

Transcription: Grand Canyon Historical Society Oral History

Interviewees: Sam (ST) and Phyllis Turner (PT)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Sam's father was the Santa Fe station master at the South Rim

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TM: Today is March 10, 2016. We're at the home of Sam and Phyllis Turner in Tucson, Arizona. Sam and Phyllis, maybe we'd just start if you could spell your names for me.

PT: Phyllis, P-h-y-double l-i-s.

ST: Sam, S-a-m. Actually I'm Samuel and its Sam Junior, but don't use that anymore. So it's just Sam. My dad was Samuel and in the family he was Samuel Ed. Edmond is our middle name. His family called him Ed all the time so that they didn't get mixed up, but I was Sammy all the way through growing up. The adults called me Sammy when I was an adult, and so that's okay.

TM: Okay. What year were you born, Sam?

ST: 1934, December 9th.

TM: And Phyllis?

PT: 1935.

ST: I'm much older but not much wiser.

TM: Where were you born, Sam?

ST: Holbrook, Arizona.

TM: What were your parents doing in Holbrook in 1934?

ST: My father worked for the Santa Fe Railway. His family of 11 brothers and sisters out of Cuba, Kansas. Many of them left and wound up either in California or in Glendale, Arizona. Two of the brothers, or three of the brothers, did significant building of the Masonic lodge in Glendale. Also, they were involved

with the high school, I think, or elementary school, I'm not sure. My father's brother, the closest brother, John M. Turner, was in Peoria, Arizona.

TM: So your father, what was he doing in Holbrook?

ST: Well, he had a breathing problem and the doctor said, "You need to go to Arizona where it's dry." So he went to Holbrook where it was full of dust. (both laugh) This is a story that I...you want time?

TM: Yeah, but go ahead and finish up. This is a story that...

ST: This is a story that I'm not absolutely clear on, but they spoke about it a lot. My dad was, what, 14 years older than my mother I think, so in order for him to pay for his rent where he was working for the Santa Fe, he lived with a guy who was blind. He could have rent-free if he would read to this fellow. It happened that this fellow liked Tennyson, Longfellow, and all the famous writers. So my dad learned poetry, a great deal of poetry, as a result of this reading things over and over.

TM: Where did your dad grow up?

ST: He grew up in Cuba, Kansas.

TM: Okay, right, Kansas.

ST: They were farmers to begin with but then they were harvesters. The family went from farm to farm and did the harvesting. They had machines and stuff, whatever they did back then. It was Quaker people. I think my dad's family was originally Quaker but when they moved to Holbrook he became a member of the community church which was there. At one point I had a recording, a tape recording, of an original recording that my father and his brothers did on an Edison wax cylinder. They put together a play that they wrote about driving a car, a Model A, and they had a can with some nuts and bolts in it and they'd shake it like this. I don't know what's happened to that.

TM: Umm hmm. When did your father start working for the Santa Fe?

ST: Well, it was before 1926. It was...I have no idea. I would say it was in the early 1900s, 1919 or 1920, right in there. He went in as a trucker guy that pulled the wagon, baggage clerk. He did that in Holbrook, and he lived with this guy and went back and forth to work. The part that I know about, that really I can be fairly sure of, the way he met my mother. My mother and her family had grown up in Shepherd, Texas. Her father, my grandfather, Jess Fain, he was a postmaster in Shepherd and business fell apart. I don't know what all happened, but anyway they all decided they would move to Arizona, and they wound up in McNary, Arizona. Do you know where McNary is? Logging. Up on the White Mountains. So my mother decided to go back to school. In fact, she taught 1st grade when she was 17 or 18 years old in Texas. She was in San Jacinto County, I think it was. She and another teacher had a combination 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade, I think. There was a picture at one time, I don't know where all that stuff is. So anyway, they moved to McNary and she decided to get her teaching certificate from Northern Arizona, which was then State Teachers College. She had a friend that said go to Holbrook and she'd take the train to Flagstaff. The friend said, "If you're going there, be sure you look up Sam Turner. He'll fix your ticket for you," whatever that meant. (both laugh) So she did, and he did. So she was riding back and forth to Flagstaff, taking a course and then coming back to Holbrook.

TM: This would have been 1920?

ST: Well, they got married in '26 so it was before then.

TM: '25, '24.

ST: I'm guessing that, yes. I may have some documents on that, I'm not sure. In fact, it would be on her tape that Al Richmond has.

TM: Okay, okay.

ST: So she goes back and forth there and she's teaching in McNary. And they have a typhoid epidemic. Out of the 26 or 29 people that brought suit against the little Cady Logging Company, all but my mother died and couldn't push on the suit. They held it on courts until it would have been 1940s I'm sure. My mother one day just said, "I'm through, let's don't do this anymore." A friend of hers who was an attorney said he was really surprised that she gave up cause they thought they would be able to win it. The logging company had wood sewage, wood pipes, and the fresh water and the wood pipe was divided. People were drinking this stuff and the lumber company said, "Well, it's the flies." This was in the winter. There were no flies in the winter. So they had basis, you know.

TM: Yeah.

ST: She was paralyzed from the neck down, and my dad arranged for her to have a... Yeah, this was because of the typhoid. My dad arranged for her to take the train from Holbrook to Los Angeles to the Santa Fe Hospital there. Now, that was really for Santa Fe employees, though. They weren't married yet, but he gave her an engagement ring. It wasn't just because of the hospital, he was planning to marry her anyway, but that was that. So she's out there in traction for nine or ten months. They used bags in those days to stretch and they said she'd never have use of her hands again or feet and, you know, it was a hopeless case. When she finished the hospital and came back she was in Holbrook for a while and her parents had moved to Williams, which was also lumber at the time, a mill there. She stayed with her mother in Williams some. Okay. While she's in the wheelchair in front of a fireplace, she could feel her feet moving. She couldn't see them move but she could feel them. Eventually she got through her paralysis enough that she had use of her feet and she could play the piano again, which is another story.

So she's back in McNary in the, I don't know, again I'd have to listen to her tape again to see what happens, but she wound up in Holbrook and my dad and mother got married there. Now, my mother was on canes, I believe, or crutches when they married. When she was in the hospital, this goes backwards a little bit, when she was in the hospital and here she was all balled up, she had the engagement ring, my dad visited her once a week. He could take the mail train to LA cause he was a Santa Fe employee, right. He'd stay with her for a day and then he'd take the night train back to Holbrook. She told him, she says, "You don't have to go through with this marriage." He says, "Eloise, I will marry you if I have to carry you to the altar." (laughs) And that's the way they were. That was their life together. That's another story, and I wrote that.

TM: So they got married and your father continued working for the Santa Fe in Holbrook.

ST: Yeah, and he became a ticket agent. He moved up from a trucker to ticket clerk to a ticket agent. I was born in Holbrook at our home. My mother has a good story about that, talking about the fact that

her doctor said, "Oh, she's not due right away, there's no rush." The midwife or nurse that was there at the house, they got ahold of him and says, "You've gotta get here right now." So I was born at home, and they have a picture of me, there's a picture of me in the other room with a little toy chair that was taken on top of the dining room table. I must have been about a year old maybe, I don't know. Anything else that you remember?

PT: I don't know that story.

TM: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

ST: No.

TM: Okay. How did your family then get to the South Rim?

ST: Okay. After Holbrook he was transferred to Gallup, New Mexico and I believe that he became chief clerk there, which is the next step down below an agency. He was there for maybe a couple... Station agent. I don't know how long it was at Gallup but it wasn't very long cause I remember a tricycle there that I rode and the next thing I knew we had moved to Ash Fork, Arizona where he got his first agency at the station there. At the same time...

TM: So a station agent is sort of a...

ST: General supervisor of what's going on.

TM: Okay. So at that station he is the top in...

ST: He's the top dog.

TM: ...in the command there.

ST: Umm hmm.

TM: He will report then to someone in a regional office, is that how that works?

ST: Yes. Yeah. Uh huh.

TM: Okay. All right.

ST: Yeah.

TM: Did your father go to university or college at all or was he a high school...

ST: No. He graduated from high school and he was in line... In fact, his friend in, I don't know whether it was in Holbrook or back in Cuba, Kansas, but one of them said that he ought to go to Stanford. Yeah, yeah, he's smart. That didn't happen. I don't know why.

TM: So in Ash Fork then he got his agency?

ST: He was an agent there and he was there for about two years. I was just ready... They put me in first grade before I was 6 cause my birthday was December 9th, so they put me in in September. I was 5 and it was too early. We knew that later but at the time I was such a smart little kid, yeah. (laughs) I was there for a half year. Then we had a choice, my dad could take an agency either at Grand Canyon or Prescott. His regional supervisor, I want to say Mr. Block, but I can't remember for sure, anyway, supervisor gave him a choice. He said, "Grand Canyon is just a spur track. It's the end of the line but it's a nice place to start. You'll be there for a couple of years and then you may be able to go to Albuquerque," which was better and that would be a stepping stone to go to Los Angeles. So he was working his way up. So they moved to Grand Canyon. I think we got there about, in December of '40, something like that. The War started December 7th and they froze everybody's position. So, here my dad and mom live at Grand Canyon, I'm going to 1st grade again, which I immediately flunked because I can't read, right. The teacher tells my mother, "He'll never be a success in life because he does not have the ability to learn to read." Bless her heart. I almost believed her. It took me five years to learn how to read, and I didn't learn from a teacher. My mother was a teacher. She knew better. I could play the piano by ear but I couldn't read. I got measles one time and they had to lock us up in the bedroom for two weeks while everything was dark. And, of course, we didn't have television or any of that stuff, and I got a book.

This is not the same one I had. When I got to thinking about it years later I looked him up and Bowen apparently was a real popular children's book story, war story thing. I got *Red Randall Over Tokyo*. I thought I couldn't read, right, so I started here and I... This copyright was '44. I don't know when I...I think I was reading this before 1944. I don't know where this...

TM: Well, that would be about right. I mean, if it was 5 or 6 and it took you five years to learn to read you would have been 10 or 11, and so the numbers would all come out...

ST: Yeah, that's close.

TM: ...to 1944/1945.

ST: That's it, that's it. Anyway, I started this, and I was reading just one word at a time. I got in about a few pages and I got caught up in it, you know.

TM: Wow.

ST: Bless his heart. I couldn't write and say I really caught onto reading cause I read all of these books, and he had a whole series. I don't know how many. Halfway through I'm talking to Billy Timeche, his parents ran the Hopi House, and Billy says, "Oh, if you like Red Randall you ought to read Yankee Flyer because he shoots down more airplanes. (both laugh) So I subscribed to... See, now, that's '43. So I got that. So I ordered these two books just to see.

TM: And that did it?

ST: He was right. Yankee Flyer shot down more planes and I liked that.

TM: Tell me about your schoolmates in school. You mentioned Billy Timeche. Who else do you remember?

ST: Marvin Rowen, his father worked for Fred Harvey. All I can remember about Marvin Rowen was that he (laughs) ran the snow plow in the winter. He was up on the hill and his mother, yeah, Marvin's mother, made great angel food cake. The whole town... Now understand there was about 120/130 people in the village. We knew everybody.

PT: Schellbach.

ST: Yeah. Yeah, Louie Schellbach. You should know him. He was the chief park ranger/naturalist there. Well, Don and I were good friends. Don was one year ahead of me in school. I'd go up and play with Don or I'd play with Marvin. Who else do I remember? There was Virginia and JoAnn Cox. I don't think they were twins. I think they were one year apart. I really was in love with Virginia. This would be in the 1st or 2nd grade. We played together. Donna Standard was another friend of mine and that goes up almost to the 8th grade. Donna was there for a while. She was with the Santa Fe. Her father worked in the power plant at Grand Canyon when they had the big smokestack before they took that down. What else?

I remember Jack Tooker. Jack Tooker was an engineer on the train that came up to the Canyon. He carried a rifle with him, and I think the story is that he shot a mountain lion from the cab of the train going up the Canyon. I don't know. But he was noted for his hunting of the animals along the rim. The other thing that he would do is during the winter the kids would come down on the platform and we'd build big snow forts that you could walk in. We had these huge... They had to be right next to the track. Tooker would take the train up and he'd turn the steam on and (sound effect, and both laugh) it'd be gone. The telegrapher at Grand Canyon, who used to be there before... Well, he was known for his ability to pitch hardball. They had a team at Grand Canyon in those days. I don't know, it was before me. Smitty could make a snowball and he could throw it so hard that it'd knock you over practically.

TM: Wow.

ST: He could really do that. He'd practice on the telegraphy bug in the office. Now, remember, we lived on top of the station, so in order for me to go to school in the morning I had a choice. I could go out the side door, which was the private entrance, or I could go through the office. I always went through the office and there would be Smitty working on the key, he called it telegraphy. Not this, this, or this. (demonstrating)

TM: So doing Morse Code then?

ST: Oh, yeah. He practiced by reading the newspaper, and he could do it fast. (sound effect). I learned it from him. We ran a wire up through my bedroom and I had a little telegrapher key and everything, telegraph key set up, and then we'd code to each other.

TM: Oh, that's neat.

ST: There was a point when I knew it. I don't remember it now but I can still...

PT: I never heard that before.

ST: Well, never came up. Anyway.

TM: What was Smitty's name? Do you remember his full name?

ST: Schmitt. Last name, Schmitt. They called him Smitty. I don't remember what else.

TM: What his first name was?

ST: No. I think it was something something Schmitt but I'm not sure. At one point our office downstairs had something like eight employees. They were busy. They not only were having tourist trains come in. 1949 they had I think it was the Boy Scouts came through, national, so they had like nine or so trains in there. That yard was full of backed in trains. Most of the time they backed the trains in. They'd go up to wye. Do you know the story? They'd go up to the wye? As the train would come in they wanted to have it headed out in the evening for the overnight train. So they'd go up and make a right wye way up into the village, back of the village area, throw the switch, and then the train would back down and so it'd be all backed in and ready to go out. And they still do that. Okay.

TM: Was the Maswik Motor Lodge there then or not?

ST: No, there was a lodge there but it wasn't called Maswik. I don't remember what it was, part of the Fred Harvey whole thing. There was a lodge there and a campground, mostly campground.

TM: Tent camp was there.

ST: Yeah, tent camp. And, now, there was a tent camp behind there that was, I don't know, it was out... Kolb's used to have another house. They had the Kolb Studio, and then they had a house behind Avenue C, I think, A, B, C, someplace back there. A really nice house. Between that house and the village there were some tent camp things. I don't remember this being in a campground but maybe they were. I didn't go there much.

TM: Where were you going to school then? Where was the school at the time?

ST: Next to the big water tanks there. One big water tank. Not the one that was up in the Park Service area, but next to the rodeo grounds. They used to have rodeos there. That's where they had baseball and there was a tennis court at the far end. The ground always looked huge to me. I mean, it was like you had to walk a block and a half to get all the way across it or something. I don't know whether you did but it was big for me.

TM: Was this where the school is today?

ST: Yeah. Well, it's where the original school...

TM: In that area?

ST: Was a three-room school with an auditorium built by the Santa Fe. Santa Fe donated for the schools. Well, it went to the community. It must have been just a couple years sooner than I got there, earlier. Let me think on that a minute. When I went there, there were, I think, 60 kids in the whole school. When I graduated from 8th grade there were six of us in the 8th grade. We all had to have a choice whether we were going to Wasatch or... There were some parents that were really upset and wanted us to stay at Grand Canyon and promote having a high school. But I went to... The first year I roomed in high school with Doug Ramsey. Ramsey is another name from Grand Canyon. Doug was a year older

than I was. I lived in Darlington Dormitory at Wasatch, in the smallest room they had (laughs). Doug and I were in there in bunk beds. Doug was brilliant, I mean, really smart. He went on to college. He could speak something like seven languages. He wound up in Korea or Vietnam. I think he was in Vietnam as an interpreter. He was captured and he wound up in a cage with other prisoners for three or four years. It did him in mentally. But while he was in this cage, he practiced Rachmaninoff music, playing it on his fingers. He knew. He also figured out Einstein's theory of relativity (laughs). He did it all in his mind.

TM: Wow.

ST: He spoke to that at Wasatch one time when he came back, was a reunion. I didn't hear it but it was written up.

TM: Can you talk me through what was it like as an 8th grader, did you know that if you were going to further your schooling you would have to leave the Canyon?

ST: Yeah. We knew we were going to...

TM: Were you looking forward to that? Were you excited to do that or was this like, did you...

ST: You know, I was excited to go. I loved my family and I was prepared to be homesick. What I was homesick for when I got to Wasatch was pine trees. I really missed the trees. We were so busy at school that I really didn't miss my folks that much. Plus, my dad gave me a Smith-Corona typewriter after my sophomore year, a little portable, so that I could write them letters cause they couldn't read my handwriting then. I didn't have a tremor either. (all laugh) When I took typing, Miss...I think her name was Clithrow, Miss Clithrow was the typing teacher, and she had a big staff. She started us out with S-M-F-V-R-4-space, bam! And she'd hit this (all laugh). What was the other sides on the keyboard? K-M-U-7-space, F-V-R-4-space, and we couldn't see the keyboard. Of course, they had a chart up there. I enjoyed working with on particularly because Vesper Vance was sitting next to me, T-V, T-U-V, alphabetically. So I concentrated mostly on Vesper and Vesper concentrated on typing. So she got her 80-word certificate and I got my 30-word (all laugh).

TM: I see. Hmm.

ST: Umm hmm. Six of us graduated. There was Billy Slaughter and Marlene Rondell. Marlene didn't go to Wasatch. I don't know what she did. She went to some... The Rondell's were part of the administration for the Park Service. Billy Slaughter, I think his family worked for the Park Service, too. They must have, they lived up in that area. Then who else was there? There was Marvin Rowan. He was in my class. I think Betty Timeche was in there. I'm pretty sure Betty was. And Sherma Moore. Sherman Moore was the father, I believe he's in the cemetery up there, I'm not sure. But anyway, Sherma became a park supervisor up in Salt Lake City, someplace up there, national park. I haven't seen her for years, but they were there. There were six of us. Interesting thing about Billy Slaughter, he and I were good friends. We had an 8th grade teacher that came in who was... Ted Fisher was the name of the teacher for the 8th grade. Now, Miss Mow became the principal, Louise Mow, and she was something else. I had Miss Mow... Let's see, we had 1st, 2nd, 3rd grades in one room, 4th, 5th and 6th in the other room, and 7th and 8th in another room. The three-room schoolhouse. And Miss Galliver was my first teacher and then I had a couple others, I don't know, and then Miss Mow became my, Louise Mow, was our teacher there for the upper grades.

It was easy to spell for me. This is an aside, the reason I switched to Methodist Church when I got through with Wasatch, while I was in Wasatch I was affiliated with the Presbyterian Church. When we came back to Grand Canyon the only minister that they could have there was a Methodist minister because he had to service Williams, Ash Fork and Grand Canyon. Apparently the other denominations would not allow their minister to be a community church. It had to be labeled Methodist or Catholic or whatever. They did have a Catholic priest eventually. Anyway, we had church in the community building. This is kind of an aside, but anyway... So Ted Fisher came in in my 8th grade year, was the first time we had a *man* teacher. He was working on his Master's degree in education from somewhere south. In the summers he worked at the Hopi fire tower, which was between the village and Hermit's Rest. That tower, that was only 40 feet tall. If you went down to Grandview tower it was really tall. Okay. One of the things he did was he had an airplane, an air coup, two passenger, twin tail, air coup at the Grand Canyon airport. Not the one that's there now but way down, yeah. That's where the Ford tri-motor used to be kept in the hangar there. Don Schellbach and I slipped inside the hanger one time when we were old enough that Don could drive a car and went in and walked inside that tri-motor, which was full of dust and hay and straw and stuff. Good thing we couldn't start it, we probably would have. I had an experience riding in a tri-motor later. Anyway, Ted Fisher said to the class, "Whoever sells the most Christmas seals I'll give them a ride in the plane and we'll fly over the Canyon." Well, I had access to the Fred Harvey dormitory for the women and I hit it. I beat everybody by 300 or 400 seals, you know.

TM: A landslide.

ST: That was my first experience selling (laughs). He said, "You can pick a friend to go with you and I'll take two trips." I picked Billy Slaughter. This was before I knew Phyllis, of course (laughs). So I did that, and the camera that I was using was a Kodak movie camera with a viewfinder right here. So here I am very short and I'm in this seat and I'm taking pictures right across the sill of the Canyon. Every time he banked I got pictures of the Canyon, and when he leveled off I got pictures of the window sill.

TM: The side of the plane. (laughs)

ST: Yeah. But that was a fun thing to do and that was my first airplane flight. My parents, you know, I'm an only child and it was a dangerous thing to do. So I did that with Billy and we had a great time. The next time I flew over the Canyon it was in a Piper Pacer. Phyllis was my girlfriend at that time and she got to go twice because she got to go twice. I don't know...

PT: There was another couple that went and there was one extra seat, said "You can go again." "Okay."

TM: Nice. Let's talk a little bit about what happened in 8th grade, we have kind of very little data on this. You want to continue your studies. You mentioned your options were to go to Wasatch or to go to Williams.

ST: Yeah, or Flagstaff. I suppose some people went to Flag. We just decided that, we being the family, the three of us, in 1948, I guess, or -9, whenever I was in the 8th grade, we took that summer, I believe, and went up, my mom and I drove to Wasatch. I didn't drive, she did, in our 1938 Chevrolet. We looked at the high school and campus and everything, walked around and everything. She asked me what I thought, and I said, "Well, this is good." I didn't know what I was getting into. I said, "It looks fine." So it was decided that we'd go. It was gonna be a financial hardship on my folks. I don't remember what the cost was but it would be cutting into their savings and everything. So when I came back...

One other thing about 8th grade, that's when I learned about baseball. I was not a sports fan at all. I didn't play baseball or softball, football, basketball. I was not athletic except I liked to go down the sledding hill on Fred Harvey's sleds, and I hiked. So here I am in 8th grade and Ted Fisher wants to hear the World Series. Now, how as a teacher are you gonna get to listen to the World Series when you've got a classroom there? So he taught us how to score baseball. He gave us the score sheets, hits, runs, errors and all that stuff. Everybody had their sheet and we were listening to it on the radio (laughs). I really threw her for a loop because I could care less about the game but I knew how to do it. So we listened to it, and Satchel Paige was pitching. You go back there, you know, when Satchel Paige was... That's when we listened to it. So we listened to the World Series and I learned how to score. I met Phyllis later and we're going to a baseball game someplace, all excited. I get the score sheet on the back of the program. I'm sitting here and she said, "What are you doing? You're supposed to watch the game." I said "No, I'm scoring it." (laughs)

TM: Oh, my gosh.

ST: So that was the fun part.

TM: What do you remember about that drive to and from Wasatch? This would have been in '48 or '49.

ST: When you crossed the Arizona/Utah border, when you got to Kanab, all of a sudden it was green. There was water flowing. It was no longer desert. Even though Grand Canyon wasn't considered desert, it was dry compared to that side of the Canyon. I remember that. It was a long drive. Most of the time the kids would come home for Christmas and they'd come for spring break. We'd take the bus to Flagstaff. We'd get on the bus at Flagstaff, our folks would drop us off and we'd take the bus from Flagstaff all the way to Mount Pleasant. Was a special bus with just the kids. And then coming back, they'd stop at Cameron, Arizona and the Grand Canyon parents would pick them up there. I remember a discussion we had (phone rings) was whether or not... (pause for phone call) (deleted side conversation) Anyway, the drive back and forth, I didn't mind that. None of us did. We liked it, we looked forward to it. We had our laundry done. We'd put it in a laundry box with straps and we'd mail it each week, or every two weeks it would go back and forth. Of course when it came back there'd be cookies or something else in it. And then we wrote letters back and forth.

One other thing that happened to me when I was 14, it was either between my 8th and 9th grade or right in there, we had a Marine friend that was a friend of my mother's. He grew up with my mother in Shepherd, Texas. He became estranged with his family and joined the Marines when he was 17, his dad signed him off. He was in the Chinese Horse Cavalry first and then he wound up in the regular Marines. He did all of the islands in the South Pacific until Eniwetok where he was wounded. He was wounded in the leg and the bullet hole missed his bone, went through a muscle. The letter we got back, which I have in here, got all of his letters that he's written. Most of them are so censored that you can't tell what's going on, but he said in this one, "The Jap was too quick for me but he's a good Jap now." He was leaning over holding a cartridge belt across his shoulder. The bullet hit the cartridge belt and then went through his leg from a sniper. So he wound up in Hawaii recovering, and then he came from there to Grand Canyon and he lived with us for a couple of years. He lived in the bed next to me in my bedroom. Drummond was...they didn't know that it was post traumatic stuff, but that's what he was. He really loved us. He was a good family member and everything. He decided one summer that I was gonna go hiking with him. We were gonna hike the Canyon down the south side and up the north. I was 14 when that happened. We practiced. We went down to Indian Garden to begin with and came back out. I think he was testing me just to be sure that I could do it without collapsing. So we did that. It was just a

couple weeks later we walked across. It took us three days. We spent one night at Phantom Ranch, another night at Cottonwood Campground, and then out the top. Coming out the top, that last couple of miles, I think it was 20-some odd miles total, I think he carried everything but me out. He had my pack and everything else. When we were starting down the Canyon, at some point we were stopped and he says, "Don't sit down. Stand up to rest. Don't let your muscles tighten up." I remember saying to him, "Wow, Joe, this is like the Marines, isn't it?" He says, "No, Sammy." His face just went dark and he says, "It's not at all like the Marines."

TM: Hmm. What was his last name?

ST: Alexander. Good luck finding anything about him. I have looked, searched out. I think I have his ID number, but I'm not sure. I've not been able to find much. But I know that he hit all the islands.

TM: Sam, did your parents ever talk about... I'm gonna keep going back to this, when you finished up your 8th grade, did your parents ever talk with you about what it meant for them to have you leave and go to school up in Utah?

ST: My mom might have. I don't remember that. Like I say, I was so involved in what was going on at school that the first two summers that I was free, couldn't work yet, wasn't old enough to work, I'd come home. I rode a lot of bicycle and I'd be home with the kids. The neighborhood kids, we rode bikes all the time. We rode out to Yavapai Point a lot. We'd sit in the back and watch Louie Schellbach give the speech or we'd ride to Hermit's Rest. When Drummond moved in that's when I went from a tank model bicycle to a three-speed. I'm sure that my parents missed me, but I was so involved with stuff that I... It was good to be home but I can remember writing letters to them saying I missed the pine trees.

PT: (laughing) Need the trees.

ST: I called my mother Eloise, and that was because when I was young my dad would always refer, "Go tell Eloise to do this. Go ask Eloise to do that" instead of go tell Mother. So I called her Ewis for a long time until I could say Eloise. Then when I got into high school I started calling her V-i-z, Viz, short for weez or whatever. Now, this is not unusual. Her cousins from Texas called her Toe; don't know where that came from. Arnold Bledsoe owned Bledsoe's Men's Shop in Flagstaff for years and years and years, and she was Toe to Arnold. It was a first cousin, I think. My cousins wound up in Clarkdale. My grandfather moved to Clarkdale and my grandmother and all, and everybody started growing up in Clarkdale. They all called my mother Aunt Key, K-e-y. Don't know why.

PT: K-i.

ST: K-i, Aunt Ki, yeah. Thank you. Yeah, I knew you'd be important to be here. (both laugh) She's an editor. So that part of the family, it was not unusual for somebody to call her Eloise. For me, "Why don't you call her Mother?" I couldn't. I'd write a letter to her and I couldn't say Dear Mother. In fact most of the time I avoided the whole thing by saying, "Good morning. It's a great morning today. It's a great day to be alive." I'd write letters like that. As soon as we had our first child, I didn't have any problem at all saying "Hi, Grandma." Ain't that right?

PT: Umm hmm.

ST: Yeah, we called her Grandma.

TM: Question about Drummond Alexander. Did he know your mother and father? Remind me again how they were friends.

ST: Well, he knew my mother in Texas, and then he joined the Marines.

TM: How did he know your mother in Texas?

ST: They went to school together.

TM: Okay, thank you.

ST: They shot Roman candles off the cotton bales somewhere, probably set fires.

PT: Your father shot off fireworks. (laughs)

ST: Oh, yeah. Yeah, my dad...being a station agent meant that he had to confiscate any fireworks that came through the freight house. Kids would order fireworks and it was illegal in the park. So naturally they just disappeared into the trunk of my dad's car. One time when I was coming back, I'd come back from Wasatch... I was not old enough to drive a car yet. Dad would do the driving, my father, which I called him Dad a lot, and I called him Pop. We took some fireworks in the car and we drove out to the first viewpoint on the West Rim and shot some off there and drove on down. Then came back. Nobody caught us. The next day, whenever he went to the Rotary meeting the next time, my dad suggested that they fine the chief ranger for not catching the kids that were shooting the fireworks off. (all laugh) I think that was Howard Strickland was the chief ranger. I'm not sure. Speaking of Fred Harvey, there was a guy named Daisy Steel. Dean Daisy and Daisy Steel, two different people. Dean Daisy was Park Service; Daisy Steel... Daisy was laid up for some reason, and I may have the names wrong, I always did. I think it was Daisy Steel that was working at the... Anyway, he would be the night watchman at the Fred Harvey garage. Now, he didn't walk around, he parked in the back inside the garage with a pickup truck. He sat in the back of the truck and played his guitar all night and sang. I can remember hearing his voice once in a while coming through the bedroom window.

PT: Cause the garage is right across from your bedroom.

ST: Yeah, it was right across... During the war years when all the jobs were frozen, for Santa Fe anyway, the train only came up once a week. It backed in on Tuesday and it brought groceries, supplies for the village. When I got older I was able to help them unload the freight car, the refrigerator car. I remember a guy that worked there named Big Ed, who was really big. When we got to the watermelons somehow or other one of the watermelons always got broken (laughs). If my parents missed me, they didn't talk about it. It was probably a good thing cause I would have thought, well, I'm supposed to be sad about this, and I wasn't particularly. My dad was a good listener. He always answered a question with a question. If nothing else he'd say, "Why do you ask that?" (laughs) Whatever he did I never could get the right answer (both laugh). I was goofed up a lot. And, yeah, my mom and I would argue a lot. You name it, we could argue about it. We'd be in the kitchen arguing and my dad would go "Ahem" and that stopped the argument right there. We never knew what would have happened but we didn't argue anymore, not verbally, no verbal stuff.

TM: What else do you remember about your summers there? You mentioned during the war years one train a week on Tuesdays. After the war years...

ST: The Bright Angel was closed.

TM: Okay.

ST: So was the auto campground. The only thing that was open was the El Tovar and the Hopi House. I don't believe the Hopi House even offered dances at night then. You could go in the Hopi House, I'm assuming it was open. I went upstairs and visited Billy Spencer, I think was the overall manager of the Hopi House until Porter took over. But Porter lived there the whole time. The whole family would do the dancing at 5:00. I remember Billy doing the hoop dance. There's a story about the hoop dancing, too. The story that Porter gave the public was that the hoop was a circle of life that you could step through. As long as you negotiate the hoop everything was fine, and I believed that. He would say, "(heavily accented word), thank you, thank you. This dance is for..." and he'd go on with whatever it was, the Eagle Dance or whatever dance. I was having lunch with Tony Hillerman one time and Tony was telling us where the hoop dance came from. It turns out that the New York World's Fair, they wanted a group of Indians to come out and dance for them. They wanted a special dance to open the 1938 World's Fair so they had a choreographer come in and they worked on the hoop dance, which became very popular with the Pueblo Indians cause they were the ones that started it, and then Plains Indians took it over and everything. Tony Hillerman's version of it was that nobody thought it up back in the old days, and that makes sense, too. I had a cousin, Ned Russell, was the chief of the Yavapai-Apache Tribe for a year back in the 70s. I think he lived near Red Rock Crossing in Oak Creek Canyon, and his family, his two daughters. He had more than two but...

PT: He had three.

ST: Three, yeah. Thank you. Ned was another one that traveled in the Marines. He was in the Marine paratroopers for a while. Then they disbanded the paratroopers and went on. He said that he always felt nervous when he got up to the Canyon because he felt like the next thing he had to do was jump. He was a great joker so you never knew whether he was telling the truth or not. I have a lot of stories about him, too, through there. He's deceased. Go ahead.

TM: As a child did you get into the Power House? Were you in there at all?

ST: I walked through it once or twice. Big generator or something, steam. I didn't know anything more about it. I know Santa Fe did a lot of development for the village at that time. There was a certain sense of disassociation between the National Park Service and the Santa Fe. Yeah. I'm not sure exactly what all occurred, but the Fred Harvey House as it came in... There was the Harvey people and there was the Park Service people and there was the Santa Fe people. The Santa Fe people and the Fred Harvey people lived on Avenue A, B, and C, and the Park Service people lived up on the hill. My mother and father were nondrinkers and they didn't like going to parties where there was a lot of drinking going on. Dr. Bryant, who was the Park superintendent then, I don't think he was a drinker either, and he didn't go to very many of these things. But the Fred Harvey people, man, bring it on. There were a lot of leaders there that were three sheets to the wind, so we didn't associate with them very much.

When they built the Grand Canyon Lodge, you know about that one that's out by Powell Memorial that had a swimming pool? Okay. When that first came in we had a minister, again a Methodist minister, but

he was serving the village of Grand Canyon. His name was Ken Poray. He was seen out at the Grand Canyon Lodge with a lot of the gang. Whether or not he was drinking I have no idea. But my mother, particularly, thought it was not a good thing for him to be seen there because it was a bar, it was a bar, too, different. That was another thing, too. During the war the only hotel that was open was El Tovar Hotel. I can remember my dad coming down the steps from the El Tovar, when they had the steps coming down instead of the zigzag trail. He would say, "Wow, they have six guests tonight." Yeah. We'd go up and it was just quiet, and the dining room was closed. I don't remember where we ate. (laughs) I guess we ate at home. At some point they reopened. I can't remember about that cause we didn't eat there very much. It was expensive for one thing. They had ring-tail cats that were up in the hotel and would come down and they'd feed them. The cashier would feed the ring-tail cats. (pause) I don't remember any more of that.

Don Schellbach and I used to climb the outside ladder of the El Tovar Hotel when it was closed. The rooms were closed, a lot of the rooms were, but if you got up on the third floor everything was closed. We figured out a way that we could get on the balcony and we could get through a door and walk down the hallway. It was quiet cause nobody was there. That was something. We did the same thing at the Lookout Studio, too. I worked at the Lookout. I didn't get paid, I was still not 16, but I used to go over there and use the darkroom. Tom Parks and Virgil Gibson. Virgil Gibson, a name you probably know, and Virgil taught us about...Don was in on this, too...he taught us about developing. We worked with black and whites and we got to where we could run the equipment. Tourists would come in in the morning and they'd drop off their film and then before they got on the train at night they'd pick their prints up. We're doing in six hours or whatever it took.

TM: Nice.

ST: I learned how to do that and when we got to high school, I automatically went into the yearbook and I worked with the pictures.

TM: What do you remember about Don Parks?

ST: Tom Parks.

TM: Tom Parks, thank you.

ST: He came from the Phoenix area. He was a photographer. I think he was a professional photographer someplace before he came to the Canyon. He was a character. He taught us about salon photography, which means you could see pictures of nudes. (laughter) That was funny. Other than that I don't know much. They were all very encouraging as far as photography goes. Once in a while we'd go down to Kolb Studio, I've been in the Kolb Studio darkroom, too. It wasn't off limits, it's just that it was too far to walk, I guess, from Bright Angel it was crazy. Lookout Studio it was what 50 feet and you could go... We spent time in... My mom and dad and I visited Emery Kolb sometimes in his house there, in his apartment up there.

TM: You know, Sam, before we talk about Kolb, cause I do want to ask you about him, can you tell me a little bit more about Virgil Gibson and the Lookout Studio. Do you remember Virgil's role there? I think he was from Phoenix as well so it makes sense that he might have known Tom that way.

ST: Could have been. He was a manager for Fred Harvey there, and Virgil did a lot of pictures. It was Virgil that taught me about using an 8 x 10 view camera. Virgil would go out and set up a tripod and put this view camera, I want to say Speed Graphic. It was bigger than that. Slide it in, you know, pull this out, click. He'd spend an hour or so setting up and waiting. He'd take, click, and turn it, click, and that would be it. I learned how to take minimal pictures, I mean, spend a little time on it, very little. I didn't have a 35 millimeter roll film to begin with but I learned to take very careful about viewing and setting up and everything. I was so surprised when I was in college, I went to Pepperdine... Lawrence Schiller was the photographer at Pepperdine College and he was also the youngest professional paid photographer in the country. He took portraits of President Eisenhower and things like that. He invited me one time to go and look at the studio where he was working for Pepperdine, taking the pictures there. I says, "Yeah, I'd like to." So I walk in and here's this guy with this 35 millimeter camera and a 500-frame roll thing on the automatic, you know, electric, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam. I said, "God, you waste a lot of film." He says, "I only need one picture." "Yeah." "So doesn't matter. The others I can just throw away." This was before digital (PT laughs) but that was a whole different approach to taking pictures.

TM: So Virgil really helped you understand how to frame a photograph then?

ST: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah. And everything was upside down, you know, on the screen, on the, what is it, glass?

TM: The viewing box?

ST: The viewing box, yeah, right. So anyway, we did that. The first check I got when... I was hired at Fred Harvey, I worked in the Bright Angel newsstand and I was 16... I went in and my first check was \$75. That was for one or two weeks, I don't know. I ordered a used Ansco Automatic Reflex, which is like a Rolleiflex except that it's not a Rolleiflex. They couldn't compete with Rolleiflex but it was a stronger case. So I bought that camera. There is a picture in the living room that I took with that camera at the very end of my use with it. I still have the camera. There's a picture of the Tucson Mountains. Phyllis and I were going on an early morning balloon ride. The sun was just right and I had my camera, took that picture and it's up on the wall.

TM: Nice.

ST: We'll look at it when we go back in and you'll see.

TM: What else can you tell me about Virgil?

ST: I know, he keeps going back to Virgil. You know, Virgil was very quiet. He and my mother were handy. They communicated a lot because she wrote the titles to the pictures that he was taking. She wrote for the *Santa Fe Magazine* and Fred Harvey. I don't know if it was Santa Fe Fred Harvey or there was Santa Fe and there was a Fred Harvey magazine. I don't remember that, but she did write for both magazines. She also wrote for *United Press International*. She covered that...

PT: Crash.

ST: ...plane crash, also the guys that bailed out of the airplane and landed in the Canyon. They didn't crash the plane because (laughs) after three or four of them bailed out, the pilot was able to make it go more, you know... B-17 or something.

TM: The reason I'm asking about Virgil, these are other amazing stories as well, was because there's always a lot of focus on Emery Kolb as the Canyon photographer and yet...

ST: Oh, no, yeah, I know. You walk into Kolb Studios and the pictures were taken by Kolb, naturally, but Fred Harvey pictures of Grand Canyon were almost all taken by Virgil Gibson. I don't know whether he got credit on the cards at all but... No? Well...

TM: I don't think so. I mean, this is the most amazing thing when contemporary people think about photography in Grand Canyon, they think of the Kolb Studio and there are the brothers hanging with the rope and the camera and isn't it nice.

ST: Yeah.

TM: Virgil Gibson gets very little press as being the Grand Canyon...

ST: Or Ansel Adams...

PT: Tell that story.

ST: Yeah, I've got a story about Ansel, too.

TM: Please.

ST: Anyway, Virgil did all of the postcards that you got, the photographed postcards. Some of them... One of the things that Tom Parks taught was how to, what do you call it, color in? They did color tinting on pictures which were then postcards. Virgil was just really quiet. I don't know much about him except I knew him at the Lookout. I think my mom may have mentioned more of him on the tape.

TM: Did you know his children?

ST: No. I didn't know he had children.

TM: I believe he did.

ST: Could be.

TM: I think they're still in Phoenix. So more research to do there. So let's go to Kolb's and then let's talk about what you remember about the '44, and then the 1956. Were you still at the park in 1956?

PT: You were at Pepperdine.

ST: I was at Pepperdine.

TM: Okay, okay.

ST: My father died in 1956?

PT: -7.

ST: 1957.

PT: March of '57.

ST: That's right. Thank you. She's good for this. She's good for a lot of things but that's one thing she knows. (laughs) At Easter time I had already met Phyllis's parents. We'd been dating for two years or thereabouts, but she was going to the University of Arizona and I was going to Pepperdine so we saw each other on the weekends. When my father passed, Phyllis sent me a telegram and said, "I'll meet you," cause she came out for the funeral, which I thought was fantastic. I'm glad she came. My dad was missed by a lot of people up at the Canyon, and my mother, too, I think. My mother was kind of a ramrod for community activity. She was not the community leader or anything but she did plays. She and Mrs. Bryant, it was Harold Bryant, Amy Bryant I think was her name.

PT: Umm hmm, that's right.

ST: I remember when Prince Faisal came right after the war. Maybe the war was not quite finished but he visited and they had a high tea, for him in Bryant's home. My mother and Ethel Schellbach and a couple other people helped serve tea there to the Prince. Now, the connection there goes, too, with Lawrence of Arabia because Faisal was the man and they went to Aqaba and all of that stuff. Well, that's part of it. I didn't know about that until later. I'll tell you something else I didn't know about. I used to have this guy that would come over when I was working the newsstand. His son and I went to school at Wasatch, but Mike was two years ahead of me. So I didn't connect Mike with anybody except that he was Mike. Then there was this guy that would come in and he would buy film from me. He always got Plus X or Tri X pan, powerful film. I would say... Stay there. (ST walks away)

PT: A lot of the stories he's told I never heard before. But this one I know. (laughs) He wrote this book.

ST: Well, it was an anthology. I'm in this book.

PT: Yeah.

ST: There were eight of us that got together and put our short stories together. This will work. It may take me a minute to find it but... Tell him how we met, Phyllis.

PT: Oh. You want me to?

TM: Yeah, please.

PT: Okay. Well, I lived in Chicago. I was born and raised in Chicago, and we moved to a suburb when I was in 3rd grade.

TM: What did your parents do?

PT: My father was an electrical engineer in downtown Chicago. My mother was a teacher. I had a boyfriend who was 10 years older than me. They decided one summer that I should come out. My aunt lived in Flagstaff, my dad's sister. She was a teacher and she worked at the Canyon during the summers.

Aunt Lucille had said that if I came out that she'd get me a job at the Canyon. So my mother and my baby sister and I came out on the train, Santa Fe. We went to visit Aunt Lucille in Flagstaff and then we went up to the Canyon. They needed somebody who was 21, and I was 20. They needed somebody in the bar and I said I wasn't gonna be 21 for another year. So they said, "Okay, well, we'll call you." So we went back to Flagstaff. My mother and my sister went to California then to visit my brother and his family and I stayed with Aunt Lucille in Flag. Well, they called the next day and said they had an opening at the soda fountain on the Rim so I could come up and see whether I would like that job. Oh yeah, I was excited I was gonna get a job at the Grand Canyon and I'd be right there on the Rim. That was great. So my aunt took me up there and they took me over to the dormitory. They had dormitories for the workers which were right there between the El Tovar and the Bright Angel. The dormitories are back there. I don't know if they're still there but... (laughs)

TM: Yeah, yeah, they are. There's some still there, yes.

PT: So anyway they set me up with this older gal and then they told me I should go over to the soda fountain and they would train me how to make sundaes and sodas. I had been there 30 minutes, my first day, when Mr. Turner comes in to see who the new girl is.

TM: Is that right?

PT: He knew Lucy that worked in the soda fountain. He had dated Lucy. He told Lucy he wanted to know who the new girl was. Lucy said, "She's Phyllis from Chicago, the blonde." So he came over and he said to me, "You look like your name is Phyllis and I think you're from Chicago," or something like that. (laughter)

ST: Some dumb thing.

PT: (laughs) Yeah. I went, "Okay, and I'm busy learning this. Okay, go away." (laughs) I've got all this work to do. I'm dedicated and I want to find out how this worked and all that. Anyway, so I went on and got my job done and everything. He worked in the grocery store in Babbitt's.

ST: I had changed from Bright Angel to the grocery store.

PT: Yeah, you worked at the grocery store. The next day one of my fellow soda fountain workers came and she said, "I brought this from the guy that works at the store. His name is Sam Turner and he wants you to have this." It was a bubblegum cigar. I said, "Who's Sam Turner?" (laughs) I had all of this stuff going and I was... I said, "Okay, fine, thank you." Then he came in later and he said, "Why don't you get Tuesday as your day off." I was, "What?" (laughs) "And I'll show you the Canyon." I went, "Oh, okay. Well, that hasn't come up yet. I've only been here one day." Later on then, I did get the day off and then he took me out...

TM: Which was your day off, too?

ST: Oh, yeah.

PT: Or whatever day it was, yeah. He showed me the front roads and then he showed me the back roads and he showed me a lot of the Canyon. We were having a good time. I had left a boyfriend in Chicago, a boyfriend from Texas, and a couple of others that when they contacted me at the Canyon I said, "Oh,

don't come here. It's really not that great." (all laugh) So anyway, that was the beginning. He was going to school in Flag and I had been going to school...

ST: No, I was going to school at Pepperdine.

PT: I mean in California, and I was going to school in Michigan. So then I asked my parents if I could transfer here to the University, would be my junior year.

TM: To Flagstaff?

PT: No, to U of A.

TM: To U of A? Okay.

PT: Yeah. The gal that was training me at the soda fountain was his ex-girlfriend and she was going to the University. She said, "She could live with her in her home and I could transfer here as a junior." So I did that. My parents were not real happy about it because that was bye-bye and it was a long ways. But I was excited, it was this great adventure.

ST: No snow.

PT: When I went to Albion College in Michigan they only took part of my credits because I had been to a junior college, like Pima College, and they didn't like some of my credits so they wouldn't take them. So I came out here and the University of Arizona took them all back.

TM: Wow.

PT: So I started here as a full junior. Then I had to pick a major and I went, "Oh, I don't know what I want to be." Anyway it goes on from there. Then we were married. I graduated one Sunday, he graduated the next Sunday, and the next Sunday we were married on the Rim in the first formal wedding ever held there.

TM: What day was that?

PT: June 16th, 1957.

ST: And I remember that. (all laugh)

PT: I hope.

TM: I bet you do. Let's back up a little bit because you were telling me about Virgil and the fact that Virgil really taught you to frame an image, not just mass shoot the picture and hope one of the images popped out.

ST: Yeah, and he didn't do it like a teacher would do it. I went out with him... I had my little, I think I had a Bolsey B2 35 millimeter, I'm not sure, but I had a small camera. No, it was a Bantam 828, not the Bantam Special but a Bantam camera. Are you familiar with that?

TM: Huh uh, not at all.

ST: Well, an 828 is a half-frame 35 millimeter. Okay. So I hardly ever took it out. I'd go with him and I'd watch him set up. He didn't say, "Now, Sammy, this is the way we do it." He just set it up and he'd say, "Uh huh, yeah, well, let's wait for the clouds to come in. We've got some shadow there. Umm, this might work." Bam. That's all. But that was my introduction to professional photography and I didn't know enough to ask him questions. I just knew about the darkroom portion of it and I knew that it required some planning, photography to line things up. He didn't say, "Now, this is the way you do it," though, I don't think ever.

TM: But you sort of learned by watching and listening in.

ST: I did, I did. Yeah. And I'd see the results. We'd put it in the developer, you know, and watch it come up and wow.

TM: So you also mentioned Ansel Adams. I know that Ansel did a lot of work in the darkroom to make his pictures pop. Did Virgil do that as well?

ST: Virgil did that in the darkroom. Yeah, he did a lot of that, but he was so good at getting it framed.

TM: Umm, in the first place.

ST: Read this. Just that.

TM: This is from the book *Hatched: An Eclectic Collection from the Quail Run Writers*.

ST: That's us.

TM: This is on page 349, and this is:

Have I got a story for you. Bright Angel newsstand, Grand Canyon, 1952.

"Good morning, Mr. Adams."

"Good morning, Sammy. I see you're back at your newsstand job again."

"Oh, yeah it's fun."

"How was Wasatch?"

"Great. I'll be a senior next year."

"Do you like Mike much?"

"No, he's on a different floor in the dorms, besides he's a senior."

"Are you still writing in your journal?"

"Oh, yes. I mail it to my folks every so often."

"Good for you. I wish Mike would write more often. Give me a couple rolls of Plus-X 35 millimeter film."

"Sure thing, Mr. Adams."

"Thanks, Sammy. Have a good year at Wasatch."

1956, I'm in a hallway of Pepperdine College passing framed black and white photographs of Grand Canyon. The end photo has a picture of a photographer. I pause and stare. I know that man. That's Mr. Adams. I didn't know his first name was Ansel.

ST: That's true. That's true.

TM: Wow. So Ansel Adam's son was Mike...

ST: Adams from Yosemite, and he went to Wasatch.

TM: And they would have been having the same problems as well...

ST: They did.

TM: ...without a high school.

ST: No high school. And we had people from Window Rock because on the reservation, Navajo and Hopi reservation, because of the same thing. A lot of times they sent them someplace else.

PT: Don Patterson from...

ST: Yeah, Don Patterson, my roommate. Oh, my roommate Don Patterson, we hiked a lot. We hiked to Rainbow Bridge back in the old days.

PT: And he lived...

ST: He lived in Kayenta, well, Oljato, Oljato Trading Post, which is north of Kayenta. Okay? Don came to Wasatch the same year that I did, but he was coming from the reservation and I didn't know him. He roomed downstairs. I was upstairs with Doug Ramsey the first year. The second year I roomed with Leonard Hill. Leonard was the first Jewish person to come to Wasatch Presbyterian Mission School. Here's Leonard. He and his sister and mother left Germany in 1938 just before everything was clamped down. He wrote once that the first thing that he remembers about Germany was the crunch of bullet holes in the ceiling when they were looking out the window illegally. They weren't supposed to look out. Anyway, they left Germany and took the Trans-Siberian Railroad all the way to China, and then a boat across to Seattle.

Met his father who had come through Sweden and they wound up in Salt Lake City. His father was a jobber for clothing, men's clothing, established the roots there and started working there. They were looking for a small private school for Leonard, and Wasatch took him. I did not know a thing about Jewish people. I just didn't. So Leonard and I wound up being roommates for a year. We got along fine but in the meantime Don and I kind of did...wanted to... So we, as juniors and seniors, when we moved to Sage Dormitory, Leonard wanted to go up on the top floor with three or four guys and Don and I became roommates at Wasatch. Then my senior year when I graduated from Wasatch, I went to NAU, which was still Northern Arizona College then, State Teachers College.

TM: State school.

ST: Yeah. And Don went to Pepperdine College. The first year that I was at NAU was not a good experience for me. Things were... The idea was that I would go to college, on the weekends I would drive up to the Canyon, I'd work on the weekends and come back to the college. So I stayed in a dormitory but I didn't stay there on the weekends. I came back and forth, back and forth, and back and forth. I really didn't get to know people at NAU. Things weren't working out. Don says, "Why don't you come out and room with me at Pepperdine." I said, "Well, we'll check it out." I took the train, get on a family pass, I

could ride to LA, went up to Pepperdine and decided to go there. So my dad had to spring for money again. I didn't know what I was gonna major in. When I was at NAU my counselor there happened to be the head of the Accounting Department and that's the only class in college I flunked (laughs). He said, "Well, everybody should have some accounting." I said, "Well, that makes sense." That's all I could do. So anyway, I wound up at Pepperdine. I think it was around... Well, I still didn't know what I was gonna do when I graduated. I thought I was going to be in speech correction because that's what I was taking. Went in the Navy. Phyllis already told you she graduated one weekend, I graduated the next weekend, and the next weekend we were married. Then three weeks later I was in Newport, Rhode Island in the Navy.

PT: And I had my first teaching contract in California.

ST: Hawthorne, California. So she's on the West Coast. The recruiter said we'd be together and I wound up in Newport, Rhode Island, which wasn't exactly the same. When I got out of the Navy... Well, she came back the second year. When she came back to... I was finally transferred to Norfolk, Virginia and I wound up in the amphibious construction battalion.

PT: Seabees.

ST: The Seabees. I worked in an office, and guess what, I typed. I knew how to type and there was no Vesper Vance to distract me. (laughter)

PT: He had a wife teaching school.

ST: Yeah, that's right. So she came out and became a teacher there. She took a thousand dollar cut from California to teach in Little Creek, Virginia, part of Princess Anne County or something like that, Queen Anne. So I finished up my career there in the Navy and we drove back. I really missed the San Francisco Peaks. I wanted to see the Peaks. We drove to Flagstaff, dropped down to Tucson. I didn't have any family there. My father was already deceased. My mother was living in Clarkdale, we stop by and see her, and down we went.

PT: Went to the university.

ST: Yeah. I decided I'd start on my Master's at the University. The first year that I was there a bunch of people from the Speech Correction Department, which was where I'd been, came back for kind of a reunion and they were talking about how difficult it was to get a job. I thought, well, maybe I ought to just finish up my education degree and just have it. I need to take student teaching. I don't know how this worked but at that time the College of Education, there were three floors on the main campus. The third floor was speech correction, second floor was College of Education. I used to ride up and down the elevator to go to third floor with some guy named Sparks, I think, who was in charge of student teaching. I thought, well, I'll go down and check. So I went down. I don't know how they knew this, but I went down and I walked in his office and I said, "I'd like to sign up for student teaching." He says, "Oh, we've been expecting you. Yeah, right here." And he says, "You're gonna be teaching at Peter Howell Elementary School." Okay. So I started my student teaching there and had a great experience, 4th grade. Got transferred my first...

The first year that they were hiring teachers, Tucson was hiring like 300 teachers. That was back then. Phyllis already had a job. She got a job at Sewell Elementary, so she was teaching. No kids, right? I went

to Drachman Elementary School, which was the heart of La Reforma area, all Hispanic, and I loved it. We just had a great time. Phyllis's advice to me my first day of teaching is don't be too friendly. So what'd I do? I sat up on the edge of the desk and I said, "My name is Mr. Turner and I'm your friend." (PT laughs) Whatever. I think it took from September to December to realize what was happening cause they just nailed me to the chalkboard and crucified me right there on the spot. (laughter) Took a while. I remember going down at the end of the year, the first year of 4th grade, and Mrs. Weeks, Babe Weeks had been teaching 6th grade there for 90 years, you know. "Well, Mr. Turner, are you going to continue with your teaching?" I said, "Well, I don't know." She says, "Well, give yourself at least three years to find out what's going on and then you'll know." Well, I said I'm remedial enough it'll probably take me four years to know, but I continued. I taught there for eight years.

I learned how to teach, mostly by the seat of my pants but it worked out. I had a good principal finally. Carl Lopez came in and he was excellent. He came from a Hispanic family where nobody had gone through college. He was offered a scholarship based on baseball because he was good. They called him Scooter Lopez. He said, "Well, I'd like to teach high school." His advisor at the University said, "You need to teach elementary school to begin with, find it out." I didn't know this but I took his room. He had been a 4th grade teacher there and had been moved up to principal. I took his room and I worked with those kids and went on. I finally moved up to 5th grade and then to 6th grade. Nervous because those kids were older and I had a great time with them. Then I transferred to Wakefield Middle School, waiting for Pistor Middle School to be built. It hadn't been finished. They were gonna hire me as an art teacher. So I went to Wakefield and that was really Hispanic. The teachers in the faculty lounge at Drachman said, "Sam, you're gonna have a terrible time there. All those Mexican kids, and there's Black kids there, too. You're not gonna enjoy that at all." I said, "Okay, we'll see." So I went down there and the first day it was great, and from then on... One thing, we had a planning period. I never had a planning period in elementary school. In junior high, you know, you had a whole period when you can just breathe. (laughter)

TM: So I'm gonna tie this back to the Canyon.

ST: Good luck. (laughs)

TM: A couple more questions for you. You mentioned Ansel Adams and you were talking about Virgil Gibson and, of course, in the back of my mind is the force of Emery Kolb. What are your earliest recollections of Emery and then as you went on through your high school years and then into college, and then left the Canyon eventually, and Emery was there all the time.

ST: When he was 80-some odd years he was up on the roof putting shingles on.

TM: Was he roped in?

ST: I don't know. He was on the roof. Mostly I remember Emery talking... I'd see him, he'd be walking over to the post office. He'd come down the steps and I'd meet him. I'd, "Hi, Mr. Kolb." Then my folks would be with him, we'd have dinner or something with him. He was quiet. He was not a great influence on me as far as photography goes or anything but I did watch his lectures a lot. I almost memorized them. I memorized Louie Schellbach, I knew his to begin with. And I memorized a lot of what Porter Timeche was saying even though I couldn't speak Hopi. But Emery Kolb, he was just there. He was alive when I left the Canyon. I don't remember when he passed.

TM: So Emery's lectures, were they different or were they the same day in day out?

ST: They were the same. He introduced his film and he would talk over the film cause there was no sound on the film originally. Later on it got to where they'd turn on something and his lecture would come up and the film would go and everything would be synced. That was fascinating. I enjoyed seeing the experience on the river and everything, what he was doing.

ST: That brings up Joan Nevills, the daughter of Norman Nevills. My mom, working for Associated Press, no, United Press International, she was writing about all the river people each time they'd run a trip down. Was it Otis Marston, Dr. Marston, he ran trips there. Sometimes we would drive out to Desert View and we'd look at their signals and they... You know that Nevills crashed his plane?

TM: Yeah. 1949.

ST: Okay. In '49, that's when I went to Wasatch. I had never met Joan Nevills but I knew that she was coming. I knew that she was a daughter of Norman Nevills. She was a year younger than I was. The first time I remember seeing Joan Nevills, and I've told her about this, she was on the second or third floor of the girls' dormitory walking from window to window outside, climbing across. I said, "I'll betcha that's Joan Nevills." She was a delight. After I graduated from Wasatch... I don't know why I didn't associate it with her particularly at Wasatch cause she went there. I think she went there the whole time but I don't remember much about her except the window. The next time I saw her I was living in Tucson and we drove up to Flagstaff, so I'll look her up. She was married to Gay Staveley then, Staveley River, and we talked for a little while. So nice to see her again.

TM: Nice. Nice. What else do you remember about Emery? His presentations were repetitious, he was fairly quiet. But, he had a darkroom. Did you spend any time in his darkroom working with him on film?

ST: No. I saw it. I said, "Oh, this is where you are." Lookout Studio was where... I could just walk in the Lookout Studio and go to the darkroom.

TM: Was that because Virgil was more open embracing or...

ST: Oh, yeah. It was Virgil first and then when Tom Parks came they just let us do it. They knew we weren't gonna mess things up. So where did I get my experience, photography? There was another fellow, Tony Albert. Tony Albert was the florist for the flowers and things for the El Tovar hotel. He was a 35 millimeter man, I think. He shot pictures for *Arizona Highways*, too. He was another person that went out and took one picture, click. Two weeks later he'd take another picture, click. That was my influence, but I never went up to Tony Albert and said, "How do you do this?" I wasn't that far along. I didn't know yet. It would have been 10 years later I might have known something. Seems like there was something I was going to tell you, too, about the Canyon.

TM: We're thinking about Kolb and about what your recollections of him were. And photography, you know, where did you learn that.

ST: I can't give you more of a paragraph and that's about it with him. Same with Virgil. Virgil, I know he liked me. He talked to my mother a lot, "Hi, Sammy, how was school this year," you know, things like that. It seems to me that he left. By the time I went to Pepperdine I think he was gone. They got rid of the darkroom and everything. It was sometime in the year '56, '57, '55, something like that.

TM: Were you at home at the Canyon that summer, end of June 1956, when the TWA v. United happened?

ST: No, I was in college probably.

PT: '56?

ST: '56.

PT: I was working there then.

ST: When the planes crashed?

PT: Yeah.

TM: What do you remember about that, Phyllis?

PT: Not much. Yeah. But I remember...

ST: Yeah, I remember going out and looking at the black spot.

PT: Yeah. Yeah. I remember... And seeing the stones there in future times that we'd been there since then, but I don't remember really very much about it. Your mother wrote the story, didn't she?

ST: Yeah, she did. She wrote the first one, and I don't know that anybody has given her recognition for that. I've read other stories about it and she's never mentioned.

PT: Yeah, and the monument.

ST: Oh, yeah, at the cemetery. I can't help you with that.

PT: Yeah. I'm sorry, I just don't have it. That's a long time ago.

TM: Okay. Yeah, yeah. Then you also mentioned, of course, you would have been 10 years old, I believe it was in 1944 when the three airmen jumped out of the training flight.

ST: Yeah. Yeah.

TM: I don't know if you remember anything else about that at all.

ST: No. We would drive out to Hopi Point with binoculars, you could see the plateau where the parachute was stretched out. There was a lot of talk about that among the villagers. I think the interview, I don't know whether my mother talked to any of the survivors or not. They were talking about the fact that he knew he was going in the Canyon because he could see the village lights and all of a sudden they disappeared below the rim, you know. The amazing thing is they all wound up on the same plateau area, which was unusual. I had an excellent boss the first couple years that I was at the Bright Angel Lodge. His name was Tram Bowman. Tram Bowman played the fiddle for the dances at

night at the Bright Angel. They had dances once a week there. Phyllis and I went to the dances sometimes when she got off work. But Tram and Morris, Gene Morris... I have one of Gene's, that may be his picture...that Christmas...that winter scene, that may be Gene Morris. I'm not sure. I don't think its Kolb.

PT: Does it say?

ST: Well it might.

PT: I'll go look. You stay here.

ST: Okay. Gene Morris. I can't remember what he played but anyway, Tram played the fiddle and he kept time... (pause)

PT: Joliet, Illinois. (laughter)

ST: No.

PT: That's what it says. Copyright. Something Barclow Company, USA.

ST: Look on the right corner. (pause)

PT: Gene Morris.

ST: Yeah.

PT: Winter's Crystal Splendor.

ST: Yeah. Well, he did pictures, too. Anyway, Tram taught me how to sell things on the newsstand. He really was a good guy. I would have stayed at the Bright Angel Lodge and not ever wound up at the grocery store and I might never have met her, but they had a new boss there after this... Well, when I started going to NAU and working on the weekends, they changed supervisors there. The new guy was...

PT: He was my boss, too.

ST: Well, Snow.

PT: I had..., yeah.

ST: Not him.

PT: Oh, not him? The one I had was not friendly either.

ST: The guy that was in the newsstand. It wasn't Pettingill but it was something, I don't know. Anyway, he did not appeal to me. One of the first things he said... He had his office in the back of the newsstand and I'd be working the front...and he'd say, "Turner, come hither," (PT laughs) all the way across. I'd have to go back and he'd say, "You young college punks think you know everything and you don't."

Okay. I never...I'd been polite to him, you know, I don't know. So I decided after that first summer, I told my dad, I says, "I want to move someplace else." So I got a job at the general store.

PT: Babbitt's wasn't it?

ST: Yeah, Babbitt Brothers.

TM: The general store was about equidistance from the train station as the El Tovar, just up the other way?

ST & PT: The other way.

ST: That's right, about, yeah, it might be a little further. It was a block or so down the road.

TM: Right. So the commute to work was tough. (PT laughs) You could have crawled it in five minutes.

ST: I could have. (laughs)

PT: You didn't have to worry about a parking place. (laughs)

TM: That's right.

ST: I didn't. I could walk. The other neat thing was that two of the platforms that ran parallel to the tracks, down to where the little trail was across it, were steam heated, so in the winter those platforms didn't have to be shoveled. That was nice. So anyway I got a job at the store. The only reason I met Phyllis that day was cause I had done something. I stopped by...

PT: You went to see Lucy, didn't you?

ST: Well, yeah, I stopped by to see Lucy. We were doing group games or something at the...

PT: Volleyball.

ST: Volleyball.

PT: At the school, and I went along.

ST: That's right.

PT: You had a date.

ST: I did. I don't...

PT: And I sat in the back. Lucy and Don, his friends, were dating and then he had a date with Jill and I was the fifth wheel.

ST: Boy, she remembers that. Yeah, I did.

TM: What was it like working for Babbitt's? Can you describe the store?

ST: Oh, yeah. There were two cashiers and the gal, bless her heart, I can't remember her name either, but anyway, she taught me working the cash register. I already knew how to do the cash register from the Bright Angel Lodge, but I learned that lettuce was nine cents a pound and, you know, stuff. While I was at the newsstand I learned that cigarettes were 19 cents a pack and Tram says, "Now, Sammy, the way you sell this is when people say 'I need a pack of Camels,' you turn around and put your hand on the cigarette shelf and then you say to them two? And they say, 'Uh, yeah, two.'"

PT: Double your sales.

ST: Did the same thing with film. "I need a roll of Plus-X 35 millimeter." "Oh, okay, two?" "Yeah, make it two."

PT: (laughs) And they were more expensive than in town.

ST: Oh, yeah, yeah. That was something else. Ask me another question.

TM: How long did you work at the store, at the Babbitt's store?

ST: I worked at Babbitt's two summers. There was two summers... There was three summers at Bright Angel, two summers at Babbitt's. And between my junior and senior year of college I...

PT: You went to summer school.

ST: I went to summer school at Pepperdine.

PT: And I got a job in LA...

ST: At J. B. Perrins.

PT: ...and lived with my brother, who lived in Los Angeles.

TM: So the years you were at the store would have been '52, '53-ish?

PT: No.

ST: '52, '53, '54, oh, at the store? '55, '56 maybe.

PT: '55, '56 cause we were married in '57.

ST: That's right.

TM: Umm hmm. Okay.

ST: That's right.

TM: Okay. I always think of Grand Canyon as a small community that's fractured because there is no mayor, there is no city hall, there is no...

ST: That's right.

TM: ...town center per se, and yet at times the clinic has held that role. I wonder, did the store hold that role? What was the center of town, if you will? What did you think the center was?

ST: Well, it was where the chief ranger was. That was right across the street from the grocery store.

TM: That was park headquarters, wasn't it?

ST: Yeah. For a long time. That's where... You're asking questions, names... Man I can't.

TM: No, no, no. You're doing right because, I mean, it's always been an interesting community because it lacks that sense of place. When you quit your job you leave. I mean, you can't...

ST: That's right.

TM: ...just go home and sit on the rocking chair and see who else is hiring.

ST: No, because it wasn't your house. The people that owned houses were Verkamps. They owned a house and...

TM: Kolb.

ST: ...Kolb owned a house.

TM: And who else?

ST: I don't think anybody else.

PT: The company has it.

TM: The Thurstons were out in Tusayan.

ST: Thurstons? Yeah. Thurstons is kind of interesting because they're relatives by marriage to me.

TM: Really?

ST: Bus was married to Skito. Skito was the daughter of Thurston.

PT: They lived in Williams.

ST: They lived in Williams. That was J. C. Fain, another Fain. And my grandfather was Fain.

TM: Okay. Thank you.

ST: Yeah. That was a distant family relation/connection. We knew the Thurstons owned land outside Tusayan. Was somebody else about Tusayan, too, but Tusayan was strictly a Mobile gas station.

TM: Do you remember Rowe Well or was Rowe Well...

ST: Yeah.

TM: What do you remember about Rowe Well?

ST: Patty Harbin. (ST and PT laugh) Patty Harbin was the daughter of somebody, Harbin I guess. She lived at Rowe Well. I don't remember, I think she was older than grade school, I think it was in high school when I met Patty. They had a bowling alley out there, three or four lanes, I don't know. People worked out at Rowe Well, they set up the pins and things. I had driven out there a couple times as I was old enough to drive there and I met Patty. I thought she'd be a good person to date sometime. It never happened. (pause) I can't remember what her father... Yeah, I've been there. You go past Rowe Well and you keep going. You drive far enough and you get to the Hilltop and you can hike into Havasu.

TM: Did you hike in that way?

ST: No, I rode a horse, an Indian pony. (laughs) I must have been nine or ten years old. We had family of friends that were in the Santa Tomas Japanese Prison Camp in the Philippines during World War II. When they got out, when McArthur brought his tanks in, they said, "George..." not George, Ivory, the family's name was Ivory, and they had said, "If we get out of this situation we want to go to Arizona and we want to see the Havasupai Canyon." They asked my dad about that when they came out. He knew somebody in Flagstaff, the connection came that way, a friend of a friend, and he says, "Yeah, I'll make arrangements for them." We still had the 1938 Chevrolet, which is important because the Santa Fe station still was holding an ice house they made for the passenger trains to keep everything cool. So we had a... Next to the railroad station, there were several different rooms and one of them happened to be an ice house. There were 500 pound blocks of ice there, whatever. Maybe they were 200 pounds, I don't know. I couldn't move them.

PT: Big. (laughs)

ST: Big.

TM: Big.

ST: Yeah, right. They were the size that would fit in the trunk of a 1938 Chevrolet. So we arranged for the Ivory's, and I think there were five in the family, three kids and the parents, and somebody else. Anyway, we made arrangements to have the Havasu Indians bring ponies/horses up for us to meet at the hilltop. We had to go down with Indian horses. My dad put gunny sacks over the ice and put a case or two of soda pop, including grape soda pop, Welch's grape juice or something. I never cared for Welch juice, but I did after this. They put the case there and then he put the block of ice on top of the case and then covered the whole thing with gunny sacks and then locked the trunk. He parked the car on a hillslope so that any water dripping out would drip down cause we were gonna be gone for three days. We took horses in. We got off the main drop-off and got into kind of the plateau area and everybody started loping. Well, here I am bouncing along and all of a sudden the cinch on the saddle breaks, it's

like this and I'm on the ground and I landed in the only soft place there, there were rocks all around. I was, needless to say, somewhat frightened and nervous.

TM: I bet.

ST: The Indian guide came over. They straightened it up. They took some string and they tied the cinch on a little bit more. (laughs) They said, "You'll be fine." I got on and my wrist hurt a little bit. I didn't break anything. So rode a little further and we got to a little ledge. We were going down the canyon area and there was a ledge, was about the height of the stirrup and the bridle dropped off. (PT laughs) I just stepped off onto this ledge. They came back and they got some more string and they tied the bridle on and I rode the rest of the way. Coming back up I rode on a different horse.

PT: (laughs) I never heard that before.

TM: And this would have been 1944, '45?

ST: Yeah, yeah. It was great because the Ivory's were cleansed, I guess, of the Japanese prison camp.

TM: Wow.

ST: My mother climbed down Mooney Falls, down the... She was still pretty careful about her walking and she put her cane away when she was at the Canyon. She'd gone from crutches to a cane. I don't remember much of her using anything but a cane. When I think of her I thought of her as walking, but she walked with a limp because the only thing that was left was... The tendons on her heel were too tight and they couldn't stretch them out so she had to wear... They didn't have to be special, she had to get a certain brand of shoe that had a wedge so her heel was up a little. If she was barefoot she'd go over backwards because she couldn't put her heels down. But she climbed down that canyon.

TM: Wow.

ST: And then I rode mules down to Phantom Ranch the first time. I must have been just...they wouldn't take little kids...I couldn't have been more than nine or ten. I remember swimming in the pool there, not swimming, but sinking in the pool. I didn't drown but...

PT: (laughing) I noticed.

ST: I didn't learn to swim till I got in the Navy. We didn't have any swimming pools.

TM: This would have been '54 or '53, '52? When would that have been in the swimming pool at Phantom Ranch?

ST: The first time was in the 40s. We may have pictures of that. I think we have movies of that someplace, 8 millimeter movies. I can't tell you about that. Don't know. Most of the movies I had set to CD disks. The first movies that my folks took that I remember were movies of the 1938 Fair in San Francisco. It was the first color film. Her dad was still using black and white. My dad used color. But his method of taking moving pictures was this (sound effects and laughter). Bless his heart.

TM: Do you remember any of the mule wranglers? Do you remember...

ST: Yeah, John Bradley was the head man. I don't know whether it was John Bradley that can spin six ropes at a time. He had two hooks on the back and he could get ropes going there and then he had one in his mouth and two in his hands. He had five ropes at once.

TM: Wow.

ST: They did that at the Bright Angel Lodge when they were doing the dances and things. I think it was John. I think it was John Bradley that also sang. There were two songs that he sang, All Aboard for that Mule, Grand Canyon Mule Ride, something, "Please Mr. Cowboy put my saddle on backwards. I don't like to see where I'm going but I like to see where I've been." And "Vera, the Queen of the Canyon, That Trail Going Mule of Mine." I think that all came from John Bradley. Boy, my mother could give you a list of a whole bunch. Her job at Fred Harvey, she started working at the garage and that's on her tape. She was hired during the War. The first thing she taught, she taught school because they needed a teacher at the regular thing. Then at some point she hired on as secretary to Jimmy Shirley, who was the original, as far as I know, the Fred Harvey Transportation Department. Then Johnny Cunningham came on after that and she was with Johnny most of the time there. Johnny had a son named David, and David Cunningham was a year younger than I was. David went to Wasatch, too. But David grew up next to the mule barns and the horse barns. He was gonna be a cowboy, there was no question about it. So the first year at Wasatch, which would have been my second year, he disappeared from school one day. He ran away, didn't know where he'd gone. He's the only child. My mom was talking to Johnny Cunningham, and they said, "All we know is that there was some cowboy that got on the bus at Ephraim," or the next town down, Springerville, I don't know, a few miles down the road. David was smart enough not to get on at Mount Pleasant. He went down one and picked up, and he bought a ticket to someplace in Phoenix. Don't remember where. My mother says to Johnny, "I'll betcha that's David. He had a ticket there. He's gonna go down and he's gonna find a ranch." Well, they found him. In fact, they found him he was on his way back. He decided that he couldn't do this in the end. So he came back to school, and I don't know what else happened. He was a lonesome kid. He married a Navajo lady, girl, which I never thought would have happened. He says, "Oh, yeah, I'm married to a Navie." They lived in Yuma for a while. We had a Grand Canyon reunion back in 1988 or '98, something like that, '88, I think it was in Yuma, and he showed up. So did Sherma Moore, the daughter of Sherman Moore, and a lot of people.

TM: Did you know Mary Hoover at the time?

ST: No.

TM: Okay. And Curly Ennis?

ST: Oh, yeah. Curly Ennis.

TM: What can you remember about Curly?

ST: He drove the bus back and forth to Williams and back. I think that was it. When they didn't have a train...you wanted to get on the train someplace...you had to take a bus to Williams and get on the train there. Yeah. He had a daughter. She and a boyfriend were out at Hopi Point one afternoon. They were sitting on the other side of the railing with their legs dangling over the canyon, 1700 feet down, and the bus driver for a tour came up and said, "You kids should get on the other side of the railing." Oh, that was Charlie Dunn. That wasn't Curly Ennis. Who was Curly? Charlie Dunn was the bus driver. So Doris

was holding onto the railing in time to look over and see her boyfriend fall over backwards. Stay on the side of the railing.

TM: Hmm. Hmm. And Shorty Yarberry?

ST: Shorty worked at the barn, and he was short. He had a limp and he did the shoeing of all the mules, the horseshoeing, what's that's called?

TM: The blacksmith, the farrier?

ST: Farrier. Yeah, he could do all of that. I used to go over and watch him. They worked the stuff and got it hot and clanged it. I didn't understand all that. David Cunningham knew Shorty Yarberry. Who was Curly Ennis?

TM: He was another one of the wranglers, another one of the mule guides/trail guides.

ST: Okay.

TM: I think he might have actually managed the mule barn for a while. I'm not sure of that.

ST: Yeah, it was Charlie Dunn that was the bus driver. (pause) There's something else that was important about the Canyon that talks about environment for me, and that's what I've tried to do sometimes with Phyllis when I was dating her. My family would go out to Hopi Point and watch the sun set. It was quiet. Sometimes the Timeches would come out, and Catherine Hart, Catherine and her husband, they'd come out. Everybody would park and we'd whisper, and there was the sun going down and the color and the shadows and everything. Usually after the sun came down there'd be a little breeze. We'd get in the car and go home, three miles or four. We didn't go to any other points, we went to Hopi Point. I remember that Betty and Billy and I would sit, Betty was Billy's younger sister. My mother had Billy Timeche in school. She taught him whatever grade it was, 7th or 8th. We'd sit and whisper. We didn't talk about... We weren't keeping secrets, we're just whispering. Everybody talked quietly. I'd go up to the Hopi House and Billy's father had a pickup truck with floor ventilators that you open up like this and you could get ventilation in, but they were on the side instead of where they are. We would sit in that truck and pretend we were B-25s flying over Germany. (PT laughter) He'd do the driving and I don't know what all, but we had a great time.

TM: Hmm. Did your mother ever talk about what it meant to leave the Canyon after your father died?

ST: No. That was a part of her life that was just over. She and my dad were really close. I was not aware of any time when they had a disagreement that would have said they're gonna split up or anything like that. Part of that was this same thing. We would drive out on the road to Rowe Well, park on the side of the road, it was a dirt road anyway, and we'd watch the woodpeckers or we'd watch the nuthatches, or we'd just listen to the trees, the wind. They didn't say to me, "You need to do this, to listen," cause I did it with them. It was just a natural thing to do. It was like learning that view camera. So when I... It's funny that the summer that I met Phyllis, the summer before that I had just been going crazy dating as many girls as I could see that were coming to the Canyon, all tourist girls. They were there for two or three days, they were gone. I'd take them to the dance. Oh, God, I was having a great time. I told Don, who was my roommate, "Next year for summer I'm gonna date one girl and I'm gonna just... I want to go

with somebody that I can go sit outside with and just relax." I was through storming around, and that's when I met her.

PT: And I showed him the sky, the stars.

ST: She did.

PT: I had astronomy background.

TM: Oh, fun.

PT: My father had taught me. So to kind of put off any romance I would say, "Oh, let's look at the stars. Oh, there's Orion, there's the Dipper." (laughs)

ST: She did.

TM: And you guys were married right there on the Rim. Where was that location specifically?

ST: It was at the Shrine of the Ages, the old one with the cross. It's to the west of the trail to the Bright Angel Trail. Down and over.

PT: I just came across that picture over there. I'm sorting old pictures because our daughter is going to my brother's tomorrow and she'll take anything that needs to go to him cause he's got all the family records. I found some more stuff after he was here in November and I thought, oh, good, she can take them, I don't have to mail them. So I got a lot of stuff. I have to get them to her by 4:00 today. So I've got a few more things to do.

ST: Tell him about these pictures.

PT: Oh, golly, it isn't anything to do with Grand Canyon.

ST: No.

PT: Well, I just found these pictures. I haven't seen them in 60/70 years. This is my brother and this is me, and this is Jupiter, Florida beach is right here. This is 1942.

TM: Wow, these are great shots.

PT: Well, I had the slides, I just came across the slides yesterday and we took them over to Costco to be blown up cause I had never seen these pictures.

TM: Okay. Nice. They're gorgeous.

PT: So anyway, I'm 7 and my brother is 11. We're standing in this tower because we are hired for free as volunteers from the Coast Guard to watch the Florida coast and report every plane we see and log it in. I'm 7 and he's 11.

TM: Wow.

PT: This is during the summer of '42. This is the tower where we climbed up the steps and went in here and there's a black phone and we'd log it on a piece of paper—one bi, high, seen. Ray 14, east, one mile north. That's the way it went, or depending on what the plane was. My brother and I had binoculars and we'd watch the planes, we'd log it, we'd wind up the phone and call it in to the Coast Guard in the summer and we're right above the beach. Too bad I didn't take a picture from up there down to the beach.

TM: Yeah. What was the view like from up at the top of the tower?

PT: Well, we just saw water out there, and then were looking at the sky...

TM: Oh, that's wonderful.

PT: ...in Jupiter, Florida. We went there during the war because my brother was very sickly. He had pneumonia five times before he was 10, or something like that. The doctor said, "If you don't get him out of this Chicago climate I don't know if I can pull him through again." He's older than me. So my folks decided to go to Florida and they stopped in this little town of Jupiter, Jupiter Island. They met some people that were missionaries and they knew a family that had a big house, cause they had 10/12 kids. Then my brother stayed with them and we went back to Chicago. But then we came and stayed there, and I went through 2nd grade there, my brother and I did, and he was healthy in Chicago, I mean, in Florida.

TM: In Florida. Wow.

PT: He was healthy during the war. So we went there back and forth, my mom and I went back and forth several times, but he lived with this family. She had a house and she took care of a blind woman one year and all different things. But I went through 2nd grade there. It was very, very fun cause we went from the Lake Michigan beaches to the Florida beaches and I just loved the beaches. Then we moved to the desert and there's no beaches. There's just the beach but no water. (laughter)

ST: Tucson.

TM: Different, yeah, yeah, it's the desert. I did want to ask you about your son, especially because in the cemetery on his headstone it says "Marvin the Martian" (PT laughs). I was just wondering about that connection.

PT: Well, he had a tattoo on his back, a great big tattoo of Marvin the Martian. So after he died we decided to have that put on his headstone because that was... His older brother had a tattoo of something else so he had to think of his own tattoo.

ST: Def Lepper or something.

PT: Yeah, some rock group. So his was...

ST: Pink Floyd.

PT: ...Marvin... Yeah, Pink Floyd, our older son. So then Rob had decided he'd have his tattoo. So he went out and had it one day and came home and showed us. We didn't know anything about it. He and his brother arranged all that.

TM: What did he do?

PT: Well, he was only 23 when he died. That's a picture of him right there.

TM: Umm, nice.

PT: He was a student. Just before he died he told us he was gonna go to Pima and decide what he wanted to do because he was just... He was into acting. In high school he was in all the plays, the more Shakespeare the better. He loved the Shakespeare stuff and he was very active in the drama group. He had different jobs. One of the jobs he had was over here at the Kolb Theater, at the movie theater. He worked there to help them open it.

TM: Wow.

PT: He did all kinds of things. He loved being around anything to do with movies. I think he thought if he worked there he might be discovered. He was a very sharp kid. But then, of course, that didn't happen. But he did work there and he liked it there. But he had this thing that he liked. He liked hot dogs. They had a rotating hot dog machine so (TM laughs) it would get to him sometimes when he was working and going back and forth. He was working on getting the seats done and all that before it opened. Well, that hot dog machine was going just too much and he would sneak hot dogs. Well, they caught him too many times. They said, "Okay, okay, Rob, you're out. You're just eating all the profits." (laughs). He never told us that. He just said that he had a fight with his boss. Several years later his best friend came by, cause he kept in touch with us. I asked him, I said, "Why did Rob quit at Kolb Theater?" He said, "He didn't quit. He was fired for eating too many hot dogs." (laughs) But he was a sharp kid. He would have been good if he'd have done more in acting and gotten into it. He needed somebody that could help him get started with that. But he would have been very good at that.

TM: Well, it's interesting cause I saw that Marvin the Martian. You know, the cemetery's unique because there are some very, very unique...

PT: Oh, yes.

TM: ...things on the...

PT: We love to just walk around. Have you seen the one that has the...

ST: Watercolor brushes?

PT: Yeah, the brushes?

TM: Gunnar Widforss.

PT: Yes.

ST: Gunner Widforss, yeah.

TM: Sure, sure.

PT: I always look for that one.

TM: Yeah. There was someone who worked for the Secret Service and the Secret Service emblem is on there, is on their stone. There's some very fun things there. But I gotta ask you guys about Marvin the Martian.

PT: Yeah, that was him.

ST: Yeah.

PT: So many people have given us things of Marvin the Martian. We have salt and pepper shakers and we have shirts and we have note pads, all kinds of things.

TM: Nice, nice.

PT: Yeah. It'll be 19 years in July since he died. He just died in his bedroom. It was called SADD, Sudden Adult Death Syndrome. It's like SIDS only for adults, they just stop breathing.

ST: It wasn't drugs, anything.

PT: No.

ST: I think it had to do with sleep apnea cause he apparently snored a lot. We didn't hear him cause the door was closed but his siblings when he stayed with them, they said, "Oh, yeah, he snored a lot."

TM: Okay, that would make sense.

ST: Also, two years before he died he had a tryst with a young lady and he wound up with a child, which was adopted immediately by a friend of the young lady's. Nathan was born. We knew that there was a child there because we knew about it for the first year or so, and then after that...

PT: He introduced us to the girl.

ST: Yeah. Then that separated and everybody went their own way. Ten years later Phyllis put an "In Memory Of" in the newspaper about Rob. At the time the girl, who was the mother, the blood mother, found the ad and sent it to the adoptive parents. She didn't tell us, she just did it. That was fine.

PT: And your email was on that.

ST: Yeah, our email. It was a Cox email, which I never use. I was going down this list deleting stuff from Cox, and it said, "If you're the mother of Robert Turner please call me." (pause for phone call) Sometimes I can hear. Anyway, so...

TM: You're going through the emails.

ST: I took the note to Phyllis. She was in here doing potted plants and right away she picked up the phone and called, and he says, "I want you to know that Nathan grew up in a really good family. He's a good boy." They live in Oro Valley and he'd gone to Canyon del Oro High School. So that all happened. And then Nathan...

ST: So here's Rob and here's Nathan.

TM: Oh, look at that. That's wonderful.

ST: Isn't that a kick? So anyway, he's been over to the house.

PT: He comes over...

TM: Super.

PT:...fFor Christmas, Thanksgiving.

ST: When we went over to see him the first time, of course everybody's a little bit nervous. Phyllis was going in first, and he looks at her and he says, "I think a hug is in order."

TM: How cool is that.

ST: Basket case. Yeah, really something. Turns out that his adopted family are all guys, you know, played football and stuff like that, and he's kind of a skinny drink of water. He says, "I never felt comfortable doing all that stuff." He comes over here and we work on puzzles. Phyllis's brother, who's four years older than she is, Jerry, in this picture, he has the world's largest mechanical puzzle collection. We're talking about 30 or 40 thousand pieces of puzzles, from the Rubik Cube all the way, anything that you can fix. He donated enough puzzles to the...I want to say Indiana University, I think that's what it's called. They built on a special wing, in the Libby Library just for his puzzles.

TM: Wow. This is Ball State in... No, I'm trying to think. It might be in Indianapolis, I'm not sure but...

ST: I think its Indiana University or University of Indiana, I'm not sure. I'm not sure. But anyway he gave them 30,000 pieces.

TM: Wow.

ST: He still has a two story storeroom. He is just a puzzle fanatic. He worked for Hughes. He was a mechanical engineer. He went from Hughes to General Motors when General Motors took it over, and he became the executive vice president or something of Pontiac Division for a while. (laughs) He developed the heads-up display that's on the window shield, you don't have to look down on the dashboard. Well, that started with the jet planes, they have heads up displays, that was the beginning of his crew that did that.

TM: Wow. Huh.

ST: Jerry has a puzzle party every year and they go either to China or to Asia or to Washington, DC or something like this. I think it is four or five places. He's retired now from that even. Somebody else is gonna be in charge of that. He'll still go but... So we had a lot of his puzzles here and Nathan would come over and he'd start using his puzzles and all. Last Thanksgiving we had a family gathering at...Phyllis will tell you the restaurant, it's up on the hill someplace, and Nathan got to meet Jerry finally. Jerry was showing us, this has nothing to do with our life, but he was showing us a replica of a lock that... The lock was back in the days of the Egyptians and it was given to messengers that carried bags wherever they went and they'd lock this onto the bag. If the lock was messed with or the bag was messed with the messenger was dead. This lock, very small, and it had two different key combinations to it. One unlocks the lock for the key and then the next one unlocks the lock and you gotta know how to use everything. So Jerry had replicas made with the mark on the back that says it's a replica, so they can't sell it for something maybe. I think he's made enough that... He's written fourteen books, I think, on puzzles. This one is going to be his last book that he says he's gonna write. You pay a thousand dollars for the book and you get one of these replicas, and it works.

TM: Fun.

ST: Yeah. Very interesting.

TM: Well, Sam, we've been talking here now for about two and a half hours.

ST: Umm hmm.

TM: As we wrap this up, is there anything else you'd like to put in here that maybe you've been thinking about, oh, I want to mention?

ST: I'll probably think about it tomorrow, or at 3:00 in the morning it'll come to me.

TM: Sure, sure.

ST: Don and I hiked into Rainbow Bridge and that was the year that I was a senior in college, I think, maybe a year earlier. But we did that hike. That was a three-day hike. That was the roughest hike, not bad, but it was the roughest hike that I've ever done.

TM: Did you sign the register when you were there?

ST: Yeah, and that register's probably long gone.

TM: If you can give me the year and the month I'll email you the page.

ST: Really?

TM: Really. Well, we'll talk about that in a minute and anything else. As we tie this interview up I just want to thank you and Phyllis for your time in recounting your life growing up at the South Rim.

ST: You're very welcome.

TM: It sounds like it's been a wonderful time.

ST: It certainly was. For my formative years it was something else. I was very fortunate to have parents that nurtured the idea of nature and the national park and the process of conservation which we never had lectures about, we just knew it was the way it should be. When Rob died we put a lot of his ashes in little Kodak canisters. We'd go someplace where he'd been with us, we'd put some ashes out there and take a rock back or something, you know, take a picture of where we were. Then we got to doing it with other places. He's never been to Alaska with us but we went up to Alaska and we were up Icy Straits and... (deleted side conversation) so we poured some in the campfire that they had there and I took a picture of Phyllis. I was talking about Icy Straits and Rob's ashes.

PT: Oh, yeah.

ST: When my mother passed, I put some of her ashes in some property that we had between Jerome and Clarkdale, and also over the Canyon at Shoshone Point.

PT: And ashes of her cat.

ST: And ashes of her cat, right. (PT laughs) So what's gonna happen now, we still have some of Rob's ashes left and what we'll do is whoever goes first I'm gonna mix the ashes with Rob's ashes and we'll scrape a trough, I have a little ditch up at the cemetery and we'll put another...

PT: Marker.

ST: ...marker. There'll be no casket or anything like that. That way...

PT: Yeah, there's only one casket. Just his father.

ST: Just my dad's. So we should have room for two or three markers.

TM: Nice. Very nice.

ST: Yeah. Yeah.

TM: Well, thank you so very much, Sam and Phyllis Turner, for a wonderful interview this morning. Today is March 10, 2016. This is Tucson, Arizona. Thank you very much.

ST: You're very welcome.

PT: You're welcome.