

# White Grass Ranch Oral History

INTERVIEWEE: Elizabeth 'Beth or Bethy' Woodin

INTERVIEWER: Mathew Heiss

LOCATION: White Grass Dude Ranch, Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming

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Note: This transcript is from a video interview with Elizabeth Woodin. The time code on this transcript coincides with the videos titled, Elizabeth Woodin, Part 1 of 2 and Elizabeth Woodin, Part 2 of 2 which are posted on the website [www.whitegrass.org](http://www.whitegrass.org). Though this transcript has undergone minor edits, e.g., false starts and other extraneous text were removed to make it more "reader friendly" the transcript, in its entirety for both videos, is below.

## Elizabeth Woodin, Part 1 of 2.

MH Today is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 2014. My name is Mathew Heiss and I am working as a volunteer for the Grand Teton National Park. Participating in the White Grass Heritage Project. And today my wife Becky and I are here in the former girls' cabin. Recording an interview with Elizabeth Woodin who was here as a dude and later came back as a wrangler. And we will be talking about her experiences here at White Grass.

E Whispers

MH Yeah

E This wasn't the girls' cabin.

MH Oh, this now

E This was not the girls' cabin, it was the next one.

MH All right, we'll keep this on, we'll keep this on. You'll see what a rookie I am. I have had people, now I thought Rachel told...

BH She did she told us this was the girls' cabin but remember Cindy said it wasn't.

MH Cindy said it wasn't. So we are getting ... conflicting memories

BH So we are not at the girls' cabin.

E The girls' cabin is the one with the door facing south.

MH OK, so we are 2 to 1

E Rachel's is getting a little fussy. (Laughter)

MH Let me also mention that Bill Woodin is here, Beth's husband and he is off camera but if you ever want to chime in with something your voice will be picked up and recorded. You are welcome to participate. So are we in cabin 15? Does this cabin have a name?

E That is what Rachel (Trehune, former Ranch Staff Member) knows. I do not remember the numbers.

BH That is what Cindy (Galey Peck, daughter of Ranch Owner, Frank Galey) said.

E Cindy is the ultimate authority, I would say.

MH All right, OK. Well Beth, let start out ... By, let me just record a little of your personal background to get a context for understanding who you are. And then we will focus on your White Grass experiences. So this is about a 15

minute "Reader's Digest" of your life. Why don't you tell us where you were born and raised and a little about your family.

E I was born in New York City, Columbia Presbyterian Hospital and I stayed there just a few days. And then spent the first 4 years of my life on a little tenant farm. An old stone farm house in Fox County, Pennsylvania. Along the Delaware in Pennsylvania. And we stayed there until it became apparent, I was the middle children of three children, that the schools were not what my parents wanted for us. So and my father worked in Philadelphia. He was an advertising agent. Had his own advertising firm for medical advertising. So we moved into Philadelphia where the schools were a little better and we were in rolled in school there. And, I spent the next... let see what it would have been... the next 16 years, no not 16 years, about 14 years there in that school.

MH You did all your schooling...

E No...

MH Grammar schooling high schooling...

E No, high school I went away to school because I wanted to learn Spanish. And the school I went to in Philadelphia only taught French. And, they were very strict about that. Spanish was considered an inferior language. So...

MH What inspired you to want to learn Spanish?

E My parents spent some time in Guatemala visiting a friend of theirs who was the British Counselor representative there. And, then the following **5:00** year we were brought down, for a visit with some people that were friends of his who had a coffee plantation. And so we spent 2 or 3 weeks in Guatemala. And, I loved Spanish and it was so nice and people were friendly. If you tried to say things they were very nice about it and pleasant. And, so I said I wanted to learn Spanish. So they found a school that was, taught Spanish, there were very few that did in those days. And so I went there and graduated from there. And then I went to...

MH What year did you graduate from high school?

E 1964.

MH OK.

E Then I went to a small junior woman's college called Bennett College.

MH In Pennsylvania?

E No that was in New York, Millbrook, New York.

MH OK

E That was wonderful because it had very small class sizes and I had practically personal tutoring in Spanish language and literature. Because that school I went to was a boarding school gave me a wonderful background in Spanish. The woman who taught it had been a survivor of Dakow (sp??)

MH Wow

E and she was a dedicated very good teacher and I did shed my German accent in Spanish. But (laughter) she was wonderful and so when I got to college they tested me out of all the lower condition things so I got to go up other stuff. And, I worked in the, with the art historian doing, helping correct papers and set up his slides. And, then I went to the University of Pennsylvania because Bennett was just a two year school. I graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1968.

MH With a degree in Spanish and Art History?

E No just, I decided to major in Art History when I got to Penn.

MH OK

E Because it had a superior department and it was more exciting. And so, but I did take Spanish while I was there I sort of had a dual thing.

MH What drew you to Art History?

E Interestingly, my true love in life has always been the out of doors and **7:10** natural history but for college most of the studies were in taxonomy which meant you had to catch or kill and pickle and carve. And, you can comment on this, he is a scientist he is a herpetologist and I did not want to do that to my little friends. (Laughter) And so, I decided I wanted to see what humans had done that was positive, art, literature, language. How humans, because I was really very nature orientated to the point think was rather anti-social. And so, I kind of had a sense I better balance this a bit. I love studies of art history and I speak several languages. And, it has been a wonderful part of my life and I hope as assisted, Bill we have had a lot of fun with the language thing. Traveling in Europe for his interests and business.

MH What other languages did you pick up along the way?

E Well, I had French from the second, second grade on.

MH Oh my gosh.

E And, had to take that from the tenth grade. Then I picked that up again in college and it came right back, it was amazing. And Spanish and then German.

MH Zelt goot

E Yeah, Laughter

MH That's right. You spent a summer in Europe.

E Yes, yes I did spend, I spent summers 1965 living with a Spanish family in Segovia.

MH Beautiful

E With the experiment in international living thing. Thank you for that **8:28** prompt, I forgot that. That's another sort of home place I am very fond of. I still keep up with the family and we go visit them. It's a lot of fun.

MH So what happened after your undergraduate degree at Penn.?

E After college, I decided in spite of a Art History degree under my arm, I didn't want to stay in New York or Philadelphia, which is where you can really use those. So I said I wanted live in the west. I had been doing summers as White Grass wrangler and I'd been a dude kid before that.

MH Right

E So I did want to live in the west and it became apparent that Jackson Hole as much as I loved it, was kind of like Shangri-La it was a place you came to but maybe not a place, in those days anyway, that you wanted to live and Tucson, Arizona was a place my mother has spent time in the 30's during the dust bowl. And, I grew up on Arizona stories. So we had friends living there that needed some help. So first my father and I went as visitors and then I ended up staying on and helping them with their kids and carpooling when they went on vacations I babysat and did the house, horses and dogs and everything. Sooo, I decided that I wasn't going to get a job in art History in Tucson and because it was um they didn't even have an art museum at that point. And, they had galleries but you had to be a **9:50** secretary. That's what they wanted was a secretary and I didn't type very well and nor did I try very hard. Because I didn't want to be tied into a secretarial kind of job. So, I went back to college in Spanish. They had a great department at the University of Arizona. And, I taught as a teaching assistant and associate for 5 years, 4 years there.

MH Did you get a Masters?

E Yes I got a Masters in Spanish in 1972. And then I'd been taking some classes in Art History in Spanish Golden Age Art, painting mainly. And was

planning to do a thesis and Masters in Art history. So I could keep teaching, it was a job and I enjoyed it and I didn't need much money so it. It helped me living simple life style I could feed myself with it. And, I wasn't married at the time, so I got an offer out of the blue to run the slide library in the art department and teach Art History and I wasn't getting anywhere with a PhD in Spanish which I really didn't want to do but I was continuing so I could TA. And I took the job in the Art History department. And, that is when I met Bill in about 1975. And...

MH What was he doing there at the university?

E He wasn't. He lived in Tucson and I met him through parties and association at a picnic to begin with, actually. And I knew who he was. He had been the director of the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum for 17 years and he was a herpetologist, a snake person.

MH A snake

E And, I am a snake person. So (laughter) since I was very little, so we both attended some singles parties and I ran into him at one of those. And, I had known who he was from visual, somebody had said that was Bill Woodin, oh. I had tried to get a job at the Desert Museum when I first got to Tucson and he didn't have any place for me. So, you were actually more little more aaah (Laughter) Anyway he didn't have a job for me. So I kept looking for other jobs and ended up getting my degree in Spanish and then finally was working in Art History. And those number of years later I saw you at a party and so new you were somebody I could talk to. So, at a singles thing I, I introduced myself and we got talking and so we could talk all night long about snakes and all the animals that we had and how tolerant our mothers were and cause we had very similar childhoods were rather unusual creatures and so we met, so that was very nice.

MH Cool

E And that was in 1975.

MH And, what year did you get married?

E 78

MH OK

E No that was 77. Yes 77

MH So then did you just keep teaching at Arizona?

E I did. I stayed on in the art department until 81. But I could never travel **13:00** with him. Bill went to Europe every year for his historic research and I could never go because I was part staff and part faculty and I could never take off time because I was teaching. So, I finally in 1981 I quit after the school session, the second semester and then I was able to go with him on trips. I did take one little sabbatical and went over in 1978 the first time and then I had to skip the other years. But, I was useful, I could use my languages to help him. In those days very few Europeans spoke any English and I could do pretty well in French and Spanish and German. So it was fun. And we would on our trips we would stay with people. We didn't stay in hotels we stayed...

MH Oh my gosh.

E with families. It was really very exciting. Got a lot of cultural and then they would come and visit us in Arizona, because Arizona is quite a destination for Europeans.

E So we have done lots of tours of Arizona with Germans, French, Spaniards **14:05**

MH Of course (Laughter) So your career after 81 after leaving Arizona

E Well, then it was, I mainly a housewife and I worked as a volunteer, I was on the board of both the Desert Museum and the Nature Conservancy and had a position as a stewardship chairman of the Board of the Nature Conservancy newly formed board. And, they only had a few staff members so we actually did quite a bit of actual work. We weren't paid or anything, but it was a volunteer thing. And, then in 1989 I was asked if I would be

interested in serving on the Game and Fish Commission, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. I said that had never been a goal but I've fished all my life so I have always had at least a fishing license and in Arizona you have to have a hunting license too to collect snakes or to even move them out of the way or to harass them in any way. So I always got a hunting and fishing license. So I said, I looked into it and Bill encouraged me because he worked with the Game and Fish Commission a lot as Desert Museum director. So I went for it and that was a very exciting experience. Because you had to be passed, you had to be appointed by the governor and then you had to be passed by the National Regional Resources and Agricultural Committee of the legislature, of the senate. So you had to go and get to know all the Senators and most of them might think were you a greenie or a, this was a very agricultural state. And, I know Utah would relate to that. And so I didn't have the easiest time because the sheep growers and cattle growers did not want me on there.

MH Why?

E They were very nice and always buy me a beer and then tell me how much they didn't want me on there. (Laughter). Because they thought that I had more of an environmentalist type of background which I really didn't because I am a fisherman and I kept and I still keep parrots. ... they live a long time so, you still want to keep them. I do things that a true hard core environmentalist would never do. And, because I was at White Grass for all those years and understanding how people can live and ranch and do all this kind of thing. I had a very highbred view point of wildlife and wild lands.

MH But they didn't see that? As they were...

E I tried to, some of them I worked with and talked to them about it and they all voted for me. I didn't get any negative votes. But, it took lots of visits to them. (Laughter) And it was very interesting.

MH What does this commission do? Explain

E This commission, The Game and Fish Commission as the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission is in charge of managing and regulating all the wildlife in the state. And, in Arizona unlike in Wyoming, The Game and Fish Commission appoints the director. Hires and fires the director of the department and the director answers to them. Then the director is the one in charge of all the staff and there is 600 staff the Game and Fish Commission in Arizona. Wyoming, Utah and all the others don't have that. The governor appoints the director usually. And, then wildlife becomes a politicized item and we don't want that in Arizona. And, we fought many battles over that particular issue. But still it is the same.

MH So are you regulating hunting permits, fishing licenses, fees, interacting with those who go out and inspect, the fish hatcheries?

E Fish hatcheries, boating, boating permits, OHV, off highway vehicles. Let's **17:35** see what else we do, environmental education. There is a part of the Game and Fish Department that has a rehab facility for rehabilitating wildlife... for injured animals to return them to the wild or use them as education animals to take around to schools. And, they interact with everyone in the state on anything that has to do with wildlife. So, it is a very exciting and at I sort of felt I was born to do it even though I had no idea I wanted to do that.

BW You were also the only one that spoke Spanish on the commission.  
(Laughter)

E I was the only one in the whole department for a while that spoke Spanish.

MH I was going to say, Spanish in Arizona feels like a real natural ....

E Yes, but you would be amazed they had no employees that spoke Spanish. They had no one on the commission spoke any Spanish so when a perpetrator came up who had shot a mule deer at a picnic and he was from Mexico and didn't speak any English then I had to handle the whole case. So it was, it was, one time they brought the governor of Sonora up and didn't even tell me it was happening. I walked into the commission meeting. Oh the Governor (O'Conya ??) is here, can you sit and be

translator for our conversation in front of the public. I am not a simultaneous translator. As good as I am in Spanish it is hard. I am good at paraphrasing, so and so said blablabla, and this is. My brain doesn't work fast enough just never has.

MH This appointment in 1989

E It was actually 90 when I got it.

MH 90 when it happened. Is this also a volunteer thing or are getting ...

E You get paid a little bit for it. For the wear and tear on your car and when you stay in hotels and your food. It is basically volunteer.

**19:35**

MH How long did you serve in this capacity?

E I did one term which is five years and then the political environment was such that and I really decided, and I had been away from home so much during those five years and all those things combined I said I'd done my five years that's fine. I would do it again however because I think they need it right now, (ha) a little balance.

MH So this takes us up to 1995, lets continue with the craniology here.

E 95, lets see what did we do after that? My mother was aging (ha ha) and I spent a lot of time taking care of her and my stepfather. And, actually he died, he died in 95. And, so then getting my mother resettled and everything. She lived, they both lived in Arizona so that helped. 97 my father died. And, those kind of family things continue and then it's a good question. I been doing, I am presently the president of the Arizona Heritage Alliance. I went on that board and that's all volunteer. We had, have a half-time director.

MH Explain what that does?

E The Heritage Alliance, it protects and educates about the Arizona Heritage Fund. The Arizona Heritage Fund was voted in by the voters in 1990, voters of Arizona, to take 10 million dollars out of the lottery that would go to the **20:53** Parks Department and 10 million would go to the Game and Fish Department to do historic preservation. Kind of the work you are doing. There would be grants for that. Purchasing natural areas. I will do the parks side first. Purchasing natural areas, historic preservation, .... They don't do too much education, there were grants for, that you can apply for to get equipment for your parks, for local parks. State Parks uses a bunch of the heritage funds for their, not capital projects, but for some work on the different parks and for buying new parks, buying land for new parks, or for adding to parks. On the Game and fish side. Oh, and they do environmental education too. The other side the Game and Fish one is environmental education, public access, to public lands. So if a rancher, it's usually a rancher has blocked access to a river or pond or hunter access or something. Then, those monies go into raising matching grants, see all these Heritage Funds go to trigger matching funds from private or governmental entities, to build roads around so you can get into the places you need to get into so the public would have their public access. That's a small part, a big part of it is, the study the investigation and the research and the management of individual species, threatened and endangered species like the condor, like the black footed ferret, Mexican wolf. Um, what else do we have out there? Those are three of the biggest ones. Various others...

MH In southern Utah it is a tortoise that lives near St. George.

E Yes, (laughter) Is that the Mohave Tortoise?

MH I can't remember.

E Anyway we have some of those in Arizona too. They are also one that is managed by this program. And then the other part of that is to buy land for the threatened and endangered species specifically.

MH Kind of like what the Nature Conservancy does? Buy land and set it aside?

E Yes, set it aside and the problem has been recently has been there is no money for operation or maintenance on those properties. And some of the properties they have bought have had whole ranches on them and they don't have any money to maintain or fix up the buildings. But the money was voted in to protect the land and not to rehab the buildings. So we are trying to figure out ways to help them come up with a way of either buying **23:30** the ranch, saving out the pieces that are really for the animals, selling off or partnering somehow maybe with historical society to manage White Grass or what it happens to be.

MH The structures.

E Right, exactly.

BW The legislature took away ....

E Well, I'm getting to that. Meanwhile, our little group is very small but we work with the Sierra Club, Audubon and all the rest to fight to protect this Heritage Fund. The legislature and the governor have tried 37 or 38 times to take it away. Sometimes they have succeeded. One year, the governor, who was our best governor, she and the speaker of the house needed to balance the budget took 10 million dollars out of the acquisition funds. The Nature Conservancy had been working with Game and Fish on the q.t. to purchase several properties but they couldn't do it in public because then when you bring these real estate transactions out into the public it doesn't work until they are fairly far along. So they lost all the money and all those purchases for springs, headwaters of the Verdi River and things like that **24:30** were really important because of the governor and the.... So the legislature and the governor still owes 10 million dollars. Trying to get that back to help with the operations and maintenance. So those are the kinds of things I work on. I have been on the Desert Museum board for 16 years.

MH The same museum he was the director of?

E Yeah, I started in 1984 and I did 4 years there and then I've done 12 years more recently, since 1990, and on the board of the Desert Museum.

MH And, when did you get involved with this commission, I think you said the year but I wanted to catch the...

E I started working on preparing to be on it but I was appointed in 1990.

MH 90 ok. And are you still actively engaged?

E Oh you bet I am. They need the publics to be engaged. I am now a public engaging with them. They need some guidance. We right now have a commission that has no diversity on it what so ever. All white males over 55 and hunters. That is fine but there is a lot of wildlife and the constituency is much bigger than just the hunters. They are important very important. If it weren't for the hunters we wouldn't have a, the elk we have in Arizona, we wouldn't have turkeys. They put all those back and the big horn sheep and the antelope which they put hours and hours of hard work into. So I'm a big supporter but you can't have that be the only thing that is considered.

MH You know there is one little part of the story that I am not sure that I got. Well, and does this take us to the present before I ask that question?

E That pretty much brings us to the present, yeah. My mother died a year and a half ago and I was very actively caring or her down, she was down the street. Oh, I lived over there 5 nights a week and coordinated her people who were helping her other than me. And um, that was a big time in my life. It was long time. And I would come up here in the summers because she rented a cabin at Fish Creek and was a fisherman. And, she did that until she was 90..6. And she died when she was 98 and a half. But 97 she couldn't quite do it and it was hard. And, she would come up and rent her **25:45** cabin and she would be there. And, I would stay with her the whole time because she really couldn't be there by herself. It is sort of what I have been doing.

MH I don't know if I didn't hear anything, do you have children?

E I have four step children and eight grandchildren. One of the grandchildren is married and two more of the young ladies, I think are both going to get

married pretty, in the next year or so. So, they are working their way down. The youngest one I hope to take to Spain next summer... She's my Spanish one. But she is going to be a physicist or so something but she loves Spanish. But, she is good at it... And, I have a sister who lives in California and my brother died when we were quite young and he... that was a big blow and hard on the family and the family sort of deteriorated after that. My parents were both divorced and each one remarried so I have multiple step everything. But, very nice step families and I was very happy to be part of their existence.

### Elizabeth Woodin, Part 2 of 2.

MH Let's now start a new section here, Becky, and talk about your experiences as a child here at White Grass. What is it that brought your family here to White Grass?

E As I said, my mother had worked in Arizona on a dude ranch in the 30's, just east of, south east of Tucson and was in Tucson quite a bit and she loved the west and her stories made me interested in the west. And, the summers in Philadelphia are hot and really miserable. And, so when I was 8 she was, she had just turned 40 and I imagine the hormones were starting to kick in. The heat in Philadelphia would have been really intolerable. So she started saying to my father, they were both fisherman, fly fisherman let's have a summer in the west. And, they had heard about this ranch. There is a person in Philadelphia was is a long time dude here and he had  
**1:16** been a wrangler at the Bar BC, the Struthersberg (sp). And, he was the sort of the interviewer to make sure that the right kind of people came to White Grass. And, his name was Kurt Windsor. And, so my parents were introduced to him and interviewed by him and they said yes, great. They wanted to come out in June and I don't know why because June is very, very cold, it's winter. But, fortunately mom had packed my snow suit because I was just 8. But, I remember fishing at Lake Ingaborg which is no longer there, for those big fish and my line freezing.

MH So, if you were 8, let's try to put a year to this.

E It was 60 years ago, 1954.

MH 1954, Oh my gosh, wow

E It was 60 years ago. This is quite a little historic year. This was my, would have been my mother's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. And it's Jackson's birthday so there are all kinds of things.

MH And, it is also the birthday of the barn which is in Wilson now. So is it the 100<sup>th</sup> year birthday of the barn?

E This is the 100<sup>th</sup> day birthday of the barn really, because actually the ranch was founded in 1913 when the homestead papers were filed.

MH So, how did you and your family get out here to Jackson?

E We came on the train...to Rock Springs. And, I was, oh it was so exciting. I just was, 11. We had gotten a television, no maybe we had just gotten a television. But anyway, I had seen several wonderful cowboy dramas. There was one movie called Canyon Passage, it just had everything, earthquakes, Indian raids, burning down the homestead, you name it. And, it left out somethings that would have been much worse but I, it really gave you a feel for the grittiness of the west. A very hard film to find now. But Canyon Passage, anyway, was very inspirational to me. And I just wanted to be a little cowboy and I had my outfit. Mother gave me her hat and we got boots and the whole thing. So when we arrived in Rock Springs, I was ready, I was all dressed, decked out for the west. And a man appeared in front of us just as the train pulled up. He was clad completely in Levi with a beat-up old fishing hat, perfect Jackson Hole fishing hat, and his skin was all leathery and he had beautiful clear blue eyes. And, that was John J. Cook. Cookie. And, Cookie was the first westerner I saw. Of course he wasn't any more westerner than I was because he was from Philadelphia or New York. Actually, I think he was from Long Island originally. But he was....

MH Was Cookie the head wrangler at that time or was he?

E No, he just kind of picked up people at the ... I don't know what Cookie did? Eventually he took float trips. He and Frank developed the float trips

industry here, actually years ago, just after World War II. And so Cookie did float trips and picked people up at the train station in Rock Springs. And, I remember it was a rattily old station wagon, I think a Ford station wagon. We came up here and got in at night to cabin 10, I think it is. The one that faces right out on the pasture with the little porch and had the tree growing up through the porch. Before you fixed all so nicely. And, it was very dark and we were told about how to use the peat in the little potbelly stove. There were bats hanging from the ceiling which I thought was fascinating, I loved that. That was neat. And it was all dark and we were sort of driven up behind the cabin and unloaded. And, then after, I don't know if Rachel was, I don't think Rachel greeted us. Then, Cookie got us in settled and the next person who walks through the door was Frank Galey. I just fell madly in love with him. He was so wonderful, tall and handsome and had a black hat and he came in and was charming, welcoming and very friendly and nice. And so, my mother and I were the first two there and then my brother and father arrived several weeks later. But in the mean-time, we were out, we went riding and my first little horse was Little Eva. And, the head wrangler was Tink Elliot who was Frank's nephew. And, we just went on rides around here when it wasn't too freezing cold, it was really cold. It was about June 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>.

**5:14**

MH Was there a schedule of things you would do or would you wake up in the morning and say today I want to fish, today I want to hike...

E The bell rang and that meant breakfast, so we went down and had breakfast. And then, after that you went riding, you just signed up to go riding, but since we were the only dudes here, there was no one else here. We were the first ones here. They knew that a little girl wanted a horse and a woman who had riding experience wanted one. So I think mother got Penny and I got Little Eva. We went on rides up to Phelps Overlook and we went on the Lakes Trail. But the Lakes Trail ride Frank took us on that. And there didn't seem to be many wranglers, just Tink and Frank were the only ones here at that time. Probably early and the college aged wranglers hadn't gotten out of school yet. Because that was the traditional help that worked here. I was no exception. So we went on the Lake Trails one day and we were going along. And, I was between Frank and my mother and all of a sudden the horses went (wooh) and looked to the right toward the

**6:53**

ranch as we were just out behind the ranch and off in those bushes that were about this high, they looked like huckleberry bushes but I think they are something else, a little taller, was something big and furry and it stood up and it was a grizzly bear. Frank said “Oh my God, I haven’t seen one of these in decades here,” you know right around the ranch. And, it was a great big grizzly, it’s the only one I think I have ever seen. It was right here behind the ranch. And so we, he ambled off in his direction, it was actually right behind the Sky Ranch and so he headed to the Sky Ranch and we kept going on the Lakes Trail. I don’t remember anything else I mean that ...  
(Laughter)

MH Were you scared or was it just exciting?...

E No, it was exciting. It was exciting, wow. And, you know since then we saw many moose and black bears and what else – elk... all around. But, it was in June and it was very cold. I remember catching all kinds of little creatures, I had a picket-pin, I had a tiger salamander in the bath tub. And then George Clover who I guess Tink, I don’t know if Tink stayed that whole summer or not. I was quite small and I just, my memories are quite sketchy that year. But, the next year George Cover was the head wrangler. And, he taught me how to, I’m not even sure if Rachel was here that first year, I’d have to ask her. But the second year and many subsequent years Rachel was here. And, George Clover taught me how to ride down to Phelps Lake, catch garter snakes, put them in my hat, my Stetson and I then would tip it to Rachel and the snakes would come out and she would go aaaah and run away, so that was the desired, (Laughter) and squeal.

MH Did you get to meet Inga?

E Oh yes, I knew her very well. She was wonderful.

MH Describe and this is probably a composite description not just your first impression...

E She was a striking, handsome woman with dark hair and very strong looking and...

MH Friendly or standoffish?

E Oh, I always thought she was very friendly. I always liked her and she was very nice to me. Always, very friendly. I felt she was very stern if you were **9:25** working for her, but in a fair way. And that, I just admired her immensely and she taught me and my mother a lot about wild mushrooms. And, we would go out in the woods collecting and Cynthia would come sometimes. But Cynthia, I met Cynthia, I think the first time, not that first summer. I think it was the second summer. Cynthia was 14, I have to confer with Cynthia on this. I have some blurs between 8 and 10, we didn't do 9, we did 8 and 10.

MH That first year did they have a kid wrangler, or since it was you and your mom was like....

E No, there was no kid wrangler .... I don't even think when I was 10, I am not sure there was one when I was 10. But, Judy could correct me she was my first kid wrangler. But the (Frietags sp), Inga's parents lived in the little room off, the Galey cabin is not there, but it was the room that faced the north pasture, or faced the pasture here. And, they lived there and they were very sweet, and quaint and nice people. I didn't see too much of them. But, she was a painter and I would see her out painting from time to time. And they were nice people. So the next year....

MH Wait, wait, let me jump back .... Was the food good?

E I thought the food was fine ... I wasn't picky and the food was good. We had things like moose, we had game ... often quite a bit.. I think we even had bear once. It's the only time I have ever eaten those things and I know it was here, it was when I was quite young. Later years, I'm not sure Frank went out and got his elk and some of the later time when I was here in the 60's when I was here as a dude staying with other people

MH So, how long were you here that first year, you and your mom arrive in June?

E Yeah, we were here in June and I think we went home after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. I think we stayed about 3 weeks, then my father was here for part of it. He drove with my brother out from the east and they met us here and we had a nice time. It was somewhat sketchy. I was mainly interested in catching wild animals, lizards, or salamanders and picket-pins. Oh, Frank Galey taught me about bumblebees. He would tame bumblebees that would get in the cabins and he would go and pick them up and ...I think there is a species here that doesn't have a stinger actually ... (laughter) But, I thought he was a miracle worker, he'd get them and he would talk to them and they would go buzz, buzz, buzz and he would talk to them and be **12:07** very nice to them. Now here was a man, my father didn't like animals very much. And I didn't have a great communal sympathy with my father, later on I did. But when I was that young. Here was a man who could tame bumblebees, who was nice about all kinds of animals, he loved horses. My father hated them. And so, he immediately became my idol. And he was my idol for all of his life until he died in 1985. But, I did see more of, more of his more human side as we both grew older. But, he was definitely my idol through school. He was nice, he taught me how to fish a lot of things about fishing. He taught me a lot of things about poker and I knew never to get in a game with him. Taught me how to make some drinks, so I would be the bartender for the poker games here at White Grass.

MH And this was at later when you were working here?

E Later when I was working here.

MH Let me ask another question about the first year, then we will kind of get forward. Was there the swimming pool here then?...

E Yes, swimming pool with a lone pine tree.... I didn't go in it very much. I did it once or once or twice, maybe

MH Was it cold?

E Very, very cold. I am not really a swimmer person, but I just want to be on **13:33** a horse.

MH So, you came at age 8 and you skipped age 9, came back at age 10. And, then how many years did you keep coming as a ....

E That's when I went on my first pack trip.

MH Talk about that.

E That was up into the Yellowstone, where Yellowstone and Thoroughfare creeks come together. And, Frank took the pack trip. So, he had a wonderful time. He... the fish we caught he would turn into chowder, we would have it for breakfast. We went in with pack horses and there were no vehicles except to get to Turpin Meadows, we, that's where we set off from. My horse then was Timmy, he was a little black and white pony. And it was, it was a fairly fun time. Great.

MH Did you learn how to ride here at the ranch?

E Yes...That was the first time I had ever been on a horse was here. And, as you know when you are 8 you have no fear. But, as I grew up, I got better and better at it. And I also, my mother, you knew I was crazy about horses, and so mother persuaded my father to shell out for riding lessons, because she said she is go to some of her friend's house and get killed on their horses. So, why don't we do some formal training which was a very good idea. So, I got formal training in the east. But when you ride, you ride whatever saddle it is learn whatever the new language is. Off you go.

MH You mentioned as we walked into the cabin this afternoon, boy this place has never looked so great and all that. Talk the living accommodations as a dude.

E Wel,I that was so unfair because I stayed here so late, being here until, I think my last year was 1981 ... Yes that was my last, I take it back it was 71, was my last wrangler year... still from 54 to ... Because the ranch was taken, was, that's not the right word, was taken over by the park service, Mr. Rockefeller, none of us were happy about that.... He did... {sold} but he

**15:45** didn't have any choice, they didn't have a choice... As I understand it they were going to be condemned and paid something... but if he agreed, he would get paid more. I don't know that Cynthia knows the answers to that.

MH And, he was allowed a life estate so he could stay here until he died and work the ranch. What was the Rockefeller connection? Were they funding this for the park?

E Oh, the Rockefellers were the ones who started the entire movement to extend the park boundary to the south. Take over all the, definitely all the dude ranches on west bank and yet they kept the JY until just a few years ago. That's a little point of resentment in my feeling. Plus, when we wrangled and our horses would escape and get over on the JY they would shoot at our wranglers. They did. Tony Fox was shot at one time, course, I thought that was very exciting with my interest in the wild west. But, it wasn't very nice and friendly. We never had a friendly relationship with any of them. And, one time I went, went on the JY with another wrangler cause we lost horses. The elk knocked fence down in the Stewart Draw here. And, Tom and I went in, sneaking in on our horse and we rode around their entire compound and no one was there. It was strange, we thought we would get caught taken to their dungeon or something. And, because they were so remote and so we had all kinds of wild imaginations about what this was like. Never did find the horses but we did go over there and trespass with great, we had to find the horses because there were dudes who were depending on them. And, all they would have to do was say a couple of your horses are in blabla and send a wrangler over. But there was never any communication, it was very disappointing. And, that was through the 70s. I don't know how it was, if you interview Pam and John Mortensen they would be able to tell you what happened later, because they were wranglers then. It would be interesting to know what that was.

BW You haven't actually mentioned you were a kid wrangler for...

E Yes I did, I said I was a kid wrangler from 1967, 8, 9 and 71.. 1970 I went to Middlebury and studied Spanish in the summer.

MH When, when were you hired?

**18:05**

E I was hired in 1967.

MH 1967. And you are that, 19 years old then?

E No, 21 ... That is important because part of White Grass was a lot of alcoholic consumption and going to Dornan's. And Frank took me down and introduced me personally to Jack Dornan saying this is my God daughter and she is 21. I became ... I became a God daughter because my family did not, were not very church orientated. We lived in a town the main church was Episcopalian and so I did go to Sunday school. And, my brother was very devout and he wanted to get us baptized. He felt this was very bad that we were not baptized, I was 12 by this time. I wasn't even baptized. So you might have some thoughts on this. (Laughter) So, he thought this was terrible, and he got us, he said we are going to arranged for all, Jill and Beth to be baptized, he had already arranged for his own baptism and did it at an earlier age. But my parents weren't the slightest interested. My father was actually rather anti-religious. So he arranged for us to be baptized. And, I said what does this mean? Mom said you have to have two Godmothers and a Godfather. And, I said can we pick our own? So of course, I picked Frank Galey as my Godfather and two other ladies who were both from Philadelphia as my Godmothers.

MH And were you baptized in Philadelphia ... and he was there by proxy?

E He didn't come for the ceremony. But, he said he would do it. He had 19, I think, Godchildren. (Laughter) He was a very popular guy with this particular job. That was his own words, but Beth Wilson, who is another, I **19:50** don't remember her married name I'm sorry to say, she was a long time dude and actually Frank's niece, I forgotten how, she is also a Godchild. So, we felt we had a very special privileged status. And then, Frank told me, and this was in the late 70s. Well, I actually had 19 of you. And, I said well that is a lot. But any way it was... it was cool.

MH So, let me just go back and get the chronology, how many years did you come up as a dude?

E Well, that's is one of the harder things, I have no gone back through all my millions of slides to figure out exactly what years I was here. I was here in 54, 56, 57, 8, I think for a very short time in 59 but Frank and Inga stopped going on pack trips and my father liked to go on pack trips with them. So, we went to another ranch Diamond G which is over on the Wind Rivers. Where there were more pack trips that went right out from the ranch, the fishing was more accessible and the valley wasn't as crowded with people and so we went to Diamond G for several summers. And then, I met friends in school who had a ranch in British Columbia and I stayed with them for a month every summer. We worked, we had to do our work in the morning and our summer reading in the afternoon. And so but we did a lot of, you know, building fence taking, flagging barbed wire fence, that was very good, picking rocks off the little air strip on this remote ranch. Picking rocks was not our favorite. Tearing down old cabins, carrying pipes up a mountainside to make a flume for a making, to make a generator using water. We had a lot of interesting times there at that ranch. But I came to White Grass, I think after that ranch, once or twice. So that would have been 60 maybe 2 and 3, again.

MH And again, always with the family?

E Not with my family, I would stay with my Godmother, Pony (sp) Windsor and Kurt Windsor. They took over this cabin or the homestead cabin. They were always in that or number 4, which is now gone.

MH Were they staff were they dudes?

E Well, Kurt Windsor interviewed and brought people to the ranch. So, I think he had some breaks ... I think he had some breaks. And, they would spend a good part of the summer here. He was a great fisherman. That was his great passion, driving around and fishing.

MH And I've heard Pony (sp) drowned up ....

E She did in the Gross Ventre. She was my Godmother. Yeah, and that was a very sad thing. That was in the early 70s maybe or mid 70s, I've forgotten.

MH So, before we started you said you had one goal in life or one goal you achieved and that was to become a wrangler here at White Grass.

E That's right. When I was 10, I said this is what I want to do.

MH Talk about how you fulfilled that goal.

E Well, I just kept coming up here and the good training I got in British Columbia, cause we had to do a lot of work up there. We also took trail rides out, we cleaned all the tack, we halter broke the foals. It was a very working kind of, it was a private ranch but they had a lot of work to do. They had some staff but the rest of us were the children's friends, and their friends, were the crew. And so, we got a good training. So by the time 1967 came along. And Frank called and said, would you like to come be a **23:28** wrangler. Oh I said my life dream fulfilled...

MH So you didn't even have to apply...

E I didn't apply. No. Called me up and said I want you to come. I was 21 and could make up my own mind about things and could go to Dornan's, could be in this alcohol orientated ranch. And, so I came. And, that was very exciting. Carol Herbel was my superior. We had 2 kid wranglers because there was usually lots of kids here. So I was the pion that summer. So then Carol got married to Freddy Herbel in 1968 at the Chapel of the Transfiguration. I was the maid of honor. And, they went off and disappeared into the sunset and so I was the kid wrangler and I had a junior, junior wrangler.

MH Talk about the responsibilities of a kid wrangler or maybe give a roll description and some ...

E Maybe I lied, maybe 67 and 68 Carol and I did it and then 69 they went off. That's what happened.

MH OK, Kid wrangler

E Kid wrangler. Great job. You got up at 4 or 4:30. You had a wrangle horse left for you in the corral, you got on it, and you went off into the woods and brought in horses from the area you were suppose to get them from.

MH The horses were just let loose .. in the night to go feed and sleep or whatever?

E Yes... It was fenced, it was fenced, to feed and sleep and they all had groups. The horses had formed little social groups usually lead by a mare. There was one group that was led by a former stallion. But, he had remained stallion enough that he commanded a certain authority. And so, he had a little group, it wasn't very big 2 or 3 horses. The mares had large groups and they controlled everything... Especially Star and Twinkle I remember them very well. And, they would be in different places. And, they had bells, the leader of the group would get a bell. So, you would ride through the woods and you would hear a bell go tinkle, tinkle and you would go off there and you would get them started and they would say Ok it's time to go in alright. You could get them started and they usually would go to the ranch. And the back door was open and they would all get grain. So they

**25:44** knew that was a good thing. Some of them would double back and decide to go back for some more food. And then, we would get to the ranch and "I started that group where did they go?" So we had to go back and get them. And then we had breakfast.

MH Now, you are doing this in the dark.

E Mostly in the dark. This time of year ... No it was light enough that you could see, you could see the trail ... I never used a flashlight.

MH Just minute let us put it on hold for half a second. So you got the horses.

E We brought the horses in and they were all given their grain and hay and whatever to keep them happy while we had our breakfast. And then, my job in my first year and my second year was making sandwiches for everybody who was going on a picnic ride. And, certain guests of course had very specific requests. Certain guests if they were going to a place where there was free flowing water would prefer an apple but if they

weren't they had to have an orange. You got guests like that and you had to remember these things. (Laughter) And when peach season hit it had to be a peach, but you had to make sure it was wrapped properly so it wouldn't get squished. And then, I would take a morning ride with kids. And Carol would take another one. And then we would come back and we ate lunch with them. And, if I remember that correctly, Carol turned that all over to me. She wouldn't have to do that. She had been doing this for a number of years so she got off the eating with them thing, and I got to do that. So the day wasn't...there was a little rest time after lunch, then the afternoon ride. Then, you came in and had an hour or so. Usually you were in by 4 or 4:30. Then, you prepared for dinner. And, the kid's dinner was usually over about 6 or 6:30.

MH Would they eat separately from their parents?

E Yes, they ate separate from their parents unless they were advanced teenagers then they could eat with their parents. But, there were teenagers about 16 or 17 usually at the dinner table in the cabin. And, in the later years, there wasn't enough room to put both of them together...because it was so full. And, we actually ate with the kids in, they had a table right there in the main, you go up the steps into the first room was the living room. We actually ate with them there at a couple of tables. So then after 6 or 6:30 we were off and we could go into town and hoop it up, go to sleep or read a book or whatever you wanted to. I did a little too much hooping it up the first year. (Laughter) No it was the second year that was the wild year. But, and we did a lot with the R Lazy S because they didn't, or they weren't able to party, smoke or drink or do anything, so they would come over here and we would have parties. And it was fun. It was really, except for the smoking and the drinking it was pretty quiet and innocent compared to what you even see on television now. (Laughter)

MH So did you ever get a day off?

E Oh yes, Sunday afternoon... sorry Sunday mornings. Sunday afternoon, sometimes we had to be on barbecue duty. Which meant having to help cook the hash browns and making sure everything was set up and following Rachel or whoever was in charge of the work, it wasn't Rachel then.

Whoever was in charge of getting the barbecues done. Because that was always what the Sunday fare was always was, sometimes it was down there, sometimes it was up here.

MH What was your association with the other staff members, the male wranglers, the cabin girls, the I mean?

E Well, we got along very, really, all the crew got along very well with each other and it was....

MH To the extent it was a feeling of family?

E Oh absolutely. Totally. In fact we had, oh, we even had a revolution one summer because Nona, who was Franks second wife, would listen in on our conversations with the intercom in the kitchen. We didn't like that so we **30:12** would take, we would take towels and wrap it so it was muffled and she couldn't hear very well. And, I remember one time we took Blue, who was a big blue and white paint, was a wonderful riding horse. And, one time we covered him with blue wound coat and put a war thing around his eye and we painted on him all sorts of things. He was going to be our war mascot as we would fight Nona. We had some unkind names for her. That was, that would also be a point of bringing us all together. So a lot of us had some very unpleasant encounters with her for various reasons.

MH I was going to ask as I have delved into this history a little bit. There are two very distinct eras, the Inga era and the Nona era. You experienced them both which is kind of unique. Rachel, she quit as soon as Inga and Frank split. Describe for us the differences between those two eras, personalities of things that went on...

E I arrived in 1967 my first year as ... as staff. And, there was no 'Aunt' Inga (Galey, Frank's First Wife) anywhere where did she go? I didn't dare ask anything. But there was this other very attractive blond woman and finally I got it out of different people what this was about. And I, I really didn't like it, that was my first job and I was going to do my job ... As the summer developed Nona was really on her best behavior that first year. She was

getting to know us and very pleasant and you can't control adults lives and they do what they do.

**32:00** And, I didn't know what had gone wrong or what had happened or anything. And Cynthia, I don't know if Cynthia was here that summer or not. If she was and she told me all about it and I forgotten all the details. Cynthia lived in a little trailer up here ... for a while but I just sort of had my blinders on and did my job. We worked, we worked very hard for long hours, you can just imagine starting at 4 or 4:30 every morning and going to 6. And, the first summer wasn't so full of the parties and everything, it was just learning my job and doing it right. And the second summer, Nona had gotten her feet on the ground pretty well and that and the next summer were the ones she would listen in on us. We, she'd would go after people and she seem to have a very erratic personality.

MH What was she listening for?

E I don't know? That we were going to take a cookie or something. But of course we were all very feisty, independent minded individuals. Everybody who worked up here. We could live in very simple situations. We were, I lived in a tent the first summer and if I forgot my flashlight I would go to the bathhouse all the way through the woods with no flashlight because I could feel the trail. I knew where it was. And, but I was waiting for that time when there would be a sort of feeling of great warmth near me or in front of me and I didn't have my flashlight and it was a bear and what would I do. It never happened. (Laughter) We had skunks come through the tent. It was a typical Frank Galey tent. It had a wood floor ... It was covered in canvas, it looked like something you would see in the civil war era with a flap and it was stick together with band aids and safety pins so you'd move your cots so it didn't rain on you. And, we had skunks and porcupines come through and all kinds of wildlife. Which I usually slept right through, which was no problem ... the bears you see were always by the kitchen and our tent was just up in the woods ... [In the path] ...Well, yeah it could have been for them to come down and go to the kitchen. I don't know why? I lead a charmed life that first. I think Libby Max was the one that came out with me and we both shared that tent ...But, we were independent minded and we didn't take kindly to be treated with this irrational behavior. To get back on subject. And so, we were very conspiratorial and really cemented

us as a family. We all loved Frank. We loved him, he was just a wonderful warm friendly person and Nona could have partaken of that sort of glow **34:45** that he had. But she was, was very jealous of anybody from his past, especially Cynthia and me because I was a Goddaughter and had a longer history here. Anybody who had a little history here she really had trouble with. And, it was too bad because she was a very intelligent person she had many good talents. She was good accountant which was necessary to keep the ranch running. She did her job as the manager and the accountant that first summer very well. And then, second summer it became more obvious that it was more of a manager and accountant. Stories began to come out how she came here and what happened to Inga. But, I missed it because I thought I would have loved to work with her but I never got to work with her, have her as my boss. Frank was a charming host, he was a charming host and made sure that everything was fine. But Inga made sure that the cabin girls and all that functioned well. And, that's hard. And, that the cook stayed, that could be very difficult. We had a wonderful cook named Marg, who was Canadian, for those last years in the 60s and the early 70s. She was wonderful and she was just a mature and older woman who was very, she knew who she was and Nona couldn't get under her skin in anyway or frighten her. Nona wouldn't dared have her leave... haha... with good reason. She made the best butter tarts.

MH Did you ever see Inga? Inga was in town for a couple of years before she went to Indiana and eventually to Arizona.

E Yes, I did see her occasionally, at various gatherings... I saw her at Bondurant once. And ... then of course she and Cynthia lived in Arizona. So I saw much more of her in Arizona than I ever did up here.

MH You could continue that relationship ... through

E Oh, yeah ... they worked at the Tanker Verde Guest Ranch. (sp) Bill's, Cynthia's husband Bill, her second husband Bill Peck, he worked there and Inga was the, I think, worked as the manager out there taking in the reservations. And, doing the sort of job Rachel did. And, they worked there for a number of years so we saw them, we went to parties at their house. They knew Bill.

MH You talked early on how Frank was sort like your hero, he became your Godfather, you made that choice. Then, you made mention of the fact that as you grew older you could see some of the humanity. What was that like for you and what did you see and what did you think? So kind of like three questions.

E Well, I just, he also would confide in me of things that were about my own father and things that, I really don't think need to be in this history. That were a little shocking, I sort of knew about them but he confirmed them.

MH How did he know? Because he and your dad were out on the trail ...

**37:55**

E They were great pals they were not riding. No, they loved to fish together. They were great fishing pals. And, Frank would go east and Dad would meet him for lunch and they would do stuff. They'd go fishing together in the streams back there, and things like that. So Dad and Frank had a very good relationship. And, they were both younger sons of three older sisters raised by either aunts or Frank was in a convent for a while in ... in France. And, both of them were very much, what is the word?, I don't want to say spoiled, they were very well treated by lots of ladies in their lives ... and they became, they were both very beloved by ladies, ladies were instantly attracted to them. Which of course made them very charming and delightful, public people. You knew Dad, and he was the most charming, outgoing and wonderful. And, had a side that was very dark.

MH Which I never saw it.

E Fortunately you never saw it. No. My first husband did. I was married for two years to a childhood sweetheart. Who is still a good friend. And, he actually worked her one summer too. He never believed the dark side of Dad until one day he said the wrong thing. He very inadvertently. But, anyway Dad and Frank were very good friends. Then, he started telling me things that had been confidences from Dad. And so I, and as you know when you get older you see that more relaxed life-styles can take their toll on people, things like that. And I did learn some things about that, there were things here that I learned, although that I have this feisty, the

Rockefellers were not very nice to us, and the fact they wanted to take over this beautiful land and that we felt was just as much ours as anybody else's. Did you ever read Jackson Hole Journal?

MH No.

E Read it. If you are interested in the history of this area. It will describe perfectly, it was written by Nathaniel Burt, who is the son of Struthers Burt, and he grew up on the Bar BC and the Tree Rivers Ranch. If you read that, you will understand how we feel about like, this place. And it's hard having it, I'm glad the ranch is still here. And it is going to go on to a new life. Personally, I think that is really wonderful. But losing it was not, **40:04** and I know Cynthia and Fran Fox were cousins, and wanted to keep the ranch going. And Stark, who was the superintendent at the time, said hell no, we are getting rid of that place as soon as possible. And then, that didn't happen. We kept coming back and haunting this place, every summer. And, pretty soon the cabins started getting roofs on them. We didn't know what was going on. We kept coming back and waiting to see it raised like Bar Lazy S (sp) was. Bar Lazy S moved, they took it away so completely, you didn't know where you were. And, it was always here. We kept saying what is this? The barn disappeared fairly quickly. We couldn't figure it out. And then, we learned over time that there were young park service employees who took an interest in this place. The spirit somehow got them. And, they realized it had historic value. Stark said this place, he had park historians look at the ranch and say it had no historic value. And that's wrong. It was wrong. But Cynthia and Franny (Fran Fox) and I didn't want to fight it. And so, we kind of melted away. Fortunately the younger park service employees did want to do something. And then, they brought in the National, what is it?, the park historic...

MH Western Center for Historic Preservation ?

E No, the National Center for Historic Preservation? ... Weren't they the ones that partnered with the park?

**41:35**

MH Well, there is Vanishing Treasures, out of New Mexico.

E What did they have to do with this?

MH I think they helped raise the money.

NOTE of Clarification – the National Park System partnered with the National Trust for Historical Preservation to rehabilitate White Grass Ranch. The former did the actual rehabilitation; the later raised close to one million dollars. The Western Center for Historical Preservation/NPS in the Grand Teton National Park was created to do the rehabilitation and also run the training center teaching historical preservation and it is part of the broader program called Vanishing Treasures/NPS. Note by Roger Butterbaugh, Coordinator of the White Grass Heritage Project and WG Caretaker, 3-29-2018

E Oh, ok. But what about the National Historic Preservation Association ... Weren't they the ones that.., and Carole Hofley was one of them, and she participated a lot. ... she got the barn rescued. And then, they did the whole fundraising thing. In a park, public sort of public private sort of partnership type of thing, which was good. One thing I learned at White Grass, it was not so good was that you fight, fight, fight the park instead of trying to really come to some... Being a Game and Fish Commissioner and working with the Nature Conservancy and working with governmental entities you learn that you can make some good outcomes if you work together, instead of fighting or being as feisty as possible. And, my nature is feisty, but you can come together and you realize your goals are the same. I did learn at White Grass maybe being too feisty was not a good idea.

MH As we were walking up the ramp into this cabin you mentioned something like, this place has a story...

E Yes, I'll tell. My mother was staying in this cabin. She was, by then she was, what year would that have been? I was a wrangler, was probably, my step-father didn't want to come out that summer.

MH While you were working here your mom would come out?...

E Yes, come and stay as a dude. And my other Godmother would come and

**43:22** stay in the other small cabin up here, which would be 11, I don't think they used 13. I think it was 11 and then 14 and 15, that's right the number is right. And so, mother was here and Aunt Nummy was in the other cabin so they came out together, I think. Mother always had hair spray. She was always spraying her hair. And so, one of the cabin girls left this toilet cleaner, bathroom cleaner foam and it was exactly the same height as the hair spray, spray on thing. Mother was rushing to go to dinner with Ella Vron, she grabbed the wrong thing and went shhhhh and was covered with this white foam. Just a story not very exciting but was cute. We all roared with laughter, and that was probably the best story of the summer.

MH You worked her 4 years as a wrangler?

E Yeah 6,7,8, and, part of '71, I wasn't here for the whole summer, they just had so many kids, that Frank and Nona called and said we are desperate we have to have somebody we need a third wrangler. Carol had come back for that.

MH Carol's last name?

E Carol Herbal

MH that's right

E She was married to Freddy. She and Freddy were here for that summer. And so, it was Carol, Pam Mortensen and I was the third one. And, we won the gymkhana that year. It was very exciting. And, it was here.

MH And is that when you invited all the other dude ranches and ...

E Trail Ranch and Trail Creek. There were still some the dude ranches left, not Triangle X but some of the smaller dude ranches. I think it was Trail Creek, R Lazy S, Trail Ranch. I know Trail Creek and R Lazy S were here, I don't think Fish Creek was here. Because at that point, they had become sort of rental cabins and didn't have a riding program any more. There

**45:20** might have been a couple others, I can't remember.

MH What was the reason you stopped coming up after 1971?

E I was out of college, I was trying to get a career. You didn't always have a choice of ...

MH summers off

E summers off and that sort of thing. I actually, I was married to Bill after 1977 and I was interviewed to be a wrangler up here in '79 by Curley, who was the head wrangler, and he was working at a ranch next to where we lived which was called the Double U. And, he interviewed me there, and his arrogance was just unbelievable, I couldn't believe it. I wouldn't work for him if you paid me. But, I thanked him very politely, he interviewed me and a...

MH He knew your history of here at White Grass?

E He knew enough, I told him then about it. He was just...I just wasn't crazy about his demeanor. But, strangely enough his best friend lived in a trailer on our property. And, he helped me with our horses when I was on the fish commission. Later, because we needed someone to live on the place when I was gone so much. We had horses, dogs and cats. It was good having another person on our property. But, Curley Temple was his real name. Curley Temple was the head wrangler that summer. He was 79. And, I was invited back I said no, I have to do something. I was working, I was full-time working. I was thinking of gee if I could be a wrangler, I'd quit my job and go up and spend a month or so being a wrangler. It didn't work out and I just didn't want to work with him.

MH I've got some questions as we move toward conclusion, more kind of reflection analysis, philosophical kinds of things. But, is there a story or an event or a personality that you would like to add to this history review before we get to those questions?

E Well, I have to say of the people who stand out in my mind the most as being this ranch were Frank and Nona and Rachel, Rachel was very important and George Clover.

MH You didn't talk a lot about Rachel.

E I loved Rachel.

MH And you never worked for her but

E I loved her. She was cheerful, outgoing, she could do everything, she was always on the move, zip, zip, zip. I never got to sit down with Rachel because she didn't ever sit down. She was on the move all the time. And, she was, you know, she was helping be the hostess with the dudes and they were the adults, and we didn't usually hang out with them. We had cocktail parties up in the woods and we would keep our cokes cold in the irrigation ditch. So we all hung out together, we played cards and that's what our summers were. We didn't see Rachel that much but I just loved **48:31** her. I thought she was actually wonderful. And that was the ranch to me, with the Galey's. And George Clover was a wonderful character and his wife Elise was a cabin girl, that's how they met. And then, he was still a wrangler when she was raising children for him in town. But he was a little too rough with horses. I, as much as I loved him, he was a character and charming. He would come visit us in the east, completely decked out with the Stetson, and the boots, and western cut jacket. And, it was a real sight for me, because I lived all year, during my school days waiting to come back to White Grass. That's all I cared about. Got to go out west. And so, when George would appear like that all decked out like that was really fun. George and Elise. Elise was from the same place where I lived. And a, she was always very calm and steady. And Cici (Daughter of George and Elise) is probably going to be at the reunion and I would think.

MH Is that one of their children?

E That is one of their children. I think one of their boys is coming too, Galloway I think is coming.

MH I think I have heard that name.

E Galloway is coming and... I kept up with George over the years. They had an outfit in town just on Cash Street there. And I bought a young horse from him. It was a wonderful horse, I named him Clovis because he was kind of a clove color and because I'd gotten him from George. And he was a great horse. So during those interim years in the late '70s and stuff all kinds of connections came and went over the years. There was the ... another thing from very early were the Messlers. They had a cabin way at the end and it was different from all the other cabins. It was a very long cabin with a pitched roof. And, I was too young to really understand all the connections with the Messlers. Cynthia maybe can fill you in. And Frank also raised silver foxes up in the...

MH I heard about the fox pens.

E I used to go and explore around up there and it was very near the Messler cabin actually. And, the Messler girls were a little older than I was. But one of them, I think it was Ann or was it Carol, I can't remember, was really good with horses. I think it was Ann. She was just amazing, she could get in a stock truck loaded with horses for our pack trip. And one had fallen down and there was some kind of problem, one of the horses in the stock truck with all these mares was a stallion and then there were geldings in there she could go in and calm them all down and get it to work. She should have been killed, she was amazing. Absolutely amazing. And, her father and Frank were great fishing buddies, they really loved to fish. And, that's really all I remember because I, when you are about 8 or 10 anybody who is 12 or even a year older, you know, they seem like they are from a different generation.

MH I read a comment, and I can't remember where I read it, but somebody was talking to the owner of the Bear Paw dude ranch.

E Jack Huyler

MH Jack Huyler, And, Jack Huyler was supposed to have said that he was amazed that White Grass was still so successful because it was run by a bunch of drunken cowboys. Can you comment on that?

E I can tell you what Frank would have said. As long as my staff and I do our

**52:04** jobs and our guests are happy, if we whoop it up or have fun on the off hours that's OK. And, there was a lot of, a lot of poker games. There was quite a lot of alcohol. And, that's what it was both a generational thing. My parents grew up in the east that way and in St. Louis and everywhere else they always had cocktails. Then, when the wine revolution occurred, that most people would have a cocktail party and they would have a drink or two then they would have dinner and they would have coffee or water with dinner. And then, when the wine thing came in, they would add on the wine. And so, a generation that kind of grew up having escaped prohibition and they loved to drink. They took their liquor with them everywhere. And, these were the people who ran our country Paul Mestell was one of them Richard Bissell of the CIA, they all did this. And so, White Grass didn't seem different to me. It seems the way that everybody of a certain socio-economic and educational status back east lived.

MH Tell us the story about Jack Huyler and the mosquitoes.

E Yes, Jack Huyler and the mosquitoes. But, Jack Huyler would say to me regularly, he never said the drunken cowboys because he knew it would have offended me, I probably would have slapped him. But, we lived it up and we had a good time here. And there were, we were very careful, we all looked after each other. I can't think of any bad incidents that occurred because we were drunken cowboys or anything else. I think the guests really enjoyed it they came back ... and brought their kids, a lot of kids grew up here. It was a tradition and that people really loved. And that's why all these people are coming up here this weekend. Jack was very jealous that White Grass had a following like that. Because, he said that to me. He said, I just can't and every time I saw Jack, cause Jack was a teacher at Thatcher school where Bill went. So, when I go back, I saw Jack every year at all the Thatcher reunions and then I would see him up here. And, he'd go I just don't get what it is about White Grass. At another reunion, I just don't get why you have such a loyal following. I just don't get it. And, he didn't put the drunken cowboys in it.

MH And how do you explain that? You mentioned, you eluded to the fact that **54:16** everybody kind of watched each other's back, you got along...

E We go along we watched each other's back. If someone had too much to drink, we took care of them. It was usually younger, like my kid wrangler, Junior. She can tell you that story if she wants to. She'd come here from a fairly sheltered career. White Grass was not a very sheltered place. And, **54:30** we'd whoop it up and drink beer and I'm sure a few drinks got mixed and you would get ill at some point. But you, boy you got up and you did your job the next day. Even if you felt terrible. Nobody laid around like they had headaches or something. And, that was the expectation, you do your job and do it well and keep the guests happy and the horses healthy and happy and shod, and enjoy yourselves. And, that could be a lot of different ways. Most people did party a lot. That was just the way it was in the late '60s. And again it was part of the 60s movement, the 60s thing. Our age group was into the whole liberteen, liberty whatever, and so it was kind of wild. And I don't know what the Bear Paw was like. That was one, I didn't know when Jack stopped that ranch or when that ranch was sold or whatever. So I don't know if he's talking about an era that I am not that familiar with. I don't know. But White Grass was, followed the personality of Frank, who was friendly, outgoing, very hospitable. And his way of being hospitable was "come have a drink", ya know, and if you didn't drink anything that was OK you could drink something else. But he was particularly good at mixing drinks and having you have a good drink with him. That's just the way he was. There was the cocktail hour before dinner ...

MH (Did this just turn off?...) Yeah, I've heard about the cocktail thing before dinner down at the Galey home.

E We had one incident and I think I was maybe 12 or 13 at the time. There was a wrangler here who was Native American, I'm not sure but I think he was full blooded Shoshone. Not sure, I forgot his name, he was very nice, very handsome, but he went on a pack trip with a couple, I forgotten where, Bridger Lake, I think. And he, I don't know if they offered him a drink or what happened, but anyway, he got very drunk and he, they, I don't know if he had a firearm, which was carried as a safety precaution or what. But, he tied them up and went whooping off into the woods and it was wild. They did catch him and he was apprehended and I'm not sure what happened to him. But, the guests were fortunately were rescued ... that was a very wild experience. But, that was an unusual sort of

circumstances. But, he was the only one there with these two people. It was very strange... But usually everything was very good.

MH You spent a large part of your career and continue to work to preserve wilderness, that kind of thing. Talk about that, did White Grass influence your decision to move in that direction? You could have become an academic, and talk about Michelangelo and art.

E White Grass and living here out of doors. I was very solitary when I was here. I was out catching butterflies. I was out catching salamanders. I was wondering in the woods, it is a good thing I didn't get eaten. Mother was always worried something was going to happen to me. But, I just wandered, I learned about the forest. And over the years watching these forest die off was a great lesson to me about suppressing fire and a lot of other things. Which was very useful to me as a commissioner. But one thing that not so much of preserving wilderness as much as being able to try and encourage people to appreciate the outdoors and live in harmony with it. And, not having it, it's got to be national park, wilderness or cities. Why can't we have a land where things can work a little better with humans living more in a natural community. That's more of my orientation rather than strict wilderness strict. Because seeing these ranches, these ranches produced

**58:45** lot of people who are protecting nature and protecting our environment today. Francis Bonikeys (sp?) is the head of the National Environmental Defense Council she was a dude here. I am really sorry she didn't come out. But she works so hard she never answers any of my e-mails. We were pals, we would go back and forth to each other's houses back east. She works so hard and she is so dedicated, I don't see any of her any more. But, Freddy Herbal was with game & fish, I ended up becoming a commissioner, Cynthia was with the forest service, and I bet there are a lot more among the dudes who probably told you how their careers were shaped by being at White Grass. But I think it was, for me, it was very influential.

MH You said something very intriguing, this might be a good question or topic to end with, and that is you mentioned as you were flying in, was it yesterday?

E Yes

MH That it was quite an emotional response coming in seeing the mountain range here.

E I have done it a million times but the same thing happens every time. I'm sorry to say.

MH And, you mentioned too before we started that you don't think you could you can articulate what it is. But I am wondering if you can explore the idea of the significance of this place.

E One of the important things, this is what is in spite of my feelings about 1:00:01 making something all park service or all wilderness verses and talking all signs of human civilization. To be able to have this area, which we flew in over, look like it does now instead of looking like Jackson with strip malls and Tucson is a very good example too. Although I have had these ambivalent feelings, this area will stay here. But, to be able to come back and just look out that window and see those cabins. I mean just knowing that this place that has historic value and is part of the fabric of the community. I don't know why the park and the government didn't work out keeping some of these going as life ways places. I think it would have been very successful. But it was in a time where it was either or black and white. And, if what happened is what happens, well it's preferable to what would have happened if it hadn't happened. So, um, but I can't explain the pull of this place. And Bill probably wonders, and I know my first husband wondered why I had this fixation for this place. And, I think he understands it now. As he spent part of the summer not Bill but John up here up. It gets you, it gets you. And, I remember talking to some of the young park service, Al Williams and Pam Holtman and some others. They, there is something here, I mean right here. This White Grass, this special place that the first Americans, apparently, as I understand it, it was named for the word for sage brush opening in the forest, as white grass. It was some sort of a special place for, I guess, for lots of different... I can't speak for the elk but I know they get it. They get good feeds. But, it's being in this particular place under Buck Mountain not sitting way back and looking at the Tetons, they become some sort of a paper cut out in your mind after a while. It's

being snuggled up underneath them. They sort of surround you and protect you and shape who you are as a human in relationship to the natural world... That's what I think is what it is all about... I guess that is as close I am going to come today.

MH That's great. Thank you very much for coming in today.

E Thank you for doing this, I think it is probably important for a lot of us who have thrashed around in our lives with lots of different things. And, still having this pull from this important place to try and define what it meant to us and what continues to mean to us.

MH Yeah, Yeah. And the fact that you traveled from Arizona to be here for this reunion says something too.

E Well, I'm probably going to keep coming back. I mean as Bill said, I'm renting, my mother's dying words were, you keep that cabin at Fish Creek or else. She really loved it up here. But, she was the one that brought me here so I really have to say I owe a huge debt to mother. Mother was just always there, you know. But as I think about it, she was the one that encouraged me in everything. (Tears) And, we had our differences as you know with your parents, but she was really something.

MH Thank you.

E Thank you.