That was not for white people."

TM: So you were breaking the color bar in reverse.

RA: Yes.

TM: Huh, good for you.

RA: And it was delicious the food. They didn't say anything. That's why everybody was looking at me. They were friendly. We didn't give any information, you couldn't really talk to them. They were sort of like somebody would come—police would come after me or whatever, but I went and had a good best dinner. The best fried chicken. I still can remember. Never had fried chicken like that again. I'd still like to know where that little place was. I can't even remember the town what it was called. All I know is that when I went back to the Greyhound station and people had seen me come out of that place. It was close to the Greyhound station. They probably wandered around outside like I did, but that's when they told me about it. That's why it said "white" and "colored". I had wandered in the colored restaurant. Had a wonderful dinner and still would thank those people who ever had it for being so nice and wait on me. I mean, I never thought anything about it because in England it was all mixed. You could go to a colored restaurant and not think about it. Well finally, I met another girl who sit next to me and we landed in Los Angeles. Stayed at the YWCA for four days. That's where we stayed and we were looking for a job. They told us wait until Sunday because Sunday they have most ads for them and you can look rather than run around here and there. In the meantime, we went down to Disneyland and looked at Los Angeles over and had very little money, we couldn't spend any money. We didn't eat out. We bought a loaf of bread and jug of jelly and that's what we lived on. No going out for dinner or that sort of thing. So on Sunday we look at the newspaper. That was I think on Third Street. There was an advertisement that wanted kitchen help. Waiters, waitress, anything, busboys. It was on Third Street and about one block was a Harvey office from the hotel we stayed. So we went. She got a job and when she didn't want to go to the Canyon they asked me. They were hiring for the Canyon. "What's the Canyon?" No idea. So first of all they gave you one of those logs to fill out with all the...

[pause for caretaker visit]

TM: So, it was the Canyon and you didn't know about the Canyon.

RA: Well, I fill out this log asking about work. I put down England for 5 years and in New York 1 year. When it comes my turn for an interview, there were lots of people. I mean there was a lot. They looked at me. "You sure that's all the jobs you ever had?" "That's all I ever had and that's why I'm looking for another job now because..." That was in May. The first of May is when I left there and now we are in June. ... "Have you ever been a waitress?" "No. I've waited on the people. I worked at a house..." "There's a sideboard, there's a little tray with coffee, with coffee pot and coffee cups. Come on over here and serve me a cup. Bring it over and serve me a cup of coffee." No problem. Put it back. I put it back. They asked, "Are you willing to go to Grand Canyon?" Whatever it is, I'm trying to. I need a job. Didn't know what it was or what it entailed. "Go buy yourself a pair of white shoes." Ouch, that hurt my pocketbook. "And a train ticket and you can leave tomorrow night or tonight." I leave Los Angeles that night. I went and got my shoes and off I went.

TM: That night?

RA: That night.

TM: And what year was this?

RA: 1957. Off I went to the Grand Canyon. They called me the experiment. Go into the manager's office. He explained to me all about the dormitories, roommates and all that. It didn't bother me.

TM: So you took the train from Los Angeles to Williams and then changed trains there?

RA: Yeah, the other train into the Canyon. At that time they had a steady. It wasn't just a visitors.

TM: It wasn't that they put you on a bus in Williams and sent you up? They put you on the train?

RA: They logged the train because the trains went every day. It was the El Tovar where they picked them up at the train and brought them up to the El Tovar. Well anyway, I got to Canyon on the train. "I'm starting you out at the BA because you can learn answers." "Okay." They told me where to get a uniform, and showed me the dining room, and showed me the counter. "This is the girl that I'm training you and she's busy. She has no time to talk to you right now. Just wait here. Sit here at that little counter and watch her." I watched her and had no uniform on. I see people all eating. She's busy cleaning a table. I just went in and helped her clean the table up. She's supposed to teach me. She said she never forgot that I wasn't even hired. I was the experiment. She taught me how to do it the Harvey way. How you serve people. That was all new to me because that wasn't the way I did my street where the people served themselves.

TM: Had you seen the Canyon by then? Had you actually walked to the edge and looked over?

RA: No. We went past when the bus came. When you drove up, you could see it. You saw a glimpse of it.

TM: So from the Bright Angel you didn't walk on through and take a peek over the edge?

RA: Yeah, afterwards in the afternoon they took me over to the dormitory. She walked me down there.

TM: Was that Rowzer?

RA: I don't know. What was it called? Colter.

TM: Colter, okay. Colter Hall.

RA: And the Indian dorm was across from... Rowzer was on the other side of the tracks. It was by the laundry. I was told about tips. They told me I could keep them. I didn't know. They told me you had to tip the busboy. "What do I do with the rest?" "That's yours to keep." We only made 50 cents an hour at that time. That was the beginning. Well, I worked, I learned, I had fun. There were lots of nice people.

TM: Tell me about your first impressions when you looked over the edge and saw the canyon.

RA: I saw that big hole and it was fabulous. The colors were something else. They changed every... You can stand at the canyon and the colors will change every time. I don't know how somebody ever painted it. I don't know. There are a million paintings and photographs and none do I like. I had fun and went around. Went by it every day to walk from the Bright Angel up to the dormitory. We walked by it every day and couldn't stop looking. Didn't walk down very much. Walked down a mile or so on Bright Angel, but I never wanted to walk down. Took the mule about a year later. Woohoo, that was so great. That was a lot of fun. I can't really remember. I was scared at first. The first couple of switchbacks, I was scared! Then it was too much to see, so who was scared anymore. Then they told us all that they never lost a mule yet. Well they didn't say anything about riders, just they didn't have any mules yet. So, I enjoyed that. We only went to Lookout Point. We didn't go down the last one. Never made it. Always said "I'm gonna go back." Never made it. Something always came up. We were busy, busy, busy. We worked here, there, everywhere. I am still the experiment. The bosses came out of L.A. We were still here. We made the experiment. Then they said all the other workers they could find, they didn't last long. They stayed a couple of days and they left. Hated, the work was too hard. It was too hard. They didn't want to work. Most people at that time... You had three crews. One coming, one working, and one going. That was it. The going on changed every day. The people came, hired out, stayed 3 or 4 days for room and board and tips. A couple of days later, saw the canyon, went down and up. "We've seen it all, let's go next place." Yeah, lots of the workers made the rounds of all National Parks that way. That's the way it used to be. Then in the winter when they shut it down, lots of them went on the ships to Hawaii. They had Grace Line, I think it was called. They worked as waitresses on the ships for the winter months and then came back. They always closed either the Bright Angel or the El Tovar, so those girls always went back and forth.

TM: So what did you do that winter of 1957, that first winter, what did you do?

RA: I stayed.

TM: Was that an option?

RA: Well, kind of. They had people going to Death Valley, but they only took certain people. They didn't ask me for a long time. By then I was working the bar and the desk. I help out here and there, everywhere so they didn't ask me to leave. I never got myself another job and I wasn't chosen to go to Death Valley. I worked at El Tovar. I worked everywhere.

TM: When did you start working at the El Tovar?

RA: No particular day. At first it was always, "We need help. Come and work up here a couple of hours." Then the BA was closed and everybody was at the El Tovar. But it was fun. Was there when Fred Kabotie painted all the pictures at El Tovar and the BA.

TM: What do you remember about Fred? Did you talk to him at all? Did you watch him do the painting?

RA: No, we just watched him. His son was working, too, on them. I remember. The only picture I can remember painting was the one at the BA when he painted the guy at the table which was the blacksmith. He sat drinking scotch in his cowboy hat. A little painting on the BA wall in the bar. I saw him paint that. Yep. We had a lot of fun. Then I went in the end, went to Death Valley.

TM: When?

RA: When did we go? In the 60s. That's when the bosses came back. We had a fabulous general manager. He retired, but they called him back to Death Valley to reorganize staff and he asked for some people/volunteers to work at Death Valley. I, of course, volunteered because we loved him. We loved Mr. Stiffler.

TM: What was his name again?

RA: Stiffler.

TM: What was his first name?

RA: Herschel Stiffler.

TM: Herschel Stiffler.

RA: He was a tough guy but he was fabulous. There's not a job he wouldn't do himself. Then he was taking over Death Valley for a while until he retired there. I went back and forth a couple of years. Worked with him in the summer, then back to the BA and back to the El Tovar. By then I worked at the El Tovar bar.

TM: What was working in Death Valley in the summer like?

RA: Closed, Death Valley in the summer. Now it's open. You had the ranch open not the hotel.

TM: Closed.

RA: Yeah, there was no air conditioning. Now it's all summer open. Oh, I loved it. They had a fabulous swimming pool. It was drained every night and refilled in the morning. The water was warm. I loved it. You weren't allowed to swim in it, of course. No, because the help not, it was only for guests. You didn't pay at that time a couple of hundred dollars for them and kept help. But we would visit it. One time we went as visitors and stayed at the El Tovar years and years later when I was at the canyon already.

TM: So, you started?

RA: At the Quality.

TM: Well, you were still working at the bar at El Tovar and had friends there? What friends do you remember?

RA: Frank was there.

TM: When? Frank showed up in '69?

RA: I don't know. I really don't know. He was kind of tough, but he was good. We liked him. He was there for years.

TM: Did you guys speak German to each other?

RA: No, I don't remember speaking to him. He just gave orders. He was the boss. You didn't talk to him. [TM laughs] He was good Spanish.

TM: What do you remember about him?

RA: Oh yeah. He made the place. I mean, he had good help and they stayed with him. I mean, they didn't have this turnover. They didn't have much turnover by then anywhere anyway. People stayed for jobs. There were years lots of people went with him when he finally quit to go to Tusayan. Lot of people went with him because he was such a good manager. Nobody could go with Stiffler because he was in Chicago. But he was wonderful. He was the boss. He would call today and say, "Get to work over here," and we'll go. I tell you, he was that way. We had good bosses. Couple of stupid ones.

TM: Where did you meet your husband?

RA: At the Bright Angel.

TM: What was he doing?

RA: He was a bartender and I was cocktail waitress. Then we went everywhere together.

TM: Where was he from?

RA: He was from Mexico.

TM: What was his story?

RA: He was a bartender and he came over. He was actually studying law and came over. I don't know why he wanted to come. He worked for a long time then, too. He was a good bartender. He worked at El Tovar and BA. He worked at one place then worked up. Once you worked at the El Tovar you mostly stayed there. He went to Death Valley, too, for one season. ...when they needed people at that time.

TM: When did you get married?

RA: 1960.

TM: Okay, and when was your daughter born?

RA: 1960.

TM: What was the hospital because in 1960 it would've been...

RA: We were at the hospital at the Canyon.

TM: At the Grand Canyon Association Offices across from the railroad track?

RA: Yeah. Youth hostel now.

TM: The new clinic hadn't been built yet. The old one, yes.

RA: The old one. Was a beautiful little hospital.

TM: Yes, and what do you remember about that?

RA: The hospital? Not much.

TM: Do you remember who the doctor was, then?

RA: Doctor Lacey.

TM: Was he good?

RA: He was good. He had to chase me down all the time. I refused to go... He chased me down all the time, yeah. So, my daughter was born in the Canyon. She belongs there more than I do. She was brought up in the Canyon until she went to school. Took her to Mexico. She is the reverse wetback. Well, because I had an argument with the school teacher at that time. They had good schools, but the English teacher didn't like the way my daughter wrote an essay. She insisted that Defoe only wrote Robinson Crusoe. My daughter immediately stated that he wrote a lot of books, that that was one of his fantasies. It was a children's book. Most of his others weren't because he was a journalist. He wrote *Journal of the Plague Year*, *The Great Fire*, and a lot of history. The teacher said, "No, you're wrong," and gave her a bad grade. I said hold a minute, send you to another school. That teacher you couldn't tell anything. I called her and said, "Just come over to my room." "What books are those?" Considered I loved the beautiful books and showed her a whole bunch of them. "Yeah but, I can't do anything now. The grades are set." So, I took her down to Mexico. At a good English school, good English teachers. The American school was full and the German school was full, so we settled at an English one. They had room for her. That's where she went to school. After she finished high school, she came over here and made her exam to get into university in Las Vegas. She last a year. She was way ahead and they gave her one year. The schools in Mexico are fabulous, the good ones. You hear a lot about bad schools where they don't learn, but schools in Mexico City they are good. The German ones. The American school is fabulous. The English schools. Mostly all your foreign schools are good. ... A couple of Mexican, too, because she went high school to a Mexican school.

TM: In what city?

RA: Mexico City.

TM: Mexico City. Was that where your husband was from?

RA: Yeah.

TM: And he had family there?

RA: Oh yeah, his mother lived there and brothers that was in the family. Then she came back to the states. She worked mostly at the Canyon for Opa then.

TM: When did you leave the south rim to go to Tusayan to start working for Frank?

RA: 1971.

TM: Where did you work?

RA: I worked at Death Valley at that time as bartender. They said they didn't need me anymore. I was replaced by a food and beverage manager. I was bar manager. They didn't need me anymore, so they had a food and beverage manager. Maxie lasted exactly 3 weeks and they fired him. "You coming back?" "No thank you." By then, Opa had given me a job in Tusayan.

TM: Was that at the Red Feather at that time?

RA: No, it was in Squire.

TM: It was at Squire, okay.

RA: Then I was bartender and bar manager at the Squire for years. Plus, there were a lot of other jobs.

TM: Like what?

RA: Run the dining room, help out here, help out there. At decoration time, I did the decorations.

TM: Like what?

RA: Christmas decorations.

TM: Now Rosie's handing me a packet of photographs. Rosie told me she didn't have any photographs and clearly she does.

RA: My daughter made me that for Christmas, but that is only from Tusayan.

TM: So here is a picture of an airplane.

RA: That was Opa's plane and I made it out of cardboard.

TM: Okay. How big is it? What's the scale here? I mean, is this like a couple feet? Couple feet, couple/three feet wide, maybe.

RA: That was a whole wall on wall. Have you ever been in the... That's the beginning of the end.

TM: Where the staircase is.

RA: Yeah, under the staircase.

TM: And the waterfall.

RA: Yeah, and then came Thanksgiving, I made a couple of cabin and it had Hansel and Gretel.

TM: Did you do this in the 50s? Was El Tovar or was Harvey doing...

RA: That is not Harvey.

TM: ...anything like this in the 50s?

RA: Yeah, but I made a candy not in the 50s. In the 60s I made a candy house.

TM: When did you start that? Early 60s?

RA: Early 60s, I made a candy house for the help. Just made a cardboard box and stuck a lot of candy on it. And it was kind of cute. One's the house, there was one this big.

TM: Okay so, a couple feet by a couple feet by a couple feet, yeah?

RA: Yeah. That was the beginning. And then we did a little bit more. Little bit here, little bit there, little bit more figures. They were all made like that. This is the candy, the log cabin. Bread sticks.

TM: It looks like Rye Crisp for the roof.

RA: Whatever, for the roof.

TM: Breadsticks for the... How'd you stick it all together?

RA: Sugar glued that together. Royal icing. And that became the house.

TM: Did you make the Santa?

RA: No, no. Santa, you just dressed him. The dolls I dressed. The little Hansel and Gretel I dressed.

TM: So you'd made the outfit?

RA: Oh yeah, sure. See, that's Hansel and Gretel. All the other candy house that we made little ones. That is when we get into more decorations. When I made all the cakes in between the different rooms.

TM: Overhead?

RA: Yeah. That is the middle room where you have the plane now. The plane was there the year before. I cut that all out of cardboard.

TM: Made in a major scene out of cardboard, with a lot of what looked like Disney characters. Disney rabbits and raccoons.

RA: Yeah. The whole Bambi family. It was all cut out of different pieces of cardboard. And then comes...

TM: So, who's this? Who's here?

RA: Ah, those are people I worked with.

TM: Okay. Do you remember their names?

RA: I know, she's Doris. That was Doris, she was fun.

TM: Why was she fun?

RA: Boss. Boss.

TM: Boston. [laughter]

RA: That's what we did to them. That's where we made the figures. Mr. and Mrs. Santa. See, each color is a different piece of cardboard.

TM: Wow, there's a lot of different colors in there.

RA: Oh, yeah, and little pieces taped to the head and everything.

TM: How big are these? A couple/three feet high maybe? Four feet high?

RA: They fit on the wall. Big, about three feet high. The ones I made at the BA, I started out making those.

TM: Okay, so the plane now, looking at it from the side, it's a cardboard flat. It's doesn't have a nose to tail dimension, it's just flat.

RA: Yeah. It's flat, just like the...

TM: Looking at it from straight on, it looks like it has a third dimension to it. Very nice.

RA: Well, it does, because you cover over the cardboard. You don't glue it down all together. You put the cardboard into...

TM: Sort of stacked it up?

RA: Stack, but they look through them actually. But so do mama and papa Santa.

TM: So, this was in the Squire?

RA: No, that was in the next one.

TM: Red Feather?

RA: Red Feather.

TM: Okay. There's a fireplace, there's chandeliers. There's red ribbons hanging from the chandeliers, there's red and white ribbons hanging over the doors.

RA: Over the walkway, see.

TM: Then the plane is dropping parachutes.

RA: Yeah, that's when I moved the plane.

TM: And gifts are tied to the parachutes.

RA: Heading to something, change it around.

TM: Yeah, so you can change this every year, then?

RA: We changed it every year. We still have all the animals. The animals are all over the windows, all around the building. Mama and papa Santa had the best ones.

TM: And Christmas tree there?

RA: Yeah, there's the tree.

TM: So this is in the dining area?

RA: Yeah, he said to make the last table's given up. That's where I made them.

TM: And is that you there?

RA: Yeah, that's someone putting the animals up.

TM: There's Casper the ghost. This must be Halloween.

RA: That's Halloween I did those. We cut out all the animals.

TM: Was this in the 70s then?

RA: That's all the 70s. And that is my big candy house. She wants Hansel and Gretel on the float when they had it Fourth of July. They had a parade and she wanted that. Make me a candy house but make it big. That is four foot tall.

TM: Wow, and that looks like it's made of cardboard and then cut out?

RA: Yeah, each one is a cut out. And then the stained glass windows.

TM: Just very ornate, very gorgeous, very nicely done.

RA: That's my daughter caught me.

TM: Very colorful looking dress. You look like a big present.

RA: Opa gave me that.

TM: Red jacket, multi-colored, really gorgeous dress, black top. Huge Christmas tree.

RA: We did all the decorations at the Red Feather and the Squire. Now the Quality Inn.

TM: So now, this is in the Canyon Plaza?

RA: Yeah, the Canyon Plaza. See the fireplace.

TM: The fireplace, yeah.

RA: We did different. I had all different stuff.

TM: That's right, this is the dining area. That's the entrance in there and dining, okay.

RA: Yeah, you know where you go, the beams.

TM: The beam overhead, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, and there's decorations up there.

RA: That's the outside. We had big sleighs.

TM: Lots of decorations and sleighs and lights.

RA: Yeah, light all over the place. That was my crazy dog that was a bandit. A bandit without no clothes on.

TM: What kind of dog was this?

RA: It was an Akita, something like it. He never told us. We asked him and he didn't tell. He was long haired until he went to get the Christmas tree with Gabe and Rosita. He got tangled in barbed wire. We had to cut a piece of fur out of him, so we shaved him off. I said, "shave him off." So, he was a bandit but he had no clothes on. He looked so sad.

TM: Looks very smart.

RA: Yeah. Mr. and Mrs. Christmas had the... They were the best. [looking at photo book] That's Mrs. Santa again. That's Mrs. Santa, she had a lot of pieces. Each one was a little piece and I go crazy with it. See Mr. Santa on one side of the dining room and she was on that side getting ready. Yeah, there she is. All the others on the little side. We had her pour with the... And a little koala sitting on that. Yeah, that's Mr. Santa reading the list. He's scratching his head and this was a Red Feather on top of his side. Cut off a letterhead. We made a million of the packages.

TM: Did you meet Bob Thurston?

RA: Oh, yeah.

TM: What do you remember about Bob?

RA: Not much, just the team. He was always around. My daughter will know much about him. He was always had the girls. That's all I know about him. He was what, in his 70s when he married his secretary. His apartment was up on top of mine. I saw him go up and down and he came to eat over at the Red Feather. Sat at the table with Opa. That's all I remember him, nothing in particular. The stories he told, but that's all I know.

TM: What kind of stories?

RA: That he was mayor of Williams and they were bootlegging. Then he learned to fly. They flew a plane out of the first airport at the Canyon behind Ten X. You know where that airport is?

TM: Yes, over by Red Butte?

RA: They used to have that airport, friends of his. I flew out of there, the first flights over the canyon.

TM: Did you? Do you remember the first helicopters to fly in and out of Tusayan?

RA: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

TM: Was that Wayne Learn? Do you remember the name of the helicopter pilot?

RA: No, I don't. I don't know anything about the helicopter. I flew one. My daughter can tell you a lot more about the flight better than me. She knew everybody and everything.

TM: Did she?

RA: Yeah. I saw them and probably better when they came to eat, they always ate. They always had the tables.

TM: And Buford, Buford Belgard?

RA: Oh, Buford Belgard. I knew him. He was in charge of the laundry. He and his wife...

[pause for caretaker visit]

TM: Buford.

RA: Yeah, Buford was down at the laundry. I remember him from later on when he lived at Williams at the dry cleaners. That's what I remember that I met him. That's all I know about him and Mary Hoover who stayed with him and took care of him because he was blind before he died. There were so many people around that I can't really remember.

TM: Thinking of Elling Halvorson?

RA: Elling Halvorson, yes I remember him. When he first came and when he built the pipeline. I remember him from then, but only as a young man. But that's all I... If you work, you don't have time. You meet them, you see them, you say "Hello, how are you?" and you remember the sight when they come in. They are like welcome, an old customer, you greet them nicely. You give them extra service but to half of his friends and so on, I don't know. I never went around with anybody there. You didn't have the time or the place. People were not going together like now everybody goes to same places. Like a

Fred Harvey employee, you were not allowed to visit the El Tovar bar. You could be in the Bright Angel, but not at the El Tovar. I can understand them because it was small. It was a small place. Now I think they open... They changed everything around, I don't know. It was a small bar, probably didn't want everybody there, especially not a drunken Indian. You knew your customers, you know.

TM: What was Dan Lopez's mother? She ran one of the restaurants there. Do you remember her?

RA: Oh, Aldo Lopez's.

TM: Aldo Lopez's, yeah. She's in Seligman now. What was her first name?

RA: Yeah, she went to Williams and had a restaurant. She had Mexican dinners at the Legion hut, but regular restaurant she didn't have. She had one in Williams or the Lopez's had it. Can't remember who was who. There was 4 or 5 sisters. They all worked together. You know Josie, was it? Was that the one was the housekeeper at the El Tovar? I remember them going shopping to Babbitt's once in a while and that's about it. You know people by sight or by... Like at Verkamp's you knew...

TM: What do you remember about the Verkamp's?

RA: Mostly you know, his store and the five the kids. They were always around. They had a lot of fun. I can remember one year the boys were out. It was really snowing hard. They were always shoveling the snow off the roof. There was that much snow on the roof they couldn't see the building anymore. That was a snow. They made a tunnel just about going from the BA to the dormitories. Now, you don't even see that much snow anymore. I was in Mexico. The headlines in Mexico City said "Flagstaff, six feet of snow." Six feet.

TM: Was that in 1966 or '67?

RA: '67, I think it was. I tell you, it was fun. We had a lot of snow the years before and after, but not that amount.

TM: Did the electricity go out?

RA: Oh yeah.

TM: And what did you do then?

RA: I can remember taking out gas stoves. Put them in the kitchen. You served chicken ala king and whole ground oatmeal and you made coffee. It was the weirdest thing. Electricity's out, you can't make coffee. You made coffee by the pot full. People said, "All I want is a cup of coffee." The guests had the hardest time trying to understand. You can't. So everybody wanted to eat chicken ala king. I don't know. 2/3 days before the... And of course no heat. You had the old radiators.

TM: But they would've been electric pump driven.

RA: Yeah, I don't know. Anyway, I know it was darn cold. We used every blanket we could get hold of. It was cold. No hot water, but the kitchen was warm. Getting Eli Gomez's and Marcus' kitchen stove out of their houses. Put them in the kitchen. We had gas. I don't know where, but it was gas. But anyway, we put the gas stoves in there. They got the gas stoves to work. How they did it, don't ask me. I didn't even

know we had gas in there. But no toast. "Can I have some toast?" "No. Make some in the fireplace." That was ridiculous. When the lights went out, the lights went out. There was no such thing as emergency generators.

TM: Who was your best friend back then? Who else in Tusayan can you tell me about that you knew about?

RA: Know anything about, not really. I didn't have any friends because in Tusayan I worked the night shift while everybody else worked the morning shift. There was always hello and goodbye and so on and so forth. Lydia I know because she lived across from me in the old dormitory. Everybody else was always off on a different day. I didn't go to town very often. There's a lot of people I remember. June Wadsworth, she was working for Opa all over the place. And Kay was working from the Canyon, Kay Benmos. She married twice, can't read the paper. Take the paper and read it. [laughs] We worked together at Death Valley and at the El Tovar, and the BA, and at the Squire and at the Red Feather. Yep. I can't remember if she worked at the Quality Inn. I know she was visiting then, then she got married again to her husband. Oh yeah. She enjoyed it there. Kathy Noeskay was a good waiter, bartender. Oh boy, she could carry them.

TM: Did you and your husband...?

RA: I didn't know her husband. I knew she was married.

TM: No, your husband, I'm sorry. What was his name?

RA: Gabbie.

TM: Gabbie. How long were you guys together?

RA: We were together until he hurt his back. He hurt his back and went to Mexico and stayed in Mexico. So, I was doing the work here. He was working in Mexico taking care of my daughter when she was little. But I had a good time. I learned to like the place. It was nice when we were over at the Squire. It was a big job. I had to take care of that. I worked at the bar and in the dining room. When Opa said, "You better fire one of my best waitresses" I had to fire her.

TM: Why?

RA: Because she didn't want to cut her hair the way he wanted it cut. He was particular. You didn't wear... The same way I can't wear real shoes, or shoes that tie on top. It was regulation for Fred Harvey. You wear nurses' shoes that tie on top and I have just a pair of slippers. Not like ballet shoes. They used those. Think about that. I got myself a comfortable shoe and he saw it. I can't wear them. Couple of hours and the blood was coming out on top. You didn't want to clean your shoes. I did, and why are they—he got me in the middle of the... I was in pain they hurt so bad. I put these shoes on and I told you... You finally took these shoes on. Now how dirty they are. So, I took them off and showed him. From then on I could wear my shoes. But I had it with Opa, oh boy. He wanted something done, you better do it. That was the rule for Fred Harvey. He was a Fred Harvey man. I can remember how manager at the BA. When the stockings came out, no seams. He said, "I'm not feeling everybody's legs," because he still had to turn around to see if the seams were straight. "How do I know you got stockings on? You mean I gotta feel them now?" We had to try to get stockings with seams on for a long time. They didn't make them anymore. When they finally went completely out, well, he finally decided. Mr.

Stone decided you could wear stockings without seams, or pantyhose you could wear. "I'm not feeling everybody's legs." You had to go through inspections everyone. See if your uniform was standard.

TM: Every day.

RA: Every day. Well, surely it had to be a clean uniform. Starched uniforms. You didn't sit down on them. You just did it that way. Oh yeah. When the boss was still the boss. Now you would say to people they could sue you for it. I mean honestly, it's the truth. You couldn't make them do the uniforms like that. Couldn't dress the way you wanted. You wore what they wanted you to wear. Yep. Even on the days off, you had to be presentable. A lot of things were different then. Lots better then. I liked it a lot better. You didn't have the kind of ruffraff around. The Canyon didn't have it. You only had one night watchman and one security guard for the whole place. Now, how many you got? You had one sheriff. The sheriff was working in a day times mule guide. He was taking them down to... You wouldn't need another sheriff on duty all the time. Dunagan was the head of the mule. What do you call them?

TM: The wranglers?

RA: The wranglers, he was the head of the wranglers.

TM: What was his name again?

RA: Bud Dunagan. Yep. His wife was a nurse at the Canyon. Just trying to think of the one who was the horseshoer. He was there for years and years and years and years. He lives right now in... I know that face, I know that face. He always sat by himself, no one talks to him. What's the other place called? The Peaks. Yeah, he was there. Maybe talk to each other. Yeah, he's in bad shape. He can't even sit. He's completely halfway... I'm kind of crooked. I've been crooked all my life. But it was a good time there with him. I know we enjoyed it. When you worked for Fred Harvey, when we worked at the BA, the morning shift and the night shift once in a while got together. Well, they had some caves. Went along the rim in some of them. There was one up on Rowe Well road and one along the canyon rim. That was big when you went out to Shoshone Point. But everybody got together. Couple of guitars, couple of cases of Coke. You didn't hate the boss every day. That was later when everybody hate the boss. When the old Tusayan... Do you know the old Tusayan? Had a big plate glass window looking out from the bar. That window got broken, I don't know how. Cowboys and Indians, yep. It always was the fight between cowboys and Indians. Later when they had, now in Tusayan where the IMAX is, they used to have the miners camp. They were living out there. That was miners against cowboys or cowboys against... One was always right. There were lots of fights out there.

TM: Who was running the bar?

RA: Down there? Thurston's. Would be Bill Bilters running that. Who else was the bartender, I don't know. I can't remember. I don't even know. The new Tusayan, when they had built the new bar out there. That wasn't smart. After the fire.

TM: The old bar got torn down to build more of the Red Feather?

RA: It burned down one night. They had a fireplace. Apparently it was left coals in there. Anyway, the building got burnt down and then the store with all the alcohol in there. It was a good fire. That is where McDonalds is now. They built McDonalds there, and they built what we call the new Tusayan. It was across the street where the part of the Red Feather is now, the newer part. No, it's not the Red Feather.

TM: The Holiday Inn Express?

RA: The Holiday Inn, yeah. That's what they built. They had a restaurant and bar. First the bar then a bar and restaurant. Yeah. We had a lot of fun. We went out there. It wasn't quite as wild. But it was busy. Busy bar.

TM: Seems like as the years went by, more and more people kept coming to the Canyon?

RA: Oh yeah, oh yeah. They built/rebuilt some more. First was the Red Feather only. Bob Thurston built the Red Feather. That only had 44 rooms, just the front and the sides. Opa built the other ones. He built them by hand. He was amazing. He was taking up the bricks. He built the back units. That's when the Red Feather got bigger. They built the restaurant then. We had the best restaurant. Buses were lined up all the time.

TM: This was where Cafe Tusayan?

RA: Yeah. The whole place, and it was fun.

TM: What did you call it then? Did it have a name or was it just the restaurant?

RA: Just called the bar, Red Feather bar, Red Feather dining room. Yeah. Dining room and steakhouse. The front was a regular dining room, drinks only, supposedly. The other was supposed to be a steakhouse. Opa wanted a steakhouse. That one was too busy and then he took all the tourists. The Flagstaff tourists they ate lunch. We had them for lunch, for dinner, for breakfast, ah yeah. We had tourists all the time, by the bus loads at night. People standing in line. I mean, it was busy. You didn't have time to socialize. You knew the people, that was it.

TM: But it was work.

RA: It was work, it was work. Work, work, work, work.

TM: And then next came the Squire?

RA: The Squire was before the Red Feather. Squire was the first and then the Red Feather. And then Opa built Quality Inn. That's when we got Quality Inn piece by piece by piece. Oh yeah. The goals of Grand Canyon, the goals of Tusayan, and the Canyon got bigger, too. I don't know.

TM: What do you think about Tusayan today?

RA: I think it's terrible what I hear about it. Anymore, I don't vote. I left before this mess all started. But what I hear about it is not the nicest. It is not Tusayan the way I know it. I don't know where they got that many people to vote, because the only people that worked there were the worker for the restaurants and the bars. People that actually worked there. And some of them, yes, have been there for a long time but not very many.

TM: So in the 70s and 80s, there wasn't a lot of this contention back and forth?

RA: No. Lot of places had all the same people. Some retired. Lot of them were the old ones like Opa and a lot of the Harvey people. They left and retired and went someplace else like Williams. I don't think

Thurston's didn't have very many. They just had the Red Feather. Even the boys there, the ones that ran the Tusayan Café, were locals from long before then.

TM: Eric and...

RA: Eric. I know a Bob.

TM: Is that Bob Sutton, who was...?

RA: Bob Sutton. He lived out there and he had a trash business. What was the other one? Quinn. Was one of the Quinn boys. His father used to be manager at Fred Harvey. One of his brothers worked for Park Service. He was a park ranger. I don't know what the other one did, but all the Quinn boys worked. His mother was running the gift shops at Fred Harvey. Mrs. Quinn was working, I think, at the Best Western. But there was all people. I don't know where they got the people from to vote for the incorporation. That is my big question. I thought you had to live in that place for a certain time. The ones that lived there, they lived in dorm and boarded housing. You didn't have any. Like I said, they want bigger housing. Before, it used to be you had to be unmarried to work for most of these places. Fred Harvey had a rule you didn't get married. So you didn't get married. When you married you had to move out.

TM: What did you do when you got married?

RA: First of all, nobody knew about it.

TM: Ah, that takes care of that.

RA: Chef was always after me. "Why don't you and Gabbie get married? You guys always going out together." He didn't know I married. In the end I told him I'm already married for six months. You were way behind. But they had about 5 rooms for married couples. That was the old brown building they moved from the rim to the back. Still exists, I guess. The top floor used to be married couples. That's all.

TM: Did you guys get a room there?

RA: Yeah. We had three rooms of the Colter Hall. The other entrance went down to greenhouse, where the old greenhouse used to be. That was where they cut all the fresh flowers for the hotels. It was a good old time and everybody was, too. That's why you didn't have all many fights going out. They put all the trailers in the trailer parks. And people got married and it was the best for a while. You see they didn't want people to get married because usually if one quit they lost two people. That was the matter behind the madness. Oh, it was fine if you had mostly all young people because then they stayed around there. But they were not that young anymore because you had all the older ones coming in from the other Harvey houses were moved when they closed them out bit by bit. Well, some of them were open.

TM: Did you notice a change to the corporation when Fred Harvey became Amfac?

RA: Amfac, yeah.

TM: What happened then?

RA: It wasn't the same anymore, slowly but surely it changed. Brought all the old managers in. If they knew the business, Fred Harvey brought up the manager. You grew it Fred Harvey... They just hired a manager, that was it. Even in Fred Harvey, junior managers they didn't last. Well, they were transferred. Amfac, you had a different type of manager. They went and they worked all for the change of this and that. You never had anything but girls working the restaurants. Then they hired waiters. It got kind of different. It changed slowly but surely. Yeah. Now I don't know if I want a job still then. I don't know what the Quality Inn is like, if it's still the same.

TM: Well, Ann's running the shop, so I would think it would be the same.

RA: Oh yeah. There's a lot of changes, too.

TM: What have I forgotten to ask you about? What other things...what else do you remember?

RA: Nothing, really. Just things have changed like anywhere else from the 50s to now. The same change. Even the towns, they come anyway. You had the dress codes and they were good. They were not bad. Now, you see dresses, ah, what you call fashion right now. I don't agree with it. How much can they know? Yeah, I enjoyed it. Enjoyed my time at the Canyon. That was just fun. You liked to work. That's when you enjoyed going to work. That's the kind of jobs they were. Not "do I have to go, I don't want to go." Even pulled two shifts. You pulled one shift next to the other if you wanted to. You worked 12 hours, 16 hours, didn't make any difference. I make one mistake one time. Was 6:00 in the morning and it was still dark. It was 6:00 at night and I got off at 2:00. That's it, "oh my god I'm late for work." I thought it was 6:00 in the morning and I went to work and I wouldn't even have to go to work until the next 6:00. You just went to work when you thought it was time, you just went. You have to go and help out. And you had people. When it was super busy, you stayed out in winter. You came back. Today, you would be a waitress in one of the places. You would come in to eat or whatever. When you see they are awfully busy, you don't just go. You help them pick up. That's when you did it and what Fred Harvey used to do. You used to do it all the time, go and help out. Don't just stand and do nothing. Come on, let's go do it together. You get through it faster and get it done. I remember one Sunday, Mr. Stiffler told everybody they could go to church except two stay because nothing was planned. And everybody went. It was half hour later, 3 bus loads of people show up. They gotta be fed. We had to do it with two. Well, of course Mr. Stiffler helped, everybody helped. Everybody helped get it done. Those girls came back from church and saw the place bad and dirty dishes all over the place. They didn't go home and change clothes, they went right in there and worked. Three bus loads, right. Well, the whole day was packed. Everybody. That's when you had the people that worked and liked to work. Now you see people that don't want to work. It's not give me the hardest job, it's give me the easiest job. It's not to get the lowest job, I work myself up. Ah, they don't want to. "I'm not taking a busboy job. I want a waiter's job. I don't want to wash dishes. I want to cook." Well, that's the way they think. They want to start at the top. End up at the bottom, which I've seen.

TM: Was alcoholism a big problem then? Did that happen more and as time went by do you think?

RA: I guess so. You had a couple of them, yeah. They loved the booze. They always drunk. You had all the park rangers that ran the night shift. He acted always... Take station wagons one after the other, down to the Havasu reservation. They came off the reservation. "Take them home. Come on Smitty, Smitty take you to home." He was there by closing time, load him into the car. He would say, "Shovel in as many as you can. Take them home. Make another run." Now they take you to jail. They take you home. You couldn't walk home, they drove you home. The boss whenever it's crowded and packed, like when

the old Canyon Inn still was open, way up on the hill where the mine was. They had a little Inn and a little bar. The restaurant was kind of good. That wasn't all his fault. That road was kind of windy. Probably didn't want to go because it was so windy. Some people drove up a tree one time. They didn't survive, none of them did. They went up the road and went up the tree. They were coming from the BA going up to the Inn. I wasn't there at that time, just heard about it.

TM: Did you ever get a tour of the mine?

RA: No. Nobody did, I think. I don't think they let people down there. You had to go down a shaft, was pretty much down. Yeah, they always wanted, what I thought, they had plans for a hotel going down the side of the rim. I've seen the model they had. Was beautiful. They never got the permit. I don't know why not, it really looked nice because you couldn't see it from anywhere. Was just in the cove of the canyon all the way down. About 30 floors down and, yeah, layered. They never got the permit. That would've been really nice. Nobody put up the money for them. That would've been a job. I don't know who could afford it. That was one of the few things you did. All I can remember is work, work, work, and enjoy it. You did. You had stories from other Harvey houses. ...

But things happened at the Harvey house once in a while. A whole trainload full of girls coming in. The BA manager was a new manager. He wouldn't sell them a room, wouldn't let them in. They came on the train. They were those working girls. You see the Harvey Girls, the film? Well, you had big house, like the other side of the building. That's the kind. He let them in again and he said he didn't get a minutes sleep. He told us the story when he was manager at the Canyon. I won't mention any names, but things like that happened and you don't know what to do. What would you do? ... Those other kind of people. Now, they tell you "Sorry, we don't let Mexicans in" and "Sorry, we don't allow." Well, you can't say that anymore, which was the way when we went to Mexico at first, my husband and I. We took a sleeper. They wouldn't give us a room. I remember that. That's why I hated Quality Inn, I never wanted. I told Frank and said get Quality Inn. I never once stayed in a Quality Inn. My husband, he couldn't get his seatbelt on, there was something wrong with the damn seatbelt. So, I went and checked with one of the clerk. He says we gotta put a new one. Fine. My daughter's still in the car. It was in that time you went dressed. You didn't wear jeans, you didn't even... They weren't supposed to be on the market. For farm workers, you would dress when you went somewhere. He was dressed in a suit with a shirt and tie and everything. Wanted to check in and then was told "Sorry, we were full." "I'm already checked in." "Sorry, we had made a mistake. We can't rent you that room." It was a mean Quality Inn. We went next door to the Doubletree Inn. They gladly took us. My husband didn't look Mexican, either. Maybe by the hair, but he was light skinned as I am. Joke, but that was the way it was. Like a giant in a movie. You see it, that's it. And it even said it on the restaurants. No Mexicans allowed, no Mexicans. No colored, no Mexicans. Was kind of funny. I could never understand it, but that's the way it was. Those ladies looked professional when they check in. But hey, sorry. He had to let them in, especially as they came on the train and went back on the train. Went some other terminal.

Lot of stories happened at the Canyon. Not that I know. I really can't tell stories I don't know. I've just heard about them. Times are long gone and long passed. Now, if I knew the new stories coming out of... I wonder if anybody finds the little caves again. That one cave up Rowe Well road is about a mile out. It's before you go over the first gate, and it's about a 100 yards up the road. You can't see it from the road. You have to go up and there's a little cave. It's about like half this room. They built up a wall and fireplace, the benches. We had a lot of steak fry's up there for about up to 8 people you could get in, otherwise it was getting too crowded. But it was a nice place. Then we had the big cave. It was a monster cave on the road when you went just about one before the last viewpoint. Going up towards

the Watchtower. There's a cave underneath there. That's probably still there, nobody knows. Nobody uses it anymore. We went at least once a week. Got the stove out, piled in the cars, had cars.

TM: Would you cook out there? Cook dinner?

RA: No, you didn't cook. We just took sandwiches and some snacks. Oh, but we had Cokes. A couple of cases of Cokes and 7-up, whatever. No booze. Nobody brought booze, wasn't allowed. So everybody didn't have it. You didn't smuggle it either. It was fun. Was a different kind of crowd. You don't get them together like that anymore. Oh, ask Eric. His party is still going on there. He still has his Swiss party once a year. You go? Did you ever go?

TM: I haven't gone yet but he's on the list of people to talk to.

RA: Yeah. Talk to Eric. He can tell you more about the Canyon than I can.

TM: And Susan and Susan's mom.

RA: Yeah.

TM: Do you remember her?

RA: Oh yeah do I remember her. Sue used to be my bus girl. Well, I think that's all I ever remember of her when we get together. What was her mom's name? Her father was head of maintenance, good friend of Opa's. Can't think of it now. Out of the blue, I can't think of. Sue, both her and her sister Pat used to be my best bus girls. We used to all work together. ... They were all brought up to work for fourteen and fourteen and they worked as bus girls, and in the gift shop, and doing something on the other. You worked. All the kids worked at Fred Harvey. The same thing like Franky Overson and Ann, they all started out as kids. My daughter was one of those, too. That's the way you learned to work.

TM: Was bussing for Harvey.

RA: Uh-huh, because even out of Fred Harvey, you still worked that way. If couple of Franky to show you, which is kind of odd. I found it in my mess. You laugh. Don't. Does this remind you of a picture? Does that remind you of something?

TM: Yeah, Robert Redford.

RA: That looks like princess. He looked like Princess Diane when she walked with her husband that far apart. They looked just like it.

TM: Yeah. So, this is Franky.

RA: Yeah, Franky.

TM: He's wearing a jacket, he's got some glasses on. Is he in Tusayan nearby?

RA: No, that is somewhere in the woods there. Yeah.

TM: What year is this?

RA: I don't know if that's his first wife or if that is still...

TM: Roughly what year?

RA: ...Diane. I don't know. Early 60s, no 70s.

TM: 70s?

RA: Yeah, yeah. This is his first wife. I just founded it lying around.

TM: Nice job.

RA: But don't it remind you of Princess Diane when she walked with Prince Charles? That's the way that she walked with her head down and far away. That's about the same. Oh my god. Old letters, no pictures. I had a whole box full of pictures. I don't know where they are. If I threw them out. If I thought it's so long ago. Just had pictures of the Canyon. That's what I took mostly. They could drive us, they took pictures. Jimmy Tallon, he did a lot of painted pictures for the Arizona Highways. One couple of pictures he took, you just had to hit it right. He took the canyon and it... A waterfall was in the canyon. The clouds were just all the way down. It looked like a waterfall and it was clear. It was fabulous.

Jimmy was one of the bus drivers for Fred Harvey when old Jake was still working bus driver. Jake Barranca, he was the guy with the biggest hands. His hands were in the Guinness book of records. Jake Barranca, he was a fabulous driver. He had stories to tell. He would go up, drive up to Hermits Rest, take the tourist buses and tell stories and stories. He got really terrible, can't remember any. Oh, and he could get mad. Good old Jake. Big guy. One time he left his hat on his seat. He got off the bus, shaken a lot of hands, nobody gives him a tip. Everybody says "Good day. Thank you very much. Thank you, thank you, thank you," and all were gone. He gets kind of mad. "What's happening? You mean after a good two and a half..." I mean, he made it worth it the way he talked the stories about the mules, about anything. He would entertain the people between the BA and the Watchtower and all the stops in between. So, he gets back on the bus. When he gets on the bus, his hat is overflowing with money. Over the seat, on the floor. He said he was never so embarrassed to think about the people what he did. Somebody had started it and put it in the hat. He was upside down, he says give me something and everybody put it in. On the seat, on the floor. Yep. It was a trip to the Watchtower, which he also brought the bags in, was on the way back. Yep, but he could tell you stories. He was there for a long time and so was his girlfriend. Opa took care of him. Gave him a room later on at the Red Feather for a long time. When he left, he didn't have a house. Opa always took in the strays especially if they worked good. A paycheck until he gets something to eat. Oh yeah, he'd feed the whole Canyon if he had to. If anybody comes to him, "I don't have any money, can I have some lunch," he'd give it to you. Maybe he won't give you a steak and stuff, but there's always butter on the bread, bread and jelly. Oh yeah. Good old Jake. He was in the Guinness book of records for the biggest hands. I don't even know what size glove he would wear. He had gloves specially made. Oh yeah. He was a big Mexican. He was a good old guy. Good guys go on forever. Yep. I wasn't there when they did the Watchtower when they painted it. When Kabotie painted it. That was before my time. I met Kabotie when he was working at the Canyon at the BA, did that. His son, I think, did the El Tovar. Those pictures, the four on the wall dining room wall. Don't know if they're even there or they'd taken them down. The big, beautiful painting.

TM: What other famous people did you see come through the Canyon?

RA: Oh, lots of them. Not famous. Melly Schminke. She was an Austria girl. I met her. She was working a certain station at the El Tovar forever.

TM: Melly?

RA: Yeah, Melly Schminke. Her husband was working transportation desk at the BA. They had a house. They were at the Canyon forever. They retired back to Austria. Yeah, the old ones all retired, retired, retired. That was before Opa...while he was still at the Canyon. Then when he was at the Squire a lot of people from the BA, El Tovar worked at the Squire for a year. Then the Squire went to Red Feather. Did anybody still work when he had the Quality, I can't remember. I think one or two worked there. They worked for him at the BA. One was a little Indian girl, Joan Wadsworth. She worked for him all over the place. She's still at the Canyon, I think, or did she go back to the...

TM: Is Diana her daughter?

RA: What?

TM: Is Diana Wadsworth her daughter?

RA: I don't know. Might be. There's a lot of... You had a lot of good friends. Reservation people. Oh yeah, we had lots of good times.

TM: Did you know any of the Watahomigie's? Just thinking about some of the Havasupai.

RA: Havasupai's, I don't know. I knew one Havasupai but don't know him. I know his name was Joe, because we called him Joe Slick. He couldn't say Schlitz. He always say Slick. Joe Slick. He was a tiny little guy. She probably have pictures of the... Can't remember his name. He was Hopi Sam. The Indian with a headdress from the Canyon. Hopi Sam was the prime of the day. As far as I know, he's back at the Canyon at the reservation. He's long dead. He was 80 when I was 30. He went back to the reservation. I wish I had his movie. He was in one of the Walt Disney movies, *Legend of the [Boy and the] Eagle*, which they played behind Grand Canyon Suite. I seen it on TV twice. I taped it once, and gave it/loaned it. Never got it back. Never got it back because she died. The school teacher. She lived right in the building next to the hospital. The teacher that was teaching at the Canyon forever. I can't think of her name right now. I don't know if it was her Verkamp lady. Grandma Verkamp I think it was. I think it was the old Mrs. Verkamp.

TM: Was it one of the Bakers?

RA: No. Was one of the Verkamps. Betty was his wife, his second wife. I think she told Mrs. Verkamp. She was the head of the school board at the Canyon. I lent it to her. We were talking about Hopi Sam one night. He was always at the dances. He's a tiny little guy. They had a postcard of him. He was waiting at that women's store when he was 80. He would chase him out. In the end they took him to the reservation and he was storytelling at the reservation. Then when they had one night this Grand Canyon Suite on. I watched it and behind him came the *Legend of the Eagle*. ... There was Hopi Sam telling the story. The story's a good one. Supposedly a true story. I wish I would've got that movie back. Yeah, it was Mrs. Verkamp and she died. In the meantime, while she had it. I mean, "I want that picture back, please." To the boys, "please?" I asked Steve. I never got it back and I've never seen it again. I'm not good at writing. I wonder if it's still the Legend of the Eagle if they had the Grand Canyon Suite still, Disney. They keep a lot of their old ones don't they. But I don't write them. It was the Grand Canyon

Suite, which was good movie and it's followed by the *Legend of the Eagle*. Yeah, you can find it on your computer. I know you'd be looking closer. Because that had Hopi Sam and he's telling the story. Hopi Sam. He was the first one to greet me when I got off the bus at Fred Harvey. He was working as shoeshine boy at the BA. They had a Chinaman, Chinaman George. he was shoeshine boy at the El Tovar. We always went. Hopi Sam was always greeting people at the... He couldn't speak a word of English. He couldn't speak any English. He used to work for the railroad. Old Bob Thurston knew him while he was working for the railroad. So Hopi Sam, they took him back to the reservation. He was still waiting the girls. He wouldn't let the girls alone. I mean, it was the truth. Then what happened to Hopi Sam. Well, he died at the end, I know. He couldn't be. I was in the 30s. He was always at the dances. They had the Hopi dances. Now they still have them back again, but I don't know if they... They had a couple of good dancers. They were all Fred Harvey employees. Yes, we had Hopi Sam. And you had a picture. Any postcard with a full face and the... You find the postcards of Hopi Sam. Oh yeah.

I didn't go to the reservation after they shipped him out. I was there once or twice before. We went out to the reservation. Some good mutton stew. I loved that mutton stew. Was it good. I wish I had a big bowl of mutton stew right now. And that homemade bread they made, oh god, in the old ovens. So, we went out when it was still allowed to go out for the snake dances. You could go. You did go out and when we were eating... Whose house were we in? We went from mesa to mesa. We were on First Mesa. We were at Old Oraibi. We were in Old Oraibi you were allowed in it. Now you can't go in. But then when you could. Said, "Get going. You better leave because you're gonna hit a hell of a rainstorm." See, that's what the snake dance is for, for rain. We were halfway to Moenkopi, halfway out when it started to rain. It poured and it poured. If we wouldn't have left when we did we would've been stuck on the road because those are all dirt roads out there. I mean, that was in the 60s. Now, they probably have roads. If they wouldn't have told us get going, we would've been stuck. We had to leave in the middle of dinner. That mutton stew, they could cook. "Try some, have some mutton stew." I wasn't so keen on mutton from England. I like Irish stew alright until I eat the mutton. Oh yeah. That was when we went out to couple of other dances. Not any of the big ones, just the little ones where you were allowed. Now you can't go out. A couple of butterfly dances when you could go out. But I didn't go out after Sam left. Didn't go out. By then you didn't have time to go out even if they asked us to come out. You still had friends, but timewise was a long drive up to Hopi. Even Mrs Watahomogie goes up once in a while when she gets a visitor and takes him up to the Hopi reservation. She still got friends up there. Yeah, she's got some good Hopi jewelry and Hopi pottery. That's what I always wanted. Wanted to buy a good pot but I didn't. I couldn't afford it. Now I got the money and can't order. Oh yeah, that was the good old days. Going up the reservation, eating good Hopi stew.

TM: Well, it's been a couple hours.

RA: Oh yeah. Takes a couple of hours to get there and back. Now they have, down by Second Mesa they have a hotel and big gift shops and everything there. I wonder if they have gambling on Navajo?

TM: They do now. I think it's a little further northeast, though. It's not on the Hopi rez.

RA: No, near Winslow but more like towards the road. They own a lot of land out... Where they get a lot of customers when they...

TM: It's slowly happening.

RA: They don't know where to see Navajo reservation. Right by the Canyon you get to a certain point between there and 69 between the road. Isn't it behind, actually, the Watchtower? Is that Navajo?

TM: It's just a little further east.

RA: See, up there. They kept building where they get tourists closer because otherwise it's all the way to Prescott or further down south or Cliff Castle. I like Cliff Castle.

TM: When did you start gambling?

RA: When I started gambling? When I was in Vegas.

TM: When was that?

RA: When I went to visit Rosita.

TM: I missed that.

RA: When I went to San Francisco. When I visit Rosita I went to San Francisco, after she went out of school and got married. Once in a while I visited her. I went through Las Vegas. It was a place to go, I didn't have a car. To get to Vegas, take a plane. That was just a hop, skip and jump. Mostly I got free flights. Oh yeah, I liked to gamble. I was lucky a couple of times, most of the time I lost. Same thing, my daughter won big one. She did better than I did. I had won \$5,000 that night, and my daughter was gambling. I went upstairs. She didn't take any papers for that. I had taught her don't play one coin at a time. It takes three. Use three at a time. "But mom, my money goes." Look, if you win... She won ten [thousand?]. "Mom, I need my papers. Can you come down?" She needed it for tax purposes. You get taxed right there. "See, I told you to go three." And they tell you that. If you have 5 nickels, playing nickel machine with 5 coins, then change them to a quarter and play a quarter with one machine. Put the 5 cause you have more chances of winning by playing for one. I taught her that. She's run pretty good. I've been doing good, but the last couple of times no. I usually came home with \$1000 but I don't at Cliff Castle. I'd be doing pretty good.

TM: It's closer.

RA: Yep. I'm spending it by putting it back in. They give you enough play money. They give you a small jackpot, put it back in. It's play money. Unless they give you a good one and you can take it home. I like to gamble. Not that I'm that rich.

TM: But it's fun.

RA: Its fun, and I have a couple of pennies. I saved and saved working for Fred Harvey. Working those crazy hours I never had any place to spend it so I put it in the bank. At one time I made that... We had a crazy cook. He was playing the stock market.

TM: One of your cooks was playing the stock market?

RA: Yeah. Lazlo. You know, "he's buy this, buy this." Then he said buy some Mexican stock. He says it's real cheap. Go buy some Mexican stock. I knew one thing about the Mexican stock. If you bought in the states they had to pay at that time 12½ % interest on the value of the stock. You were making money on it. That dividend's were good. They paid it not over dollars. 12½ % of a Mexican, which was little at that time. Well, the dollar was actually 12½.

[pause for IT conversation]

TM: Well, we've been yik yaking here for a couple hours, and I just want to thank you so much...

RA: Oh, you're welcome.

TM: ...for talking about the Canyon.

RA: I can't tell you much about the Canyon.

TM: I've been on Facebook emailing with Rosie. She sent me her address and so I'm going to make a copy of this and I'm gonna mail it to her. I didn't tell you that before we started.

RA: Oh, oh.

TM: Okay, so she'll have this, too. Then a copy will go up to special collections at the park.

RA: I mean, it was fun at the Canyon. We had a lot of fun.

TM: Sounds like it was a lot of fun.

RA: But people were different, like they were in the 50s. They were different. All the kids, they were growing up at the Canyon. Like Franks kids and all the manager's kids were working.

TM: That was very much a working time.

RA: Yeah, everybody worked a lot. That one cook that sold me the stocks. I bought some stock anyway. Forgot all about it. Kept it for 40 years. Made good money now.

TM: Oh, good for you. [laughs]

RA: That's what I'm living on. That's what I'm playing away. Otherwise I couldn't even afford to live here.

TM: Good for you.

RA: I bought a thousand dollars worth of stocks which turned me... It gave me my money back. In about 2 years I had my money back plus a little more. I don't really know how much the stock is worth either. Opa he bought a lot. He sold it again, but he bought a ton. He had a stockbroker. I didn't. It went down to 35 cents a share. I would've bought some more. When he bought a ton more, he really made good money on it, he did. But he sold it in the meantime. I still got mine. A couple of hundred bucks I get every three months. They don't pay every month.

TM: That's good, that's good.

RA: They sent pretty stock certificates. They are beautiful. I always said one of these days I'm gonna paste them all on the wall. I'm glad I didn't have to send them in, they would split. Yeah, so I did some dumb things. I bought those. Yeah, we had a good time. The crazy airplane. I didn't know how big it was going to get. Oh my god, I drew it and the wing was getting longer and longer and I'm still not there. I was like ooh.

TM: It's nicely scaled, though. It looks good as a scaled proportion. It looks like it's coming right at ya.

RA: Yeah. Santa Claus is steering. Did you see it?

TM: Well, it's got a red nose. I see the plane's got a red nose. There's Santa Claus in there, all right.

RA: Yeah. Santa Claus is driving the plane.

TM: That's cute, that's cute.

RA: He's the pilot. And his sack is next to him.

TM: He's waving out the window.

RA: And the sack is on the other seat, he's the co-pilot. Oh, that was beautiful. That was the middle room.

TM: Because when I was talking to Opa last week, he was talking about you making this stuff. He said you really got into it, and you did. I was like looking at it all, oh my gosh.

RA: Fred Harvey stuff was really fun. That was the gorgeous. I started all out with the stupid candy house. Then when Opa had his dogs and his poodle named Peter. The house was on that side, and Peter ate all the back of the house.

TM: Must've been a sick dog.

RA: I don't know if he was sick or not but he ate all the chocolate. Oh god. He ate a pound of chocolate off the house. That little dog was something else. Big Jake I was telling you about, he was so scared of that dog because Peter would bark. His head would going, going. Crazy dog, oh god. Yeah. Big Jake, he was afraid of that little poodle.

TM: The guy with the giant hands was afraid of a little dog.

RA: Yeah, and it was a miniature poodle. It wasn't a big one. His name was Peter and I remember him well. He would eat the back of the house. First, I made that little house. I made it for the kids as Christmas presents. Ann was the little girl, Franky was much bigger. Was at the Squire. So I made them a little candy house. Over at the sites, got it going, decorated it here, and got some wooden horses and animals on it. That was my little work. Okay, then came the... See, that was cause next came the cabin. The log cabin. Then for Halloween, I made a log cabin full of little ghosts. Then at Christmas came the castle that's made out of sugar cubes, the big white deal. Oh god. I was gluing sugar cubes forever. Putting sugar cubes together. That was that castle, then that went down. We got more dolls until we got set up. I started on the figures. Made them all for the dining room, Squire. Kids in international costumes, all different costumes on the white places between the... And all the balls in the dining room on the chandeliers. Made big white balls and glued them on. We did something different than I started. Then we went to the Red Feather. That's when I could do whatever I wanted. That's when it started out. My daughter didn't take the pictures. I don't know where they are, the ones with the dogs. The ones of Halloween.

TM: Well, if you find them, we'll come back with the machine.

RA: Because the Halloween ones they on the table. Hannah wanted the Wizard of Oz so I made the lion, and the tinman, the scarecrow.

TM: How big? Couple feet? Foot and a half or so?

RA: Yeah.

TM: Kachina doll size.

RA: They're all gone. Somebody stole it. I gave the lion away. I gave to the Lions Club actually. I don't know if they probably thrown it out.

TM: Oh, don't know.

RA: And the tinman, he fell apart. Didn't get the right feet. He would tip over. Well, the strawman, he still exists. Because then comes Halloween. Halloween, I made the witch. The one's a beautiful witch. She was flying. We had the witch and a big cauldron full of candy all over the place. We had all the Casper's and the witch's flying around. I was having an argument with Opa's secretary, because I dressed the witch in velvet. Fancy, oh god, I loved them forever.

TM: What a great idea.

RA: The hat had leaves around the little turquoise on the headband. She had white sleeves under her britches and she had petticoats on. The pantaloons and the white petticoat. Then they had the witch's wide western skirt so she could sit on the broom without showing her underpants. I made a witch before once at the BA which was a disaster. Everybody loved the witch and looked underneath. So this one had real stockings stuff and then dressed them. Then I had to dress the other ones. She just had boots on, the first one. This one was a fancy and it was stolen. I asked Hannah, "Where's my toy?" The whole box of Thanksgiving decorations was gone. Nothing, lantern, nothing. I had to get the lantern. I had the funny mummy. The mummy was stretched like Frankenstein. Top hat and regular dress like a mummy, was wound like a mummy. Oh god, took me forever to remember how to...

TM: With a cane, with a black walking stick?

RA: Yep, he had the walking stick and the cape. The cape was orange on the inside, black on the outside. He was dressed to kill. He didn't scared anybody. I didn't think it should be scary, should be funny. The witches, they don't dress up like witches. Don't look like witches. The guy said, "Wait a minute, it's their holiday." So I dressed her up. She was dressed to the hilt, the boots. Oh god, that witch took me forever to sew the lace on. The sleeves. Didn't have a blouse on. They ended up underneath it. But she had long sleeves, the white sleeves. Had the end a lace sticking out. Necklace on. She wore Indian jewelry. Small, tiny pieces of jewelry. They were all made out of coat hangers. You bent the coat hangers. Doubled up. You take the coat hanger and bend them this way, and that is the main body.

TM: So, a couple feet by a couple feet?

RA: Don't even have one of them in here. [looking through photo book] No. I thought she took one of the Halloween stuff.

[pause for caretaker]

TM: So, was it a couple feet by a couple feet?

RA: No. Take a coat hanger and squish it that way. That is that big, included the feet.

TM: So the whole thing was just a couple feet? So you made the dresses and made the hat and made the boots.

RA: Yeah. I made all that. They were so cute. I wonder where they are.

TM: You could've gone into business Rosie. You could've made those.

RA: They could've gotten it. I made a set for Sue's mom.

TM: For Sue Hovey's mom?

RA: —Sue Hovey's mom. Yeah, she got a scarecrow. I said, "Which scarecrow do you want?" They have two different hats on. I can't remember what the difference was. One was a bowler and one was... I can't remember what. She took the prettier one, of course.

[pause to look for photo book]

RA: Here they are. No, that's the decorations of the Christmas. This was in my house. That's my room. That's in my room. That's the machine. Yeah. See, left some of the kids in there. When they were little, Opa had the kids with him when they were little.

TM: Yep, there's Opa. That looks like Anne and the kids, which are now gone to college.

RA: And that's Anne and Jackie. That's my house. My room, that's my room. She must've taken those pictures out. That's Franky.

TM: That's Franky playing Santa Claus?

RA: Yeah. That's at the Christmas party, I think. Yeah, that's where everybody is dancing. That's Chris and his kids when they were little.

TM: And who's this guy? Do you know who this is?

RA: Oh, that's Roberto the cook.

TM: Oh yeah. So, are these labeled in the back who these are?

RA: No.

TM: Okay, so I'm gonna tell Rosie next time she comes over that she needs to sit down with you and you guys need to label these, alright? There's Opa. These are great photos that need to be labeled who they are and roughly when, what year do you remember.

RA: Rosita's got those. She wanted to look for something. Some more she has. She must've taken the...

TM: Oh, winter garden.

RA: Yeah, that's the winter garden. She took all the...

TM: That's in the atrium, isn't it?

RA: Yeah.

TM: Yeah. Atrium of the Canyon Plaza Inn. Nice. Yeah, I was talking with Hannah and Hannah has a lot of photographs.

RA: Oh, yeah. Hannah has a lot.

TM: She showed me a couple and none of them have who or the year or the place, so Jackie is gonna get together with Hannah and write all that on the back of the photographs. That's the plan, anyway. I hope it works.

RA: Yeah, do me one favor. Go look in the first drawer.

[pause to look for another photo album]

RA: I don't know where I put them.

TM: That's alright.

RA: Because the ones of Halloween, those were my favorites, really.

TM: Yeah, it sounded pretty neat.

RA: They were so cute. I don't know where in the world could those pictures be. I got to find out.

TM: Okay. Well, if you find them, let me know.

RA: You see, I was going to put them back in here, the ones that she took. She sent them back. See the ones she took these to be done.

TM: Oh, to be scanned out, okay.

RA: The ones she made an album from. And I know she sent them back. Those are mostly the ones at the... See, we gave up decorating when we went to the Quality because Opa decided from now on we stop it. Yep. That's her last words. That's the way she... I didn't do anything anymore.

TM: Do they still do that, or did they stop doing it?

RA: They just have plants. Poinsettias and stuff. Yeah, we wanted to do it nice all the time, but she decided to get it back. She never did get a professional. A lot of her stuff got stolen, too. I can't complain. Those were my two lanterns. Those lanterns, those two, I had them for Halloween on the back of the desk with the witch. They had a girl working for them in the office and Chris had fired her cause she was lousy. Then she got rehired and got even worse. She got fired again. Ann said get out of here and she must have taken... What they found in her room later on was a lot of bills, checks paid that she didn't send, and all that sort of thing. She must've taken all the dolls decorations with her because I had a little tree with four dolls. Those were bought dolls. They were cute. I bought them at... They were

first before the Halloween dolls got there. Halloween was gone, they got back at the box. It was a little tree and three dolls decorating the tree. Beautiful dolls. They looked like Franky and Ann when they were kids. One was a ladder. You stand on a ladder to get on top of the tree. We had a little baby lights. These little light bulbs, but they didn't have that kind of light at that time. I wish I had them. See my Christmas lights still in there?

TM: Oh yeah.

RA: Those lights are battery lighted. They come on at a certain time and go off at a certain time.

TM: That's really pretty.

RA: Yeah, you're not allowed to have candles in there. Look at the candles. They look like real.

TM: They look like real candles. Yeah.

RA: That is all the new...

TM: LED lights.

RA: Yep.

TM: Okay, well thank you so much, Rosie. I'm going to have to run along.

RA: Can I offer you a cup of coffee?

TM: No, I'm gonna run away, I'm gonna turn this machine off.