

White Grass Heritage Project  
“Sharing the Legacy”

INTERVIEWEE: Ken McPheron (KM)

INTERVIEWER: Matthew K. Heiss (MH)  
RECORDER: Becky Heiss (BH)

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Note: This transcript has undergone minor edits, e.g., false starts and some text were removed to make it more “reader friendly”. Ken’s complete interview transcript is below.

MH: Today is the 6<sup>th</sup> of September, 2014. My name is Matthew Heiss. I am working as a volunteer for the Grand Teton National Park and I am working on behalf of the White Grass Heritage Project. And today, we are in cabin 1155 and I am recording an interview with Ken McPheron, who worked as a wrangler and a manager here for Frank Galey at White Grass from 1970 to 1973. Ken let me just tell you, thank you, right off the bat, for coming in today for this interview. You’re the first wrangler that I’ve talked to. I’ve talked to, we’ve interviewed a lot of dudes who become wranglers...

BH: I talked to one... this morning.

MH: Who did you talk with?

BH: The first girl, female wrangler (likely Ann Cuddy)

MH: No, but she started as a dude.

BH: Ok, Ok

MH: We’re talking about professional wrangler here. Not somebody who worked his or her way up. So, let’s begin. I’d just like to get a little bit, a sense of who you are. Tell be about where you were born and raised and tell me about the family you grew up in.

KM: I was born in Greeley, Colorado. I came from a family of six kids.

MH: What number were you?

KM: I was six.

MH: Oh, the baby of the family. OK

KM: Right. And I went to high school in Colorado Springs. And went to college at Colorado State University.

MH: What year did you graduate from high school?

KM: '57

HM: And did you also start at the university also in '57? Or did you take some time off?

KM: I took a year off and then I went...

MH: What did you study at the university?

KM: Vet

HM: Vet, OK

KM: Then I got behind on my grades and at that time Vietnam was warming up...the dean had to turn me over because of bad grades and you automatically got drafted.

HM: Wow... what branch of the service did you...

KM: I was in the army.

HM: OK. And what year was that, that you started in the army?

KM: I got out of the army in '65.

HM: OK. You did two years?

KM: Two years.

HM: '63 to '65. Did you go over to Vietnam?

KM: Yup.

HM: Ooh, wow. Infantry ah?

KM: Yeah, I as a ground pounder.

HM: OK. Wow.

KM: And then I was married, got divorced and I was rodeoing at the time.

HM: As a professional or a crew, staff?

KM: (2:56) As a professional... And ah, I decided to leave Colorado and I came to Jackson, Wyoming. I was sitting in the Wort Hotel having a beer and Frank Galey happened to come in and sit down beside me. And we got to B-S-ing and he asked me if I wanted a job. And I said, doing what? And he said, "I own a guest ranch." And I kind of told him I wasn't into punching dudes. And he said ah, "What do you want to do?" I said, "Well, I can shoe horses and I'll pack but I said I don't want to mess with the dudes." He said, "You're hired." So, I automatically went to work for him and that started out as one of the best relationships I have ever had with any man.

MH: I want to come back to that. Let's, let's, let's finish your life history and then I want to come back and talk about Frank and the work that you did here. So, 1970, you get a job. 1973 you stopped working here. Tell us what happened after 1973. Just kind of take us through there.

KM: Well, I went to the Red Rock Ranch and went to work for the McKenzie family... And I was with them through '76. Then, I went to Chicago and rode cutting horses for a corporation. I left there and went to California and managed Dean Martin's ranches for five years... And then I turned around and bought a hunting camp in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Sold it. Went back to Colorado and opened up a huge equestrian center and...

MH: Where in Colorado?

KM: Colorado Springs

MH: Colorado Springs, OK...About what year is this? I've lost track of years.

KM: I had that equestrian center in '84, '85, and '86. And then I went to work for Marlboro here in Wyoming.

KM: And then I, I left Marlboro in 1995.

MH: What did you do for Marlboro?

KM: I rode for them and ... worked props... modeled for them. And then I married a girl from Baker City, Oregon; met her on a Marlboro trip, been with her ever since. And um, I'm semi-retired. I produce rodeos now. And ah, I refinish horse drawn equipment. Rebuild...

MH: Like old, old things?

KM: I build chuck wagons and...

MH: Build them, build em new?

KM: Ground up...yup. And I buy a lot of olds and just restore them...I'm still doing that.

MH: As kind of a hobby or as kind of an income? Or both?

KM: Yeah, it was both. I mean ah, I could get \$10,000.00 for a chuck wagon. Still do... and here I am at the White Grass today.

(6:22) MH: Awesome, beautiful. Well listen, let's start, start a new section here and talk about your relationship to Frank. Let's elaborate on that. Why don't you tell me about your first or your impression your impressions of Frank? What kind of a man was he and why you had that special bond?

KM: Well, as time went by, we got into a lot of conversations about his past and my past. I knew he flew in WWII and that really impressed me. And we drank a lot of gin and tonics together. And, he trusted me an awful lot to take care of the guests. I got a real education at the White Grass by sitin down talkin with guests from all over the country. Most of them were multi-millionaires but down to earth people who owned corporations and huge what-ever. I became friends with all those people; it became a personal relationship with all of them. Frank trusted me to do anything with the ranch, to keep the ranch goin. Like I said we had a lot of private conversations together. Had a lot of drinks together. I left the White Grass Ranch because of his wife.

MH: Yeah, that was my next question. I've heard several Nona stories.

KM: They are all true.

MH: Why don't you tell me your experiences with Nona and your memories of Nona.

KM: Well, they weren't very good. When I came to work, I had a bunch of good cowboys. And we'd go to work in May and go to the high country and fix fence and repair fences for all the horses coming in. She had the guys go out and pick mushrooms every day. And I didn't think that was the right thing and, we ended up eating them damn mushrooms three times a day.

(9:00) I finally asked Frank, I said, "Jesus Christ doesn't anybody know how to spell beef in this outfit." So, we started eating better. Nona was on some kind of medication and I don't remember if it was for depression or what. But it was something similar to that. Sometimes, she'd go to bed and sleep for two days and get up and just raise hell with everybody. She would hardly ever eat in the dining room with guests. Frank did every night. She wasn't good to the guests and a lot of guests quit coming back because of her. I told Frank one day, I said, "Why don't you just get rid of her?" And, he said, "I can't." Well, I said, "That's your business, none of mine."

One night I was in Yellowstone, five weeks with Al Benson on a pack trip. And we came out on that last trip and Frank was holding a big party in the house down there. We all took showers and went down to the party. I was in the living room visiting with some of the guests and people I knew from town. I walked into the kitchen and she (Nona) took her wedding rings off and threw them in my face and said, "Here if you love the son-of-a-bitch so much, you marry him." Excuse my French. Frank walked in and said, "What's the problem?" I said, "Well, She's

flipped out again, I guess, I don't know." But I said, "I'm going to town." So, four of us cowboys, five of us, went to town.

And got to talk'n and I said, "You know, I've got to do Frank a favor." I said, "I can't work here no more, I've got to go you guys." Later. Frank and I had a long talk and I said, "It's best for you and it's best for me, Frank." I said, "You have to live with her, I don't." And I said, "I'll never forget you, you will be a friend forever." And he was.

In time, Frank came up with a wild dream, to drive 150 head of horses from here to Lander, Wyoming. And I said, "Are you crazy?" I said, "I've never been through those mountains. I don't even know where the hell we're going." He said, "You'll find it, you'll get there." Took six nights and seven days.

At that time, Chevrolet wanted to do a horse drive with some new trucks, Suburbans. I told Frank they're willing to pay a pretty good price to film a horse drive. And I said, "They are only going to go so far, cause they can't go any farther in those trucks. When we get up in the high country they will stop." He said, "Well you just take care, you handle it, you handle the finances with them." So, I did. We kind of lucked out cause I did Chevrolet commercials for four years after that...

MH: And they just wanted to film those suburban's hauling - horse trailers and cowboys on...

KM: No...this was Chevrolets in, in with the herd...going down an old road or the highway. We did that for two straight years. And it was rough, it was. But we did it for Frank not us. But we got a lot of experience out of it too. And got a lot of notoriety for the ranch and Frank and us. And that was one experience.

Another experience was I rode the high country back here (behind the ranch). I went higher than any cowboy did. Everybody had a place to wrangle the horses. When I was coming through a set of quakies (aspen trees), I saw the ground, should have been a foot of grass or fourteen inches of grass mowed down to about two inches. I thought what the hell is going on here. This is, this is not right. So, I'll go back to where previously a two-year old colt broke my leg, kicked me. We were missing that colt and that's why I went back to the high country cause I knew that colt had to be up there. Well, I found the colt but it didn't have a head on it. So, I said, "Oh man we have a grizzly problem." So, I come back to the ranch and said, "Frank, I think we have a grizzly in the high country." He said, "How do you know?" And I said, "Well that black colt's up there and he doesn't have a head on him." Do you remember the Craigheads, that did all the grizzly studies in the Yellowstone?

MH: (14:05) I've heard about them... They were stationed here at Moose...or Dornan's or some place.

KM: Yeah, so he said, "Call the Craigheads." So, I did and said, "We have a grizzly problem in high country. He said, "I'll be right there. Saddle a couple of horses, Ken, and we'll all go up." And, sure as hell it was a bear...was a grizzly. And ah, we wouldn't, we didn't take any more dudes up into that country, like into Death Canyon. We really didn't know it was an old grizzly,

hungry grizzly or what. But the grizzly disappeared and never come back. I'll never forget that as long as I live.

MH: You know, let me, let me ask you a question. You said something interesting. You said that when you were interviewing with Frank and was talking about the place as a guest ranch, you said you really didn't want to be punching dudes. But then you said you began to associate with them and began to do things with them. So, you really did associate with the clients.

KM: Yeah, I did.

MH: Alright. What made you change?

KM: Well, they all seemed to be pretty nice people. And I had cocktails with them every night out on the deck over there. And we'd take 'em on pack trips and they'd sit around the campfire maybe in the Yellowstone or wherever we were. They'd ask me of my experiences and I'd ask them. I mean I didn't get in nobody's, ask them if they had a lot of money or what they did. After a few drinks, anybody will volunteer anything, you know. (Laughter)

So, I mean, I met the CEO of Sears and learned all about that corporation and how it operated. I met the guy whose family builds the Pullman railroad cars. I met the biggest bankers out of New York. I met people that owned ship lines in New York, bankers out of Chicago, high, high end families. Like the McKenzies - Debbie McKenzie owned, inherited Household Finance. And ah, you start finding out they are just wonderful people. And, you start to learn some things from them. And vise versa, they learn some things from you. They realized when us cowboys took them into the Yellowstone, I mean that's griz country too, that their lives were in our hands. And my cowboys knew we had a job to do, we had to take care of them. And it just worked out to be that way.

MH: Did you ever have any dudes that were really just kind of a pain in the neck, either they, they didn't know how to ride well or tie down the, cinch up the saddles or just have...

KM: Oh yeah.

MH: And what would you do with those that were, just leave them in the cabins?

KM: Not all, we'd go ahead and take them on a pack trip but they were real jerks but, we thought, OK we'd get you in with the Yellowstone boys, we'll just educate the shit out of you. (Laughter) And those always had to go down to Dornan's and buy what they wanted to go on a pack trip. And I mean, it was like caviar, high dollar wine, chocolate grasshoppers. (Laughter) I mean shit this was all new to us guys. We weren't going to eat that caviar and we weren't going to eat them chocolate grasshoppers. We'd sit around that campfire and watch them eat it. But ah, they'd start to find out that they were in our hands and we were taking care of them. We were doing cook'in.

(18:07 One time we took two lawyers out of Maryland. They were real jerks and had their wives with them. They never offered us a drink of wine at night, at supper, cocktail or anything like

that. One day we were in the Thoroughfare and this gal let out a blood curdling scream and I ran down. And said, "What's the problem?" She said, "My husband's got a fishhook in his cheek." And I said, "Well let's take a look at it". So, I looked at it and this fishhook was just under the first layer of the skin, right here in his cheek. And I said, "This is serious." I said, "Do you have a bottle?" She said, "We've got a bottle of Scotch." So, I said, "Well get it."

Hal's with me on that trip again, I said, "Sit down on the stump and have a drink of Scotch." He takes a drink. I said, "Hal have a drink of Scotch," and I take a drink of Scotch, and pretty soon we didn't have any Scotch left. So, I said, "OK now I'm going to cut this out of your cheek." And she's shaking like a dog eating pizza. Hal's looking at me like your crazy.

I had a hunting knife and I, I put that knife right up here by his eye and I just plucked that out. And then I said, "OK, I'm going to have to tape this for infection." So, we just put adhesive all over this side of the face and this guy is growing a beard. (Laughter)

We got back and we used to hold a cocktail party for people who come off a pack trip. And I said, "When you take a shower you can take that tape off. And ah, I think you're going to be OK." Well, we were in the bar over here, and he walked in.

He said, "You no good son-of-a-bitch. There wasn't anything wrong with me. I said, "I know it. Just your God damn attitude." (Laughter) I said, "You know, you were a real ass-hole on that trip." And ah, I said, "But you're OK, you'll be alright." But I said, "I can tell you, you aint, you aren't coming back onto this ranch." He said, "Why?" I said, "You, you're a total ass-hole up there bub." So ah, excuse my French... so he went to Frank and said, "Frank, ah, Ken won't let me come back to the White Grass." He said, "I know he told me that." And Frank said, "Were you an ass-hole up there?" He said, "Well, I guess I was." So, Frank said, "Ken, can he come back?" I said Frank, "You own this son-of-a-bitch not me. If you want to let him come back, let him come back." So, he came back the next year, same guy, their wives, you couldn't ask for a nicer guy. That's how we educated a lot of dudes.

Then one time a guy came, one of Frank's best friends. And I think he was out of Chicago and he brought his saddle. And he said, "I'm probably the finest horseman in the country." And I said, "No shit?" He said, "Yeah, I'll be wranglin with you guys in the morning. I said, "No you won't." So, him and Frank were having dinner and Frank called me in and said ah, "Can he go with you, Ken, in the morning? I said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah, let him go with you."

(22:02) I said, "You be at the barn at five o'clock, you're going to the high country with me." So, he's talking and talking and talking and just won't shut up and I thought I've got to shut him up somehow. So, we go under some trees. I take a limb with me, and he's coming under the tree, and I just let the limb go and that limb hit him right here...In the face and knocked him off his horse and bruised him up, cut him. Well, he played golf for the next fourteen days. He didn't want to get back on a horse or go to the high country. (Laughter) But ah, we, it was something all the time. Never a dull moment.

MH: As the manager, did you have to hire and fire some of the cowboys? Some of the wranglers? How would you find them? How would you fire them? Talk about that.

KM: I had, I had a few rules. I said number one, you guys have got to be gentlemen. Number two, you'd better be a good cowboy. Number three you'll be clean at all times and shaven. And I said, number four, you're going to be about a half-ass good psychiatrist, because that's what you're dealing with up here. I said, you break those rules your ass is going to see that cattle guard. And yeah, I fired probably one or two a year just for stepping out of line. Because that was their job. That's what they were getting paid to do. And most of the guys were all rodeo cowboys and rodeoed in Jackson. When a Jackson ad run in the paper for a four-night rodeo, we'd take the guests in with us. After the rodeo, we'd take the guests to the bars with us. Ah, made them as comfortable as we possibly could...

MH: This might be a strange question at this point, but based on your experiences, what was the purpose of, of White Grass? Why did the folks come here and, and what were their expectations?

KM: Well, you know, I met a lot of those Philadelphia blue bloods and those people from New York. They absolutely loved Frank Galey and they came back year after year. Some families were fifth generation coming here. And there was kind of a bond among the guests cause they drank together, they ate together and they went on day rides together. Some of them even, two or three families would go on the same pack trip. Frank had a million stories and he'd set in the dining room or the barn, talk to people, and they just all set around and have a wonderful time. I think that was the heritage of this ranch, was Frank Galey. Nobody else.

MH: In one of the interviews we recorded, somebody mentioned that White Grass really was a reflection of Frank Galey and his personality. What's your response to that?

KM: I agree. I totally agree. Um, (pause) I don't know if I should tell this story. It won't go anywhere if I don't.

MH: Tell it.

KM: (22:30) One day we were having a cocktail party out here on the veranda, had a bunch of kids playing in the round corral behind the barn. Frank had couple golden labs. This bear comes through the round corral and one of the dogs took it on. And this bear claw come across one of the lab's back, up behind his neck. And just kind of like a surgeon, folded his hide back. We knew where the bear was going - down to the dump. Frank told one of the guys, "You go take the dog to the vet. Ken, go down there and shoot that bear." And I said, "Jesus Christ Frank, were in a God damn park. I can't shoot that bear." He said, "We are going to shoot the bear, Ken." So, he went and got the guns and we drove down there and that bear was in a tree. We shot him out of that tree and brought the bear back up to the house and took it down the basement. Well, we skinned the bear. And I said, "Now you want the hide or what we do in here?" "No, we are going to eat that son-of-a-bitch." I said, "When we gonna eat it?" He said, "This weekend". (Laughter) Couple of his cowboys looked at each other like he's lost his mind now. We had a big pit all of us guys built. It was about six feet deep, it had screens on it, like put potatoes or corn on the cob.



MH: Fire down there.

KM: Yeah, we put that bear in there...had a keg of beer. There was a pond near there. And we lay out there all night, drank beer and poured water on that bear. We ate that bear...

MH: Had you ever eaten bear before?

KM: Never...

MH: And does it taste like chicken?

KM: No, it don't taste like chicken...It's really greasy...Oh man, you could probably get five gallons of grease off a bear...but I thought man, if the park finds out about this, we shot a bear we're all going to jail. But that was kind of the heritage of the White Grass. You never knew what was going to pop up. Like we had a French kid, we always had a couple foreign kids come over from France or some place.

HM: To work at the ranch?

KM: To work here. They'd put wood on the cabins; they'd do the trash or work in the kitchen. One day I went and paid bills and come back and we found a yard-arm had come off that barn - where it'd pick up the hay and put it in the loft. They had one of those guys hanging upside down. I said, "What in the hell are you guys doing." "Well, Kenny don't want to get a haircut." I thought, oh really. So, I walked over there and looked up at him and I said, "Ah, do you want to get a haircut?" He said, "They're not cutting my hair." I said, "What if I cut your hair?" He said, "Would you do a nice job?" I said, "Yeah." So, they let him down and I trimmed his hair.

Went down to the office and worked a while and come back and we had a horse drawn wagon. Well, they had this horse hitched up and they were parading him (the French guy) around the ranch with a blind fold on him. Of course, it was Bastille Day...had his hands tied. I said, "What the hell are you going to do now." "Well, we are going to hang him, Ken." I thought, (Laughter) "Jesus Christ, I said let that kid go." But it was always something, constantly. You know.

I'd let guys, I'd tell say, the cooks, make up some custard pies. Let the guys have a pie fight after lunch. Just to keep it going, you know, anything to keep the moral up... Because those guys did work their ass off for me. They really did.

MH: Yeah. Up early, long days...hard work...yup.

KM: And if they weren't wrangling, they were building fence or something...So that's my memories of this ranch.

MH: What about, what about the relationship to the park? I'm interested in Frank's relationship with the park? Was it a friendly kind of thing, was there a lot of contention, not just about bears but you know, over all?

KM: We got along with the park. Frank didn't have a lot of problems with them...And they used to bring a lot of barrels in here. And we'd, we'd captured a barrel right down here where this pick up is, at night you know. We, we cooperated quite a bit with them. And ah, everything worked.

MH: How was the food when you were here?

KM: Food was good.

MH: Good cook, good, good variety, once you got rid of the mushrooms and started getting meat?

KM: Yeah, we, we ate good...The cowboys request something like biscuits and gravy, they'd get biscuits and gravy...so the guests ate the same thing we did.

MH: Yeah, yeah, so it had to be good enough to, so people would want to come back.

KM: Sure.

MH: What about the prevalence of alcohol?

KM: Lots of it.

MH: And is that unique to White Grass? Or is that just the way it was on a ranch? I mean I have not had that experience.

KM: Well, every ranch that I was on, including the Red Rock, there was always a cocktail hour in the evening. We'd feed the kids at five o'clock, the guests would have cocktails from five till...six thirty or seven and they would have dinner. They never let the kids have dinner with their parents in the evening. Now they could have breakfast with them and lunch with them. But we didn't want kids in the dining room or in, around the liquor in the evening. So, we let them, feed them and get them out and let them go play some place. That's how that worked.

MH: OK. Back to the alcohol. Here's just a weird, naïve question from me. If there is a lot of it and the cowboys are around horses, they're around equipment, they're around guns or knives or whatever, how did people stay safe and function? They could just hold their liquor?

KM: I guess you say well trained...that's the only word I've got for it...but nobody went out on a horse...hung over or anything like that. No guest either.

MH: (33:04) OK, OK. Cause the safety would...

KM: The cowboys had to be in the saddle at five o'clock to go wrangling...They knew they had to be sober...

MH: So you, you leave in 1973, and I want to come back. Talk little bit about that and what happened to the ranch up to 1985, up to Frank's death. Did you keep in contact with Frank at all? And did you continue that association?

KM: I kept...I kept in touch a lot with Frank when I was at the Red Rock and he was still here. And I lost contact with him when I went to California. And then I went back to Colorado like I said. I wasn't here for his funeral cause I didn't know about it.

MH: Right, right. How did you hear about his death?

KM: Through Hal (Vinson).

MH: OK. And Hal was?

KM: My, one of my wranglers...

MH: OK, OK, who stayed on the ranch...

KM: He stayed here for a while... Then he left and went to college and got a pretty good degree.

MH: OK. So, what are your thoughts on this new life of the ranch? You know the cabins were abandoned and things started to go downhill. And all of a sudden, some money and the park service comes in and rehabilitates the place.

KM: Well, I came up here 22 years ago and it was all falling down...the barn was gone.

MH: You came just to visit? Just driving through?

KM: I came up here to show my wife where I'd worked. And ah, we walked around and I knew the cabins were going to hell and I thought what a waste. And a lot of them, all the cowboy cabins, bunk house cabins had been sold...

MH: Yup, the barn was gone you said.

KM: Yeah, main house (Frank's house) was burned to the ground. I think Nona burnt that down.

MH: We've heard that.

KM: I thought how sad to not have this place preserved, being historical and because of the age of the ranch. And I heard there was a park superintendent. I don't know his name but it starts with an "S". Stacks?

MH: Jack Stark.

KM: Stark wanted to mow it all down. And thank God he didn't get a chance to do it. Or it all would be dilapidated and gone...

MH: Oh yeah, or burned up or something.

KM: But this is, this is in, this is going to be something for education, and for people to see, and what can be done to restore something. And I believe in that and I'm all for it. Ah, I believe in restoring anything you can that's 100 years old.

MH: (36:30) Yeah, historic value.

KM: Yeah, just like old buildings in towns...same thing as here. But, yeah there are a lot of memories here...a lot of them. And ah, I am very impressed with the, I call it the lodge.

MH: The main cabin?

KM: Yeah...that's exactly what it was, it was a lodge. And ah, lot of memories out of that place over there. Really is.

MH: When you were here, did you help repair some of the buildings, or prepare them for winter?

KM: Yeah, we, we kept the roofs on them...When my cowboys didn't have anything to do, I'd say OK lets roof this one, right here. Let's get that done. So anything that needed repair, the cowboys did it. We didn't have any, any maintenance people.

MH: You were it.

KM: We were it...

MH: Did Frank ever share with you some of his concerns or his sorrows about the way things were going or did he keep that to himself?

KM: No not really. Once, we were sitting down at open canyon, and a pack trip was ready to go in there, and we was sitting on tail gate drinking gin and tonic. And I said, "Frank, what's the story with this ranch, really." He said, "Well like a dumb ass, I sold in 1957, for \$50,000.00. I," I said, "Are you kidding me?" "Nope." But he said, "I have a lifetime lease on it. As long as I am alive it's with me." Frank drank heavy, he really did. And ah, at that time I thought man, I don't know how many years you've got left. You know, the way he was going and Nona being a running wreck.

(38:42) I knew if he died this place didn't have a future. And I figured who's going to take care, or what's going to happen to it, you know. And that's about the only thoughts I had on it. But Frank was very sincere when he told me all that. Cause he didn't talk to many of the cowboys about his private life. And ah, we'd sit down in his living room and have a drink at night and talk. He was a cool guy. And he'd been around the horn...he owned a hotel down in St. Thomas. I think it was called the Golden Rock. We, he had a guy come up named Pete Hudson, that I think was a captain on a yacht and he spent the summer with us. He went on the horse drive with us. Course he couldn't ride. But ah, he drove a truck. Pete told me a lot of stories

about the Golden Rock cause he knew Frank really well too. And ah, I never did go over and see the Golden Rock. I wished I had, I was sorry I didn't.

MH: Really, I've seen pictures of it, beautiful place.

KM: But I know a couple of people from New York that kind of helped Frank financially, when he'd get in a storm.

MH: Like a loan or a gift or?

KM: A loan...and I know the people who did it. I don't know if I should tell you that...But ah, and they loved Frank too. And ah, Nona pissed them off too and they never come back.

MH: Did you ever have any dealings with the Rockefellers, were they around at the JY when you were here?

KM: Yeah, trees would fall down. We'd go over and get our horses on the JY, we would have to go after them. And ah, the Dellenbachs, she's a Rockefeller...Dellenbachs are some of my best friends.

MH: And, they love this place.

KM: Oh yeah, my God...

MH: They even put their money where their heart is and helped preserve this place.

KM: That's right...and they're doing it...And thank God for people like that...You know a lot of people cuss the millionaires but I don't think people realize what the millionaires do for places like this preservation. And, Dellenbachs are big in that.

MH: What'd you do in the off season while you were working at White Grass? Did you stay up here during the winter? Would you go out and get a...

KM: No, I'd go to Colorado and ah, work construction, work some of those big winter rodeos...then I'd come back up about May 1<sup>st</sup>...Actually, what I've been all my life was a professional saddle bum. (Laughter)

MH: Kind of cool. Kind of go with the gypsy life. Kind of here and there, learning a lot and ah, but not putting down roots.

KM: Well, I have now.

MH: You know, that's, that's kind of my, my last question or topic. Before I ask about that is there any important topic or story that we haven't talked about that you think should be part of this history? (Pause) I mean, I know there are a million stories with all that but something big and unique that we haven't covered? (Another pause)

KM: Not really. I think I've been pretty honest about my feelings with this whole thing.

MH: (43:00) Yeah, yeah, it's been awesome, it's been great. We talk about for those years, until you met your wife and settled down in Baker City, of not sinking roots. And yet you come back to the reunion. You must have some roots or some part of your heart here. How, how would you describe that and why?

KM: Memories.

MH: Memories?

KM: That be it.

MH: Memories of the place, memories of?...

KM: And an education.

MH: Talk to, explain why.

KM: I got an education here.

MH: About?

KM: Life, people, and I found out it didn't make any difference if you were poor or you were a multi-millionaire, everybody still has problems...and I heard them all. I did. And ah, I always said people go to these kind of places to get out of the rat race and let down, which they did. And enjoyed it before they had to go back to the rat race. And I think that, that's what these kind of places are all about. I think, I think they have a purpose. Just to let down, be free instead of going back to those concrete cities. I couldn't live in one.

MH: I was going to say, aren't you glad you don't have to go back to a rat race?

KM: Absolutely. I come from a town of 95 hundred. It's all cow country. And ah, I produce one rodeo, it's the richest bronc riding in the United States. And in 18 years I've given Children's Hospital \$400,000.00.

MH: Wow, wow, that is incredible. That's what it's about.

KM: Yeah, there is a big KCI Institute in Portland, it's kind of like a Shriner's deal. You have don't have to have any money to go to have eye operations or to get eye glasses or whatever. We give a lot of money to that. And ah, there is a big summer camp in Oregon that takes care of speech kids, therapy kids, and hearing, we give a lot of money to that. And we buy school clothes and coat, winter coats for kids. Just like we just bought a \$1000.00 worth of school supplies for the needy. But all the money has to go to charity that we make, because we are a non-profit deal

outfit. We didn't start out to make any money; we are just able to pay the bills and the rest goes to charity. That's how that works.

MH: That's great. That really is great. Um, well listen, Becky do you have any questions?

BH: I know you just said what made this place special was Frank Galey. Is there anything else about this place that you think makes it unique? Or stands out from other ranches or other places?

KM: I think it is great that he is buried right down here...cause he belongs here.

MH: We've gone down there and seen the grave. And his first wife Inge is down there too but not Nona.

KM: I know. I liked Inge. She was a great lady.

MH: You got to meet her?

KM: Oh, yeah. You bet. She's very gracious and she kept Frank in line I guess before my time. But all the people loved her. I've not met one person who likes, liked Nona. I'm not kidding. And ah, Nona was vicious, she really was...she wasn't a nice person at all to anybody.

MH: Did you have any idea of why, was she just unhappy being here or did Frank ever?...

KM: Nona was a cabin girl. That's where that affair started with Frank. And that's why Frank ended up with her, I guess you might say. And then Nona just, I guess she just did a 360 in midair and became the bitch out of hell. I don't know. I know I couldn't get along with her and I mean, I can get along with anybody. I couldn't click with her. You couldn't be nice to her or anything. And the last time I saw her, I was sitting in the Wort Hotel having a drink after Frank died and she came in and sit on a stool right beside me. And she said, "Ken, you know I never did like you." And I said, "Nona, the feelings are mutual. (Chuckle) I said, "Go to hell" and got up and walked out of that bar. I thought, you bitch, I don't ever want to see you again...I mean, I was damn sincere about that when I said that. And I think she probably is in hell. I hear she is dead.

MH: Yeah, I've hear that too.

KM: So that's all I can tell you about the White Grass.

MH: Beautiful. Thank you so much.