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Interviewee: Ada Hatch (AH)
Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)
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TM: Today is Tuesday, March 1, 2022. This is Part Three of a Grand Canyon oral history with Ada Hatch. My name is Tom Martin. Good morning, Ada. How are you today?

AH: I'm good, Tom. Happy the First of March.

TM: Yes! Pinch and a punch; first of the month; white rabbits. That's good. You got me first.

AH: [Laughs]

TM: May we have your permission to record this oral history over the telephone.

AH: Yes.

TM: Thank you. Yesterday, you told us quite a bit in Part Two about Lake Powell and boating there. I wondered if you could tell us some about how the formation of the Powell Museum in Page came about.

AH: Well, it was organized and going before I got here in Page.

TM: Oh, it was? Okay.

AH: But I worked with them in trying to set up a cataloging system, which I had learned from the Museum of Northern Arizona. So, I worked with them along that line.

TM: When you arrived in Page, this was—

AH: In '68.

TM: In '68. Who was working for the museum at the time, do you remember?

AH: Yes, Marie Golliard. And Stan Jones was on that committee or on that board.

TM: Were there others there?

AH: I just remember working with Marie and Stan.

TM: All right. I wondered if Joanie Nevills Staveley was there at the time, or did she come later?

AH: No, she came later.

TM: Okay, so Stan and Marie— And, by that time, did they have the building where it is today?

AH: Yes, they did. They did.

TM: And they have a boat out front—

AH: Right. Yeah.

TM: —which is one of the replica boats made for the 1959 filming of *Ten Who Dared* by Walt Disney.

AH: That's right. Correct. It's still there.

TM: That boat was already out front. Was it on a stand then, or was it just lying on the ground? Do you remember?

AH: I don't remember.

TM: Whether it had a roof over it or not?

AH: I think it did.

TM: Okay. Alright. 'Cause today it's on a nice stand and has a roof over it so it gets some protection from the weather there.

AH: I was contacted by Larry Wiese to start a Glen Canyon Natural History Association and break away from the Grand Canyon. Larry worked here in the park service, and he said, "You know, we might as well be making money to give to Glen Canyon rather than all this money going to Grand Canyon." And so in 1968 we broke away. I was on the first governing board with Larry Evans, the chair of that committee; and Gary Scarmazzo; and Larry Wiese, who contacted me; and Dave Pape; and Paul Zaenger; and Corky Hays. We were all in the first group. We had to set up our goals, a statement of what we were doing, and how we would be helping Grand Canyon National Park with donations from what we made from our sales of books and all.

TM: Of these people, which one of them worked for Glen Canyon National Recreation Area?

AH: Larry Wiese.

TM: What was his position there, do you remember?

AH: Geez, I don't know. He was right under the superintendent.

TM: Okay, so, like an administrative assistant?

AH: Yes, I think so.

TM: And the idea was that the Glen Canyon Natural History Association would be a fundraising arm for Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

AH: Correct. Yes.

TM: And there was probably wasn't— I mean, the Grand Canyon Association for Grand Canyon National Park, the next National Park downstream on the Colorado River. That'd been going a long time.

AH: Right. Yeah.

TM: So, when the Powell Museum formed, were they part of Grand Canyon Natural History Association?

AH: Yes.

TM: Really? Okay. I missed that connection.

AH: Until 1968. And then we hired Lulu Santamaria, and she was the past business manager of the Grand Canyon Natural History Association.

TM: So, you hired her away from the Grand Canyon NHA to run the Glen Canyon NHA.

AH: Well, I think so. I mean, that's what I had in my notes. She gave us a lot of suggestions in how to set this up that she had brought from the Grand Canyon.

TM: Was that helpful? Because she would have clearly had some skills there.

AH: Yes. That was very good.

TM: She would drive up from Flagstaff then.

AH: Well, I think she lived here at that point. I'm not sure. It's just that she was very active as we started our natural history association.

TM: Because I know she worked for Northland Publishing or Northland Press in Flagstaff for a while, but that would have been, like, in the '80s. So, at one point, she would have moved into Flagstaff.

AH: Well, in the '80s, and see this was 1968, so that was quite a bit later.

TM: Right. So, how did it work, forming the Glen Canyon Natural History Association? Was it pretty smooth to get going?

AH: Yeah, it was good. We started out in a garage, and then, you know, we ended up meeting in one of the Park Service rooms. Then I think we rented a room from the Park Service. Then I think we, I don't know— I was on that board. I was the last member to go off the original board. But we were making good money and helping the park a lot.

TM: Great. Because that was my next question. What sort of funding were you generating for the recreation area?

AH: Well, mainly from our bookstore, you know. We had several people, like Gary Ladd, write books and publish them about this area. They were big sellers. We made a lot of money.

TM: Great. And I would think that Stan Jones's maps, etc.—

AH: Well, Stan Jones' maps were separate from our natural history association. He did that.

TM: Oh. Did he sell them, you know, at—

AH: He sold them directly.

TM: Okay, so, he wouldn't sell them at a retail discount to the museum who could then turn around and resell them.

AH: No.

TM: No. Alright. Well, then, that's good. I mean, the whole principle of the associations, now they're all called conservancies, is to help be a funding arm for the park service, whether it's a recreation area or a monument or a park.

AH: Yeah.

TM: So, that's good. So, for the museum, do you remember who some of the early curators were? And one of them might have been you because you got them going on a—

AH: Well, no. Yeah, I wasn't— Julia Betts was there for a long time.

TM: Was she trying to be a curator but also trying to, you know, work with visitors when they came into the museum?

AH: I'm not really sure whether she— Jim Stubbs was with the *Page Chronicle*. And now I'm not clear whether Julia took over the *Page Chronicle* or whether she was part of the museum.

TM: Or both, maybe?

AH: Maybe both. I'm not sure on that. I don't know where she is now, or we could find out.

TM: No worries. Do you remember the sort of things that the museum might get donated?

AH: Yes. First of all, Marie Golliard had an incredible collection of fluorescent rock. And there was a section that you could go and push this light that would turn on this little area of all these rocks that glowed purple and red, green and— Then we had a lot of donations of baskets and things like that. I don't know where they originally got them, because they were all part of the museum before I got here.

TM: And Marie—

AH: Golliard.

TM: Golliard. What was her role? What did she do in town? Do you remember?

AH: Well, she and her husband, Roger— She might have also been in charge of the museum. You can ask Sharon Buck about some of that.

TM: Okay. Alright. So, she had a fluorescent rock collection. There were indigenous materials, baskets and—

AH: Yeah. And, of course, early things from the dam. You know, they had a lot of the building of the dam, a big section of that. And a section of the river runners.

TM: Alright.

AH: And then special people would come in for showing— Like the Blairs, who had a trading post here. They had a whole room of their things that were on display for a year, and they would trade off with different special exhibits.

TM: And where was the Blairs' trading post?

AH: It was where the old Bashas' was. It was west of the old Bashas' building, and it was there for several years. I mean— The original Blairs passed away, and their son took it over for a long time, Jim Blair.

TM: And so, the trading post would have come up with the town, because there was nothing there before the town.

AH: That's right. And Blairs had a trading post over in New Mexico.

TM: So, they knew the business.

AH: And spoke Navajo.

TM: Oh, great. Okay. Which is kind of a prerequisite if you want to be a trader—

AH: Yeah, for sure.

TM: —out on the reservation. That makes sense. Okay. And so then, I would assume that collections would come in of photographs and boat parts, and you know, different things of the area.

AH: Right. Yes.

TM: And the museum is still in existence today.

AH: Although since Covid, I think it's been closed. But it's still there.

TM: I mentioned already Joan Nevills Staveley.

AH: Right.

TM: What do you remember of Joan?

AH: Well, she had a really interesting history of her parents. She and her sister were there when their plane came in and crashed, and she lost both parents in that accident.

TM: Right. Her mother and father were Norm and Doris Nevills. And she married Gaylord Staveley. So, then she was Joan Nevills Staveley.

AH: Well, Norm Nevills—

TM: Right. So, Joan and her sister Sandra, their parents were Norm and Doris Nevills. And then Joan married a man named Gaylord Staveley.

AH: Right. Yes.

TM: I'm just putting that all in perspective. But Joanie had grown up at Mexican Hat and was going to Wasatch Academy when her parents died in a plane crash in 1949.

AH: I thought she had told me that she had seen the plane crash.

TM: Yeah, her sister did, but Joanie was up at Wasatch.

AH: Oh, her sister did. Okay. Alright.

TM: Joanie was at class that day, Monday. So, she was instrumental there in Page for a while.

AH: Right.

TM: Was that the museum or was she part of city government as well?

AH: No, mainly I think the museum. And then she ended up moving to Flagstaff.

TM: Right. Okay. And then recently the Glen Canyon Natural History Association became the Glen Canyon Conservancy as a lot of the natural history associations picked up the word conservancy, but the mission is still the same. Is that right?

AH: Right.

TM: Okay. Alright. What about the museum are you thinking we should, you want to mention?

AH: I think that's basically it. We'd take our school kids down and take them through the museum and, you know, give them a little history of Page. I would always take anybody that came to visit down to go through the museum.

TM: Alright. And that sounds good. What other changes have you seen in the town of Page, gosh, over the last 50 years.

AH: Basically, in the last 10 years or so, motels started coming in. We just couldn't believe it, but the tourism was incredible. They were coming to see Horseshoe Bend and to see the slot canyons.

TM: The Wave out there, the Coyote Buttes.

AH: It was pretty hard to get to The Wave. It took a lot of hiking. Later, you had to have a permit to get out there. But it was interesting because some of the people from Europe came in to see Horseshoe Bend and the slot canyon, and they didn't even know too much about Lake Powell. I thought that was really interesting.

TM: So, these things, sort of the local attractions right around Page were outperforming visitation on the lake.

AH: A little bit. Mainly to foreign— You know, buses would come in with foreign people from all over Germany, everything.

TM: And you think it was driven simply by the fact that these people were on a bus.

AH: Well, maybe. It could be.

TM: And, you know, you can walk them 100 yards over a sand hill, and they get a nice view, and walk them back and get on the bus and off we go again. I don't know. But yeah, that whole Horseshoe Bend— When was the first time you went out to Horseshoe Bend? Do you remember?

AH: Yes, I would say it was probably 1970, and at that point we could drive right to it and get out of the car and, you know, walk 50 feet, and there it was. We'd go out there and picnic and everything and be the only ones out there.

TM: Nice. So, you'd drive right around the south side of that sand hill that everybody walked over for a while.

AH: Well, yeah. I think we followed power lines.

TM: Or did you just drive right up and over? [Laughs]

AH: Well, we followed the power lines and drove right to it.

TM: Oh. Okay. And then eventually that was closed off, and people had to walk over.

AH: That's correct. Yeah.

TM: And then in the last 10 years there's a big parking lot and fee collection.

AH: Right. And charging people.

TM: That's right. And who collects that money? Is that Glen Canyon National Recreation Area that collects that money?

AH: Well, I think it's shared between the city and the recreation area.

TM: Okay, I see.

AH: Because part of it is city, and part of it is recreation area. They make a lot of money there. They've got restrooms up there now, too, and stuff.

TM: It's more people, and then you need more services. So, then you need to pay for the people who are providing the services. And it kind of goes on that way. And isn't there talk now about putting in sort of a walkway or kind of a—all the back up along the rim, back toward town with more hotel-kind of things.

AH: Well, they've talked about that. But they have put in a walkway from the dam to the overlook where you look down and see the dam. And that's, I would say, about a mile's walk. But that's nice because you can walk over and look and see the river and see the rim. And the dam is right there.

TM: And when did the golf course come in? Was that early on?

AH: Yeah, the first golf course was down below, and the early and— See, Sharon can give you a lot of information on that.

TM: Okay.

AH: A lot of the locals worked on that to form that golf course. And then later, the 18-hole golf course came in. And that's where you go around and you hit off from the top of the mesa, down off the mesa to one of the holes. That's on the last nine holes of the golf course.

TM: Did you play golf?

AH: Yeah, I did.

TM: So, that must have been a unique part of that golf course. Was that, you know, okay, your hole is down there below this cliff, and your job is to keep that little ball and have it land on the green down there, wind included.

AH: Yeah! Right. True.

[Laughter]

TM: And of course, recently the Navajo generating station that your husband worked at, as you mentioned, in maintenance for many years, is being removed.

AH: Yeah, when I first came, I would go out there and grade papers and all and sit on a rock. And there was nothing there. And then they came in because they were talking about putting in a generating station. I took a ride in a plane with Paul Gutfreund. We circled around with an instrument, taking the atmospheric pollutants in the sky before the plant. He recorded all of that.

[Transcriptionist note: This may be Paul D. Gutfreund of Dames & Moore, Atlanta, Ga., referenced in the Navajo Project Environmental Statement – September, 1971.]

TM: And he was a pilot?

AH: Well, no. He was out of Dames— He was out of Georgia somewhere. He was hired by Salt River Project to, you know, record this information before they ever built the plant.

TM: So, he was looking at air quality before the plant was built. Hmm. Okay.

AH: Yes.

TM: I wonder what the before and after studies, or before and during—

AH: Yeah, and I can remember being in that plane as we circled around. I saw the slot canyon up above Antelope Canyon. Those are the canyons now that you can take tours to go up in, but when I did that flight around, I spotted that and drove up there in my four-wheel-drive Jeep. And I would take my kids up there and we would have cookouts. At Halloween, we would take the boys up and kind of spook the canyon with pumpkins and stuff. And then we'd take the girls. Right before you got to upper Antelope was another canyon, and we would take the girls up that canyon and around and come behind the slot canyon. Then we'd go through, and the boys would be in there, you know, with the jack-o-lanterns and scaring them, and then we'd have a cookout. But our fifth graders made a sign because then other people were coming in. Our sign said "Please do not deface this canyon. Leave it for others to enjoy."

TM: Oh, nice!

AH: And we would go in there, and Gary Ladd went in there with us with sandpaper from the shop, the woodshop place, and sand out any carving that we saw. That sign stood up there— We put it further away where photographers couldn't get it in the picture of the original slot

canyon. But finally, it was washed away. But we used that a lot with our kids. We'd go up and hike and have cookouts.

TM: Okay. I'm thinking there were other slot canyons a little further away, a little more remote, that were just as equally amazing, but they were further away and more remote and so harder to get to. So, I'm thinking about sanding out the names with sandpaper for people who had scratched their names in the soft sandstone. That happened on the lake quite a bit, as well.

AH: Oh, yeah. I went out with the Trash Tracker, and we would go out there with squirt bottles and clean up a lot of graffiti out there. We'd use iron brushes to brush them out.

TM: Wire brushes?

AH: Yeah.

TM: Okay. That's another good tool.

AH: Yes.

TM: But, yeah, it just kind of makes you wonder about the ethics of people—

AH: I know.

TM: —to see that. Okay. Have you noticed the air quality improving since the towers came down?

AH: Yes, I do, because when we used to come into town, we'd see kind of a long, gray haze, kind of like in a string, going over this whole area. And now you don't see that at all. And we didn't before the power plant.

TM: Yeah, because there were three very large towers— How tall were those towers?

AH: I don't know.

TM: Two hundred feet? They were impressively tall.

AH: They were. They were. It was quite spectacular when they tumbled them down.

TM: Were you there?

AH: The town was there, watching them go down. They went down kind of every, I don't know, every 10 seconds or so. The first one went, and then the second, and then the third. We got pictures of them as they were falling and crashing to the ground. And then a huge bunch of smoke and all and dust from them crashing down blew over, through and over, Page and everything.

TM: Right. It was quite the event. I was thinking of changes in the town. The coal-fired power plant came and went. The tourists have come and keep coming. The water comes and goes in the lake.

AH: Yeah. Yeah.

TM: Is there anything else about the changes in Page that you're thinking about?

AH: No. Like you say, just our town is still growing a little bit, and the tourists are starting to come back. You know, during Covid and all, there were no tour buses or anything. And so that's starting up again. But I think with this really low lake level and all, it's going to be a long time before we get back to where we were before Covid.

TM: Right. Right. And Covid may be with us in one form or other moving forward, so we'll have precautions, and we'll be all right.

AH: That's right. Yeah. Yeah. Right.

TM: But it is interesting. Everyone's looking now at water management in the West. And of course, Page gets its water directly from—

AH: The runoff in Colorado. Yeah.

TM: Yeah, the runoff in Colorado that comes down the Colorado River and gets trapped there in Lake Powell behind Glen Canyon Dam. And as that water drops, the intake for the city has to follow that.

AH: That's correct.

TM: The piping goes further, deeper, deeper. And then, oh, the whole new marina at Antelope—

AH: Oh, yes, that's true. None of that was there.

TM: And now they're talking about a pump-back storage project on the Navajo side of the lake there to pump water up to a reservoir and then run the water down through turbines back to the lake. And so, during the day when there's a lot of renewable energy, you can use that energy to pump water up to the reservoir, and then at night when there's less, you can get that water that you pumped up earlier in the day to release its energy back to the lake, and so it's a way—

AH: Oh, that's interesting.

TM: It's kind of like a big battery made of water.

AH: Wow.

TM: There's much discussion about that happening up lake a little bit.

AH: Who's going to be doing that?

TM: I'm not sure. Clearly, the Navajo would be doing it with an independent contractor, I suppose. You know, and that will be more jobs, which is good.

AH: Oh, that's good.

TM: It will be more impact to the landscape, which has problems. You know, it's just always tradeoffs and ways to look at things.

AH: Right. Right. Yeah.

TM: So, is there anything else you'd like to bring into this interview?

AH: Okay, I'll bring in one last thing that I thought about. That summer out on Paiute Mesa where we were excavating that ruin, we three girls worked in the shade ramada back at camp, and the boys would go out to the top of the mesa for excavating. Then they would come in and bring bags of potsherds and things like that. Then we would take them and scrub them in hydrochloric acid and things like that, the sherds and everything and catalogue them. But the boys all knew the only thing I was afraid of were mice. I mean, scorpions and any of that other stuff, no big deal. Well, they sent a sherd bag down with a dead mouse in it. We dumped it out to process it and saw the mouse and we were— I couldn't believe it. And so, we decided to take that mouse, and we cut off its tail. And we scrubbed it really good with soap and water. Then we took it and we stuck it in Steve Hayden's toothpaste tube.

TM: Oh, my gosh!

AH: And so that night, usually we girls went to bed before the boys. But that night, we stayed up because we wanted to hear when he would brush his teeth. Nothing! So, the next morning, we were the first ones up 'cause we figured maybe he doesn't brush his teeth at night. Nothing the next morning. Two days later we hear this scream, and Steve comes running into our camp and dumps me out of my cot. Apparently, he'd been brushing his teeth but there was a groove in his toothpaste that was coming around the tail, and so he had two days of brushing teeth with that tail in his toothpaste. Yeah. But, you know, when they came in that first night, this mouse was hanging from the bush where they park the Land Rover. And it said, "I am a mouse. I have no tail. Where is my tail?"

TM: Ooh! So, you gave him a hint, even.

AH: Yeah! So, two days later, out came the tail.

TM: Oh my!

AH: So, basically, that's my life of the last 80 years.

TM: Well, it's been a lovely life. It is a lovely life.

AH: It's been a great life. Yeah, it has.

TM: I really like your thought that it was 35 years to meet Jim, it was 35 years with Jim, now you're on the 35 years after Jim.

AH: That's right.

TM: You know, so that's a 115. So, go for it.

AH: I will do that. I will do that. And I hope to meet you up here at—

TM: I look forward to that. I've got some work to do with Gary Ladd and Curran and Cindy, and so I really look forward to getting a chance to visit with you when we're up there.

AH: Good. Good.

TM: Well, Ada Hatch, thank you so very, very much for a lovely interview series. Do you have anything else to add, or are we good?

AH: No, I think that pretty much covers it all.

TM: Great. Well, this will conclude our oral history series with Ada Hatch. Today is March 1, 2022. My name is Tom Martin. And, Ada, thank you very much.

AH: You're welcome.