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Vincent Ellis
March 23, 1971

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison
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(Tape #50 Side 1)

(Tape #50 Side 2)

EVISON INTERVIEW WITH VINCENT ELLIS

Richmond, Virginia

March 23, 1971

(Tape #50 Side 1)

(Tape #50 Side 2)

DRAFT

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[START OF INTERVIEW]

Herbert Evison: This is March 23, 1971. I'm Herb Evison and this morning I am in Richmond, Virginia, in the Regional Office of the Southeast Region and specifically in the office of Vincent Ellis, one of the Assistant Regional Directors and what did you say that special, your field is?

Vincent Ellis: This is it I am Assistant Director for Park Support for the Southeast Region which primarily covers the smaller areas within the region.

Herbert Evison: I see. Now I'm particularly glad this morning to be getting Vincent Ellis on tape because he is one of those rare birds whose career with the National Park Service started back in the nineteen thirties as a Civilian Conservation Corps enrollee. The Park Service has had a number of employees on its permanent rolls who made their start in just that way. I think off hand of two other Assistant Regional Directors, Carl O. Walker in the Southwest Region and the recently deceased Jim Eden. Vince, let's start this off with those basic facts about you that I was talking to talking about a few minutes ago - when were you born and where and where did you go to school, who were your parents?

Vincent Ellis: I was born on November 14th, excuse me, November 21, 1914, in New Mexico. My parents was Burt D. Ellis who had with his brothers and mother migrated from Missouri to New Mexico in 1906. My mother cut it a minute, was Bertha Brands a member of the Brand family who also migrated from Kansas City, Missouri to New Mexico in 1908 or 1909—

Herbert Evison: You didn't name the place in New Mexico where you were born.

Vincent Ellis: The town was a small village named Amistad. We were a ranching, farming family. I grew up and went to high school at Amistad and Nara Visa, New Mexico. This is on the Texas-New Mexico line.

Herbert Evison: Is it anywhere near the present Amistad Reservoir?

Vincent Ellis: No. No where several hundred miles from the Amistad Reservoir.

Herbert Evison: As I remember it though that word means friendship.

- Vincent Ellis: That is correct. And we had a great number of friends in the area.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Now you went through high school. Did you go on from there?
- Vincent Ellis: Due to circumstances beyond our control, which consisted of a five-year drought beginning in 1929 I was financially unable to go to college. In 1934 we SOLD to the government all of our cattle getting up to twenty dollars a head for those who could that could be taken to the railroad station some thirty miles from our area. The remainder were shot, and we received four to eight dollars per head. This bailed us out on the money that had been invested in feed for the previous five years. I then entered Civilian Conservation Corps under drought relief action and was assigned to the camp at Bandelier National Monument; at that time, I became a part of the National Park Service.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Now you went there, what time in 1934?
- Vincent Ellis: November of 1934.
- Herbert Evison: Very late in 1934. Now was there just one C.C.C. camp at Bandelier?
- Vincent Ellis: There was only the one at Bandelier.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah, well now.
- Vincent Ellis: It might be of interest to you, Herb, my first boss at Bandelier was Jim Eden.
- Herbert Evison: What was he then? A sub-foreman?
- Vincent Ellis: He was a general foreman. Jim had formerly been a C.C. enrollee, but his ability was recognized early, and he was soon given a foreman's job.
- Herbert Evison: Uh huh, I'm very interested in hearing that because I didn't know what the steps were in Jim's progress back at the very beginning. Now what what kind of chores were you engaged in at Bandelier? How long were you there?
- Vincent Ellis: Initially it was on the field crew under Jim Eden. We were building fences and cattle guards on the entrance road to the park. Later I was given the assignment as an assistant leader. This is one of the lower grade foreman and still as an enrollee.
- Herbert Evison: But you got a little bit more money for it, I think.
- Vincent Ellis: Six dollars a month more. At this time, I was given a crew consisting of native youngsters, Spanish-American and one of the foremen when my name was called, Vince Ellis, thought I was another Spanish-American. ((chuckling by Evison)) At least he accused me of this some years later. With this crew my assignment was initially going up into the high mountain country and cutting vegas, logs, lintels, for the present museum building at the park.

- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Was the was the museum building built while you were there?
- Vincent Ellis: The museum building, the lodge, the utility area, and five residences all of stone were constructed during the period I was at Bandelier.
- Herbert Evison: I'll be.
- Vincent Ellis: By C.C. enrollees. The technical staff I believe of seven foremen and a superintendent, and we hired an electrician, the only skilled employee on park time in the entire job.
- Herbert Evison: Now I have seen those buildings and like many others I have seen constructed by the C.C.C. masonry buildings, they were extraordinarily good masonry work. Now how and I'm pretty sure that my memory is correct that the masonry at Bandelier was very good, now if that is correct, how did it happen who taught those boys to be good stone masons?
- Vincent Ellis: I uh I had some input into teaching how to cut the stone. We spent; my crew spent many months cutting shaping stones for the building. One of the top masonry foremen was a man named Ed Cano, C A N O. Ed was from the Bernalillo area. He learned most of it at Bandelier, but he was the top foreman in the masonry construction. It was amusing. Ed had very little education. He had never been involved with plans and when Hub Chase, the superintendent gave him his first building to construct, Ed spent the first week every night with the plans spread out on the floor of his room going over them in detail and then he folded them up and he never had to look at the plans again.
- Herbert Evison: C A N O was that name was now was he a Mexican American?
- Vincent Ellis: Yes.
- Herbert Evison: You know Hub Chase was a name to conjure with in the thirties and I wish you would get on the record here anything that you remember about him particularly what kind of a of a superintendent he was and what what were his characteristics?
- Vincent Ellis: Hub was a great guy. He was known in Southwestern Monuments area as Hub Chase and his kid, his crew, most of his staff foremen were younger people ranging in the twenties early thirties. Hub had a great deal of ability in handling people and knew the construction trades inside out. He had grown up in the construction business. He was sure that his staff could do anything and let them do it. Jim Eden was until he became a ranger a youngster in twenty-four or twenty-five what is was his main help or assistant and when Hub was gone acted as superintendent. He was not afraid to delegate authority and give a man a pat on the back when he did a job. I remember one instance - he sent me into Santa Fe to meet with the governor in as somewhat of an interpreter for some of the Mexican Americans who were concerned about their jobs with the C.C.C.'s. This is the type thing he would do. He would send a man to do a job or a boy to

do a job expecting to do a man's job, but he gave you confidence. If you made a mistake, he helped you clear it up and if you made a decision, he would support you.

Herbert Evison: You don't happen to have among your possessions anywhere today a picture of Hub Chase, do you?

Vincent Ellis: I probably do, but I would have to search.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, well I mention it because I hope that sometime you may come across it or may even undertake a search for it because he is so famous as a C.C.C. superintendent that I think that along with what you have told about him here there ought to be a picture of him in the Park Service Archives, so I'll be awful glad if you will keep that in mind.

Vincent Ellis: Herb, if I do not have one, I will get one from Hub or Ruby. They are now in California. He retired—

Herbert Evison: Oh, Hub Chase is still alive.

Vincent Ellis: Yes.

Herbert Evison: I thought he was long ago dead, well I'm very glad to know that.

Vincent Ellis: In fact, I have hopes that they will come to see us sometime this next year.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, I'm just delighted to know that he is still among those present and he will go down on my list if I ever get West, I'll certainly will tape him too.

Vincent Ellis: Well, I'll give you his address and see if I can find a picture.

Herbert Evison: Good. That'll be wonderful if you can. Of course, if I get out to see him, I'll try to get a picture of him at that time, but it would also be nice to have one that dated back to the days of his camp superintendency and at Bandelier. Now Bandelier at the time the C.C.C. started in there just about didn't have anything and the C.C.C. gave it a beautiful little hotel, museum, headquarters office, residence group, so that it was set up for business more or less. Now one of the things that I remember about Bandelier was that up on the side of the cliff there are some hewn out cave dwellings, prehistoric cave dwellings, and at some time or other in the history of the Park Service's management of that area there was built out from the wall a sort of a conjectural reconstruction of what might have been there during the prehistoric times. Do you happen to remember whether there any of that work was done by the C.C.C. or whether they did any work on that circular ruin of the I think Tyuonyi, no, that isn't right, uh but anyway the ruin just up the canyon a little ways from the headquarters area.

Vincent Ellis: I remember the ruin. I cannot remember the name. That was a lot a number of years ago. This C.C.C.'s did very little work on it or although a small crew under the supervision of archeologist, one of whom Bob Lister,

who is now head of the Anthropology Department of the University of Colorado performed some stabilization work on all the ruins in Bandelier during the period of the—

Herbert Evison: You're tending to drop your voice.

Vincent Ellis: Okay.

Herbert Evison: Now you stated you were a C.C.C. boy for more than two years if I remember rightly.

Vincent Ellis: From November 1934 until May 1937.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well normally as I remember it the period of enrollment for a C.C.C. boy was not more than two years.

Vincent Ellis: It depended upon your age. Uh you were supposed to be out at the time you were twenty-three as I recall. Each enrollment period was for six months.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: That you could re-enroll. In my case I was still under the age limit when I received an appointment as a result of a Civil Service examination. I went on the rolls at Bandelier as a Junior Assistant to Technician, the longest title, and the shortest paycheck on the payroll. My first salary was one thousand and twenty dollars per annum or eighty-five dollars a month.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Of course, expenses were not too high. Room cost me five dollars a month and board with the foreman's mess less than twenty dollars a month. Everything else was free. There was no income tax, so you had enough to live on.

Herbert Evison: In fact, you were almost in clover.

Vincent Ellis: Yes, but not to the extent that the guys making sixteen twenty and two thousand all.

Herbert Evison: No. Well now you continued on at Bandelier?

Vincent Ellis: I continued on at Bandelier. Sometime approximately a year before I had switched from field work to clerical work, so Hub Chase says you can be my junior assistant and stay on and run the office, so that is when I got into the clerical field.

Herbert Evison: Oh yeah.

Vincent Ellis: And stayed there until 1941. The camp was closed, and I was moved to Southwestern Monuments headquarters at Coolidge, Arizona.

Herbert Evison: Now during this time were you did you continue to be paid out of C.C.C. funds or were you on regular Park Service funds then.

Vincent Ellis: Well, it was a special E.C.W. fund.

Herbert Evison: Uh huh.

Vincent Ellis: Which financed the oh work projects.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: It was no longer under the C.C.C. funding.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, well of course E.C.W. - Emergency Conservation Work - was work done by the C.C.C.

Vincent Ellis: Yes, but the technical and supervision the work forces was from E.C.W. funds rather than C.C.C.

Herbert Evison: Yes. They were from funds allotted to the National Park Service in this case—

Vincent Ellis: Yes.

Herbert Evison: Rather than to the Army which up until then had paid you.

Vincent Ellis: That is correct.

Herbert Evison: I just want to get that switch straight in the record. Now meanwhile you were working as a clerk. You were doing that at least you were a clerical position at Bandelier. Do you remember anything about what the C.C.C. accomplished during those later years? Did the C.C.C. do anything on improving the entrance road to that canyon?

Vincent Ellis: The early years of the C.C.'s, the first job was to build a road into the canyon. That was before my arrival, then of course they continued to do some work on it, but once the road was constructed then it became a Park Service road and maintenance and additional paving and so forth was handled by the contract under the Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes. Well now you transferred you said in 1941 down to headquarters of the Southwestern Monuments. Was that had that been transferred to Santa Fe by that time or was it still down in Casa Grande?

Vincent Ellis: It was still at Casa Grande. Before I answer your go into that though I would like to comment uh make a comment on what Hugh Miller stated a week or so after I received my first appointment with the National Park Service. I was the only one on the payroll under with Civil Service status since I had passed a Civil Service examination. Retirement was taken out of my pay and Hugh visited the area and he says: "Vince, there's only one thing now that keeps you from becoming the director of the National Park Service." And I said: "What is that, Hugh?" And he says: "It is yourself." ((Chuckling by both)) I have lost all aspirations to become director. I'm getting a little old for the pressure, but I still think it is something that any

young employee with the National Park Service can look forward to if they want to work hard enough.

Herbert Evison: Either a directorship or anyone of a large number of jobs that carry a good deal of responsibility.

Vincent Ellis: That is correct, but it is up to the individual.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, well I hope you'll pardon me if I say I think that considering that your education, formal education, ended when you got through high school. You who done extraordinarily well. I'm sure you don't worry where your breakfast is going to come from tomorrow morning.

Vincent Ellis: Not really.

Herbert Evison: Now one thing before I forget about it, somewhere along here, maybe I'm getting ahead of the game a little bit, but I'm sure you've committed matrimony.

Vincent Ellis: Yeah, we're still ahead of the game. I dragged that out quite a while. I was enjoying life. This was after moving to Casa Grande, Coolidge, Arizona, I met a girl Natalia Mashaya, a second or third generation native of Arizona, at Florence, Arizona. We courted for some months, perhaps she wouldn't like that word and in August 1942 we were married.

Herbert Evison: Now while you're at it even though this is getting ahead of the game, what family did you have?

Vincent Ellis: We have three youngsters, two boys and a girl. The oldest boy, six foot eight.

Herbert Evison: Where does he play basketball?

Vincent Ellis: He played in high school. He started with an engineering course they recommended that he be expected to keep his grades up; he'd forget about basketball, so he did not play in college other than in intramural. He attended three years at the University of Colorado. He's now in Georgia working for the Bell Telephone Company as a umm as a programmer for the computers for the telephone company.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yeah.

Vincent Ellis: He did drop out of school because he didn't want to be an engineer or a chemist. He's now going back on night school and will and not in the too distant future have a degree in business administration which fits his present managerial activities.

Herbert Evison: Now that was your oldest son, your older son.

Vincent Ellis: That is the older boy. Boy number two—

Herbert Evison: Wait a minute. What's this first son's name?

- Vincent Ellis: Vincent Victor.
- Herbert Evison: Vincent Victor. You added another V in there.
- Vincent Ellis: Yes, he had another uncle. James or Jim, James Edward again was a college dropout worked for three or four years in Atlanta, Georgia, after we moved to Marietta and last year returned to Colorado and now living in Denver, single and going to school. Our youngest daughter, Cathy (Kathy?) is going to school at Martha Berry College as a freshman at Rome, Georgia. That accounts for the location of youngsters. I don't know whether I will ever get them through school or not.
- Herbert Evison: ((chuckling)) Well, now let's get back to Southwestern Monuments. Where your boss was a man whom I esteemed very highly whom you already mentioned, Hugh Miller.
- Vincent Ellis: Hugh was there only a short time after I moved then he went into the Washington office as the personnel director and Chuck, yeah, Chuck Richie, was superintendent that I worked under most closely for the eighteen months I was at Coolidge.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, now let me ask you this question. Uh Bandelier was one of the Southwestern National Monuments under Boss Pinkley.
- Vincent Ellis: Yes.
- Herbert Evison: And under Hugh Miller. Did you ever at any time while you were at Bandelier encounter Boss Pinkley?
- Vincent Ellis: I encountered Boss Pinkley only one time during all the years I was there. Very seldom, things was operated so smoothly at Bandolier that he didn't have to come up there. ((both chuckle))
- Herbert Evison: I'm sure that was the case, too. Uhh I was just hoping that you might have a have had some contact with him that stuck out in your memory. You a—
- Vincent Ellis: Of course, the thing that always stuck out in your memory was the love everyone had for Boss Pinkley and the last section of the monthly report.
- Herbert Evison: His ruminations.
- Vincent Ellis: His ruminations.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah.
- Vincent Ellis: The first thing anyone turned to each month was that page report.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. He was a he was a real philosopher and a real inspirer of men, no question about that.
- Vincent Ellis: No question.
- Herbert Evison: Now, you say you were in there just a year and a half.

- Vincent Ellis: I was at Coolidge only a year and a half and then went into the service.
- Herbert Evison: Oh, yeah.
- Vincent Ellis: I did help move the office to Santa Fe. Checked with my draft board in Santa Fe, the notice was already out. Back up just in December of 1941. I attempted to get into the service and was turned down because of flat feet. 1942 I was recalled at this time I was accepted flat feet or not. Went into the 13th Armored Division as and was assigned to an artillery battalion.
- Herbert Evison: Where?
- Vincent Ellis: In Marysville, California.
- Herbert Evison: Oh yeah.
- Vincent Ellis: Camp Beal. We were there a year and then moved to Fort Bowie, Texas, for another year and then went over overseas. My Army career was something else. A bunch of accidents, my first promotion was in I made went from private to PFC at the end of six weeks because I wanted to get out of work. We were in a barracks the upper upstairs and my bunk was right by the head of the stairway. Every morning when they were sweeping up a pile of dirt of all the dirt that was in that whole barracks would be in the front of my bunk and I had to pick it up. So, one day I made up a roster giving two people the job of cleaning finish cleaning up each morning, took it into the sergeant and asked him to sign it, posted it, and the next Monday I was a PFC. Some, months later when we were going through the training period the lieutenant in charge of this group turned to me and said: "Corporal, will you carry on with the training for the rest of the hour." I said: "Yes sir"; well, he'd called me corporal, so they had to put the papers through and made me a Corporal. ((Evison chuckling)) I don't recall how I became a Sergeant, but later that came up for something like six months and a few months later we had a reorganization just like we have in the Park Service.
- Herbert Evison: As radical?
- Vincent Ellis: Darned near. They cut thee our company, our battery some twenty-five per cent. They cut down a number of jobs. There was one job that went up and that was mine and it went from Sergeant to Staff Sergeant. So again, by accident I got a promotion.
- Herbert Evison: Now you uh were you a Staff Sergeant when you went overseas?
- Vincent Ellis: Yes. We fought the battle of California for a year and then we fought the battle of Texas for a year and then went overseas. We were on our way over during the Battle of the Bulge. This was late when we got into it.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: Over in Europe again there was a change. I had been an operations sergeant when during the training period primarily concerned with

computing fire data for the firing batteries and operating a fire direction center. Just before we shipped out the survey sergeant was injured and couldn't go along, so they switched me over as survey chief, so enroute to Europe I read all the books I could on survey operations.

Herbert Evison: Now what kind of survey does this mean?

Vincent Ellis: This means engineering surveys, plotting, preparing maps, plotting in the locations of the batteries, the battalion, and the division, reading aerial photographs, plotting targets, the whole ball of wax including we didn't although we carried a transit, the only thing we used that for was to determine latitude and longitude. We used an aiming circle which was sixty-four hundred uh I don't know I uh —

Herbert Evison: Six hundred and forty degrees?

Vincent Ellis: No, it's not degrees. Mils! Sixty-four hundred mils makes a circle. Now a mil is an angle that transcends a yard at a thousand yards, and this is what we used for our survey work. We worked for approximately six weeks in Europe getting set up to go into combat went into combat within about a week and the lieutenant in charge of the aerial section came back to pick me up and says: "The Colonel wants you to fly as aerial observer." We had L-4 Cubs to observe artillery fire and look spot targets. So, I went back with my can mess kit and he says: "Where's your gear?" I told him: "I just came back for the day." And he said: "The hell you did, you're assigned back here." The air strip was usually a mile or two behind the battalion headquarters, so I spent the next few months flying as an aerial observer as I always said: "Tail gunner in a Cub."

Herbert Evison: Hmm. ((chuckles)) Is a Cub ever under aerial attack?

Vincent Ellis: The second day of flight we were caught - I looked out and I could see tracer going in front of the wings and when I realized this was the Germans had their tracer one to four, there were four solid ones going by at the same time I was a little worried. One time we got caught in eighty-eight fire. A bang out at this wing tip, and a bang out at this wing tip, and the pilot had told me if I saw eighty-eight fire which comes out pretty black to hit him on the shoulder on the side in which it was coming. I started to hit him on the shoulder, and he was diving so fast I could never get my hand down.

Herbert Evison: ((chuckling))

Vincent Ellis: We got down in the trees and heard on our radio that we were shot down. So, we rushed back set down close to the battalion headquarters, went in to plot the location of the two guns. Went back and got in our plane, started to take off and this was spring and at that time the farmers were dumping their cartloads of manure in the field. A two wheeled cart pulled by an ox and occasionally a horse and they piled of manure across the field were oh three four feet high. We started to take off on a cleared area

on top of a little hill and the plane wouldn't rev up, so we hit one of these piles of manure and landed upside down. ((Evison chuckling)) The pilot ended up with an injured back, went to the hospital, and I broke a grease pencil. ((Evison chuckling))

Herbert Evison: No wound stripe for that.

Vincent Ellis: No wound stripe for that. We determined apparently that the plane did have some flak in it and wouldn't take off properly. Went back to the airstrip the second pilot says that you have to get in and fly now or you'll never fly again, so we went out and looked for some more things that evening. I did complete my tour of duty in Europe as an aerial observer. Long towards the end of hostilities I was called up to the battalion headquarters along with the First Sergeant of our battery who was also flying as an aerial observer; the two of us were offered and given battlefield commission. So, I came back as a Second Lieutenant. It was not quite so crowded on the boat coming back as it was an enlisted man.

Herbert Evison: ((Chuckling)) Yes...advantages, eh?

Vincent Ellis: During our thirty-day recuperation leave the bomb was dropped on Japan, then I had to wait out whether or not we'd have to go to Japan as occupation troops or we'd get out. As the turned out I was discharged following February.

Herbert Evison: When?

Vincent Ellis: February of 1945.

Herbert Evison: Wait a minute, February of 1946 —

Vincent Ellis: Forty-six, correct, February of 46.

Herbert Evison: Well now did you come back with the service immediately?

Vincent Ellis: I returned to the service at Santa Fe as a personnel clerk.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes. Now—

Vincent Ellis: And there—

Herbert Evison: regional office?

Vincent Ellis: Regional office.

Herbert Evison: Or Southwestern Monuments?

Vincent Ellis: The regional office and worked under Gordon Cox who is Chief of Administrative Services in this office. How about cutting there a minute I gotta—

Herbert Evison: Vince, let's go on for a quick rundown of the various jobs that you held since you got out of the Army and went to the old Region Three office as

personnel clerk. What are the jobs you've held since and when did you hold them? If you can remember?

Vincent Ellis: In August of 1946 I transferred to Grand Canyon as purchasing clerk. I worked there some almost a year and was promoted to accounting clerk. In June of forty-eight I transferred to Big Bend National Park as chief clerk. Stayed there five years. Returned to Grand Canyon as chief clerk which was converted later to administrative officer. 1961 I transferred to Mesa Verde in Colorado as Assistant Superintendent. In sixty-six went to Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Marietta, Georgia, as Superintendent and in May of 1970 to my present position in the Southeast Region.

Herbert Evison: Now I am reminded of something. I was in Mesa Verde in late 1962 at which time I tape recorded Mrs. Pinkley and—

Vincent Ellis: Art Thomas.

Herbert Evison: Art Thomas and you were at some afternoon affair that my wife and I attended during the day or two that we were in Mesa Verde.

Vincent Ellis: That is right.

Herbert Evison: I I think that is probably the first time that I met you.

Vincent Ellis: I think we met at Grand Canyon some time ago.

Herbert Evison: Well that very well might have been.

Vincent Ellis: Yes.

Herbert Evison: Now one of your old associates was working at Grand Canyon at the time that you went there. Your old boss from the C.C.C. days if I'm not mistaken. When you went there after the war, Jim Eden.

Vincent Ellis: Jim Eden at Grand Canyon. Hub Chase was at the Canyon when I got there.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: He was heading the maintenance division. Jim Eden was transferred in, and I cannot recall whether it was before or after - but I believe Jim came shortly after I did.

Herbert Evison: But at any rate you were both there at the same time.

Vincent Ellis: We were both there at the same time. Also, soon after I got there, we found that Lawrence Shire ((Shyrer?)) who had been our shop foreman at Bandelier was trying to get back in the service, so he came to Grand Canyon. There was four of us at one time.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: A few months later one of the other foreman, a forestry foreman, who was with the Army engineers and was considering coming back to the National Park Service and was considered for a job but turned it down. If he had come, there would have been five of us that worked together in the C.C. days at Grand Canyon, but as it was there were four of us for quite a period.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, that had worked during the C.C.C. days at Bandelier?

Vincent Ellis: That's correct.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well now I forget from that summer of yours just you were what chief clerk at the at Grand Canyon when you went back there?

Vincent Ellis: The second time I went back, yeah.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: I was I had left there and went spent five years at Big Bend.

Herbert Evison: Now who was your superintendent at Big Bend?

Vincent Ellis: Ross Maxwell initially and then when Ross quit Lon Garrison came down.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: I worked for Lon twice during my first period at Grand Canyon from forty-six to forty-eight he was assistant superintendent.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Then a few months before I left Big Bend he was there as superintendent.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: So, another one at Big Bend that you will remember was Leon Evans.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Vincent Ellis: He was assistant superintendent.

Herbert Evison: I remember Leon Evans very well from I met him first at Yellowstone.

Vincent Ellis: Another individual that was - I worked for at Big Bend was Bob Gibbs who was assistant superintendent under Ross Maxwell. At the same time a former Bandelierite and C.C. employee was George Sholly who was Chief Ranger at Big Bend.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Now that's S H O L L Y if I remember rightly.

Vincent Ellis: That is correct.

Herbert Evison: Do you remember from your five years there at Big Bend any events of particular interest?

- Vincent Ellis: Well, the one thing of particular interest after the day my wife and I spent waiting six hours to cross a creek. The first oiled road was put in the month after I arrived at Big Bend. Before that we had forty miles of gravel before we hit pavement and it was another forty miles to the nearest town or eighty miles. Big Bend was a wonderful experience. Every time you spent a dollar you could see it. Anything that was did was new or it was an improvement.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: While I was at Big Bend Joe Rumberg, the present Western Regional Director came on his with his first permanent job as a Ranger.
- Herbert Evison: Now, who was this?
- Vincent Ellis: Joe Rumberg.
- Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.
- Vincent Ellis: Regional director of the Western Region.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: I remember a one instance, we had a number of Rangers, but only two or three of them could handle horses. We were having a big horse round-up picking up Mexican horses.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: They pulled Bob Massel who is now Administrative Officer at Great Smokies and myself out of the office to participate in the round-up and had two of the Rangers or three of the Rangers hauling supplies and setting up camp for us. There was Joe Rumberg, George Sholly, Bob Massel and myself doing the riding.
- Herbert Evison: You had been a rider since childhood I would presume.
- Vincent Ellis: I grew up on a horse. Big Bend of course it was forty miles to anything. The East district, West district, the North district, was forty miles to any place, but it was a close-knit group. We got along very well and accomplished, I felt, a great number of things.
- Herbert Evison: I'd like a little bit more about this horse round-up, what you remember of that. That, how long were you on it, how much territory did you cover?
- Vincent Ellis: Well, there were two or three areas we had our horse round-up in. One along the river section usually lasted about four days. One that I recall - you started at the East end of the park along the river and started working west, picked up horses, worked them into a herd and moved into a holding area just below the Jesus Mountains.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Worked over eastward from Boquillas Canyon?

- Vincent Ellis: That's correct. All the way to Santa Elena Canyon and then up to the holding pastures. On this particular round-up we had picked up a hundred and twenty head of horses. We had to advertise them, hold them, and they also had to be checked by veterinarians. We had held the horses for a week when we got word one morning that half the horses were gone. A group from Mexico had come across and removed half the horses that were along the fence and taken them back across the river. So, it was even at time became a something of a game between the Mexicans and the Park Rangers.
- Herbert Evison: Well now that was one round-up area; where else did you operate as a as a—
- Vincent Ellis: Well, you asked how long. Usually we tried to get a horse round-up over in three to four days.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: Now this particular area was some forty miles long that you were covering between Boquillas and Santa Elena Canyon, rough and hot. The other area that where there were a great number of horses that we rounded up was in the northeast section of the park and this was an area covered with giant daggers and again it was well it was actually about twenty miles of area - twenty miles square - that we had to cover for the round-up.
- Herbert Evison: Well now this this round-up business was something was repeated at intervals?
- Vincent Ellis: The river section of it, yes. About once a year.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Now I remember having discussed the situation there with Lon Garrison at one time and his difficulty with the people who were after candelilla. Did you ever have any experiences in that country - especially during round-up of coming across candelilla?
- Vincent Ellis: We did not come across any candelilla camps because most of the candelilla wax camps were somewhere in canyons where they could get the water or else in the mountainous areas. One time George Sholly and I were in the northwest portion which was somewhat mountainous and covered with candelilla wax and we came upon a wax camp. We caught one man with his burro loaded and he agreed to go to camp and wait for us and we were hiking across country and spotted another worker, but he spotted us. So, George said: "Well, I'll go back around, get the car, come down on the other side." First George shot up in the air a couple of times to see if he could stop the guy, then he said: "I'll go get the car and come around and you follow him. " So, I followed him across the country and was a sandy area. I got down to the location where the boy was when George had fired and he's running steps just doubled and he was really stretching out. Never did see him. We did take the one fellow in, of course he was turned over to the Customs people who took him back to Mexico.

Candelilla wax operations was going on all the time in the park. We had a good stand. Wax camps would be burned periodically, but you could never stop it. It was also commerce, the wax business from Mexico give to the United States. It was against the law against the Mexican law to bring it out of Mexico, but there was no law against bringing it into United States, so the park roads were used for moving wax across country and it was big business a number of years.

Herbert Evison: Hmmph.

Vincent Ellis: We pay charged two cents a ton mile and paved some forty miles of road in the park with the income from wax hauling.

Herbert Evison: That's a new one on me.

Vincent Ellis: It wasn't true paving. It was what we called well you brought your road up to grade packed it down good, and then shoot oil on and gravel, but as you kept getting layers, pretty soon you had a pretty good road.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Now you were in there then until when?

Vincent Ellis: 1952.

Herbert Evison: Then you went back to Grand Canyon again?

Vincent Ellis: Went back to Grand Canyon.

Herbert Evison: Uhh in 52 who would have been the superintendent there? Would that have been Harold Bryant?

Vincent Ellis: That was Harold Bryant, Doctor Bryant.

Herbert Evison: Did you ever get to know him very well?

Vincent Ellis: I knew Dr. Bryant very well. We became good friends over the years. Of course, he was there at the time of my first assignment.

Herbert Evison: Uh hnm.

Vincent Ellis: Dr. Bryant we still get Christmas cards from Mrs. Bryant, Amy Bryant.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm, yeah.

Vincent Ellis: We'd get a card every year all the time until he passed away.

Herbert Evison: Very interesting ones she's been sending the last couple of years with those pen and ink drawings.

Vincent Ellis: She does those herself.

Herbert Evison: Does she?

Vincent Ellis: Yes.

Herbert Evison: I I didn't know that.

Vincent Ellis: Yeah, they were all of her travels. She did that for a number of years for a after Dr. Bryant retired.

Herbert Evison: Uhmm.

Vincent Ellis: Remembering back to Dr. Bryant's retirement, he came to me some months before he retired. He says: "I've got to talk to someone, and I don't want anyone to know about this, but I'm planning to retire, such and such a date. Will you figure my retirement for me?" So, we did. He says: "The reason is I do not want to be uh did I want to carry on as some other superintendents after the last year when they know you're going to retire have to retire at the age of seventy."

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: "No one pays any attention to you, so I'm going to retire eighteen months early."

Herbert Evison: ((chuckling))

Vincent Ellis: He was not going to be a lame duck. He was followed by P.P. Patrawl Pat Patrawl.

Herbert Evison: Very briefly.

Vincent Ellis: Uh about eighteen months as I recall. Pat had been an Assistant Superintendent at Grand Canyon years before and he found it was a much harder job than he had anticipated. I think Pat was also worried when Tillotson passed away. It was Tillie Tillotson who died of a heart attack and was buried at Grand Canyon, so Pat decided that he would get out and enjoy life rather than work himself to death, then following Pat was John McLaughlin.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Charlie Shevlin was Assistant Superintendent all through that second assignment at Grand Canyon and a wonderful guy was Charlie.

Herbert Evison: Yes, he did. Of course, those were all people who were known long, long time. Johnny Mack from the very early days of the C.C.C. and Charlie Shevlin from the same time.

Vincent Ellis: Johnny Mack started as a Ranger at Rocky Mountain in 1929 as I recall.

Herbert Evison: I think actually he started as a Ranger a little bit earlier than that in Yellowstone.

Vincent Ellis: Wait, no he was seasonal I think earlier.

Herbert Evison: It might have been. He was one of the early civil service park rangers.

Vincent Ellis: That's right.

- Herbert Evison: Up until about 1928 uh the Rangers didn't have Civil Service status. Yah. You served under quite a succession of Superintendents at Grand Canyon.
- Vincent Ellis: Well, I left Grand Canyon because I decided I couldn't retire Johnny Mack.
- Herbert Evison: You couldn't what?
- Vincent Ellis: Retire Johnny Mack.
- Herbert Evison: Oh! No nobody has succeeded in doing that yet. I suppose eventually the time will come when he has to retire, but he has he's going on forty-three years of service now I think including his war time service in the Armed Forces.
- Vincent Ellis: That is correct. I uh he still has a few years yet.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, I suppose so and who would really want to retire from the superintendency of Sequoia-Kings Canyon?
- Vincent Ellis: I think no one, apparently.
- Herbert Evison: I can't imagine anybody wanting to do it. Do you remember anything particular from that second period at Grand Canyon aside from changes of superintendents?
- Vincent Ellis: That was the growth period of Grand Canyon, the beginning of Mission 66 soon after, although they called it 66 the Visitor Center which we put in I believe in 1955 or started in 1955 I think was considered the first Mission 66 Visitor Center.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah.
- Vincent Ellis: So, it was a growth period, a period of change, all during that time at Grand Canyon, development of the new lodge area, the campground; it was changeover we for many, many years the utilities had been maintained and operated by the Santa Fe Railroad. So, it was all turned over to the National Park Service. So, we became a utility company because ninety per cent of the utilities were used by the concessioners.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah.
- Vincent Ellis: But we had to maintain, operate 'em, and charge for them.
- Herbert Evison: Now all those changes made differences in your responsibilities, didn't it?
- Vincent Ellis: Greatly. Uh one thing that as a result of that utility operation being turned over to us, we were spending more money, and collecting more money from the utility operation than we had in our maintenance account, yet we supposed to operate these from our maintenance account, an annual account.
- Herbert Evison: The income from it all went into miscellaneous receipts?

Vincent Ellis: No. We did have clearance, special clearance, until legislation could be authorized to use it to operate the plants.

Herbert Evison: Uh huh.

Vincent Ellis: So, this is the time I got into changing the accounting system for the Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: I uh persuaded regional administrative uh Assistant Director of Administration Medrick Carpenter that the tail was wagging the dog, so we should throw this into a clearing account under the construction program. He agreed, but it kicked around two years, back and forth, Washington office the Accounting Division, General Accounting Office the Department, all said it couldn't be done because it wasn't in the book. They spent weeks out there on a special audit. We'd argue all day and I'd convince them that we should rewrite the book. They called somebody in Washington, and we'd re-argue it again the next day, then some months later after the audit, we never did get an audit report, but after they had been back to Washington, Carl Walker came out and tried to convince me that I was doing it wrong. And I says: "Maybe so". He says: "It isn't in the book." I said: "Rewrite the dam book!" Eventually, they rewrote the book.

[END OF SIDE 1 OF TAPE #50]

[START OF SIDE 2 OF TAPE #50]

Herbert Evison: I notice you have some jottings there of they seem mostly to concern people and you might just refer to that and give me some stuff on here that those notes of yours suggest.

Vincent Ellis: Well, I've pretty well covered the Grand Canyon period. I think somewhere I've mentioned the people at Big Bend. One thing that I in my career in the National Park Service - the one thing that I'm most proud - is the record that people have made who have worked for me at one time. For instance, Bob Mansell who is now an Administrative Officer at the Great Smokies started as a grader operator at Big Bend. I pulled him off a grader, put him in the warehouse, and then promoted him to a fiscal accounting job and recommended him for chief clerk.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Now you say you put him in the warehouse. There his job presumably was to keep records on—

Vincent Ellis: Keep records.

Herbert Evison: Now what came in, what went out, and where.

Vincent Ellis: Inventories, the whole ball of wax on property management. From that I pulled him into the accounting my one accounting position and made an accountant out of him, not a professional accountant, but a fiscal type. He was good at it, so I recommended him for a Chief Clerk's job. He went to

Death Valley, Hawaii, to Glacier, to the Midwest Region, and then to the Smokies. Another is a boy here in our office. He was my supervisory accountant at Grand Canyon. Did very well. Was my number two man or my number one man. He went to Big Bend as Chief Clerk, came as back as a supervisory accountant, then to Colonial, into Washington, and now ahead of our program and budget division in this office.

Herbert Evison: Who is he?

Vincent Ellis: Chuck Watson.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: Another young man that I pulled in at Grand Canyon, John Sansing, another accountant.

Herbert Evison: How do you spell that?

Vincent Ellis: S A N S I N G. I uh he went from there to Lake Meade into the Western office is now superintendent of Redwoods National Park.

Herbert Evison: Your boys have moved, ALONG.

Vincent Ellis: Fourth one is Keith Williams. I had transferred him from the GAO General Accounting Office in Denver as supervisory accountant. He did a fine job for us. He went to Yellowstone, and I've lost track of him for a while. Now he's Chief Administrative Services in the Midwest Region. Another young man that was with me for a while at Grand Canyon as supervisory accountant is Dick Dahlberg.

Herbert Evison: D A H L B E R G?

Vincent Ellis: Correct. After Grand Canyon I believe he went into the Washington office, but now he is Chief Administrative Services in the Pacific Northwest Region.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yeah.

Vincent Ellis: So, I'm proud of the boys that have come out and at times they were higher grade than I.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Which that always makes me feel good.

Herbert Evison: Wonderful. Now anything else in connection with your trick at Grand Canyon, your second one?

Vincent Ellis: Uh not too much. It was mostly a work session, but Mesa Verde might be of interest to you.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Before you leave Grand Canyon though I knew people there at Grand Canyon, some of them very well, now I'm sure that when you first went there the Chief Park Naturalist was a guy named Louis Schelbach.

Vincent Ellis: Louis Schelbach.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Now he was outside of your field, but I'm sure if nobody could ever be at Grand Canyon while Louis was there without being conscious of him.

Vincent Ellis: Well Louis read everything, and he remembered what he read. Education wise although he didn't get it in school, he was probably as highly educated as most of your doctors—

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: —in his particular field.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. I would agree with that. Now were you there during Ernie Schultz's period of service as Park Naturalist?

Vincent Ellis: I was, yes.

Herbert Evison: Uh huh. Did you have many contacts with him?

Vincent Ellis: Worked closely with Ernie. Ernie was again dedicated to his particular field. Nothing else was important. It didn't make any difference whether any other part of the park operated. He had no outside hobbies or interests.

Herbert Evison: Didn't he?

Vincent Ellis: His youngsters started playing basketball and insisted that he go to the basketball game, but Ernie would take 'em some plan and study them while the ballgame was on. He had no outside interest. And I think it's unfortunate. I think a person needs something to relieve that —

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Vincent Ellis: —and maybe take a break.

Herbert Evison: I agree. I suppose you know that Ernie is now working for the state of Nevada as an interpretive planner.

Vincent Ellis: I understood that following his retirement he's still doing the same thing.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. And as you say after a deeply a man deeply dedicated to his job. Now you went from there and I am sure you had an interesting time. You were in Mesa Verde at a very interesting time.

Vincent Ellis: Again, there was two things at Mesa Verde, of course the Weatherall Mesa project. Art Thomas was Superintendent, and a grand guy was Art Thomas. You interviewed him in 62 as the—

Herbert Evison: That's right.

Vincent Ellis: —only Park employee you knew of whose total career had been in management. Art had although his job with the Park Service his title was archeologist, he was custodian or what is now superintendent at Bandelier.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: When I first when Art selected me as Assistant Superintendent, we were having the sixty-one conference at Grand Canyon and kidding back and forth and Bob, let's see I knew Art at Bandelier and Art had told Bob Gibbs, "That sure we'd get along." He'd brought me up and I told Bob when he asked me: "Sure we'll get along. I taught him all he knows about the Park Service." So, we had a good relationship. The Weatherall Mesa project was the main thing at Grand Canyon of the main public interest.

Herbert Evison: —at Mesa Verde.

Vincent Ellis: —at Mesa Verde. Of course, the National Geographic Association was highly involved although they got all of the credit for financing it, they put in a quarter of a million dollars, and we put in three quarters which meant for a million-dollar project over five years. We had scientists of practically every type because not only was archeology involved there was studying of botany, tying together the changes over the thousands two-thousand-year period which they could identify. It was fascinating to watch the cliff dwellings and ruins emerge from rubble and all apparently nothing. Mug house was one of my favorites because it was just underway when I arrived. They were beginning to dig it out. Cliff Palace was well on its way. A beautiful thing.

Herbert Evison: Now wait a minute. Cliff Palace

Vincent Ellis: Now excuse me, not Cliff Palace.

Herbert Evison: Long House.

Vincent Ellis: Long House, yes.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: I was getting my names mixed up.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah.

Vincent Ellis: But, still Mug House was my favorite.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Probably will be one of the harder to preserve because the cave is still active.

Herbert Evison: You mean it's undergoing changes all the time?

Vincent Ellis: Yes, the cave is still undergoing changes.

Herbert Evison: Uh huh, uh huh.

Vincent Ellis: Great slabs of sandstone can be expected to flake off.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Actually, all the in all the caves they're undergoing some change, all the time.

Herbert Evison: Uh huh. Fortunately, slow because they stay dry, though.

Vincent Ellis: Fortunately, slow because they stay dry.

Herbert Evison: Hmm. My wife and I went down into Larner House with Jean Pinkley during that 1962 visit.

Vincent Ellis: Jean Pinkley, the daughter-in-law of Boss Pinkley, was chief of interpretation.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Anyone of them could run the park.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: And I had to be very, very careful or they would be running the park. ((chuckles)) But it worked out well and we made a team. Another thing was we had all the scientists, primarily archeologists on the park payroll and there full time on the Weatherall Mesa project.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. I'm trying to think of the man there who was such a wonderful excavator. Had a son and a daughter, I think. Al—

Vincent Ellis: Al Lancaster, who called himself a bean farmer.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Al had an eighth-grade education, but probably knew more about excavating Southwestern ruins than anyone alive today. He was an authority who started back in the thirties with the Smithsonian Institute Group and became interested and educated himself and especially in locating and anticipating what you could find under a pile of rubble.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Al was given, as a result of his work, the Department of Interior Distinguished Service Award during the period I was at Mesa Verde before his retirement.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. You know, that always tickles me when a man's work is recognized, uh during the time that he is working, and he gets an award like that instead of like most of us - sort of getting a sop after we've retired.

Vincent Ellis: Following Al's mandatory retirement at age seventy, he was employed first by the University of Arizona on a dig in southern Arizona and now I believe is still working during the summer months for the University of Colorado in southwestern Colorado on archeological projects.

Herbert Evison: Hmm. He's still doing the kind of thing that he loves to do.

Vincent Ellis: He's still doing the things that he loves to do.

Herbert Evison: I think it was him - that could be said that a man's profession was also his thoroughly enjoyable hobby.

Vincent Ellis: That is true.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: And Al again was one of those wonderful people to be with. He observed, not only archeological aspects, but he observed people.

Herbert Evison: Yah.

Vincent Ellis: He could tell stories about all the great archeologists and anthropologists who had he had worked with in the southwest.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Amusing stories.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. You know with that lead I've just about made up my mind that eventually I've got to tape him again and get some of those stories on tape. You know, he isn't an easy man to get to open up, He's—

Vincent Ellis: No.

Herbert Evison: —sort of a reticent sort of a guy ordinarily. I suppose primarily with people that he has just met for the first time.

Vincent Ellis: It takes quite a while to get acquainted with Al and you may need to sit down somewhere in the sun by a ruin and he'll be start reminiscing about something that happened at Chaco Canyon or somewhere else and the people involved.

Herbert Evison: Uhhmm.

Vincent Ellis: And make quite a story.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I imagine he could, and I really hope I get a chance to try to do that. Now do you think of other happenings during your period there at at Mesa Verde that we ought to get on this record?

Vincent Ellis: Mesa Verde was a tough place for the ladies or women, park wives.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: There was thirty miles from town which was the longest thirty miles you'll find anywhere that rose from seven thousand feet at the entrance to seven thousand feet at park headquarters, but you were also up as high as about eighty-four hundred feet at least once above eight thousand and back to seven thousand six or seven times.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

- Vincent Ellis: It was the first twenty miles was almost an hour's drive, unless the girls were working there wasn't too much for them to uh interest them. For the park employees it was an exciting period and I think is an exciting area. Anything can happen.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. And mostly it did.
- Vincent Ellis: And mostly it did. One happen uh thing that might interest you, Herb. We were having a Christmas party in 65. It was a little cloudy, a bunch of people came up from Cortez and Mancas - park wives and so forth - and the party started at five o'clock. It started breaking up at 6:30. It started snowing about the time the party started. It started breaking up at 6:30 and the people couldn't get out of the park. At the cuts some eight or ten miles out, the snow had drifted across, and we worked until two o'clock getting vehicles through the snow and one car - the first car that started out never did get out. It was it hit a snowdrift and lifted the wheels off and we had to cut around it and it was standing clear up off the pavement the next morning. Next morning was the most beautiful day. The sun shining. Here's sixteen, eighteen inches of snow. I burned up roll after roll of film just taking pictures and that. One I remember when my daughter in one the cut areas up to her hips in a snowdrift in just a light jacket, no hat. ((chuckling)) But, during the five years that we were there our children went to school by bus and they missed one day of getting to school. This thirty-mile round trip every day.
- Herbert Evison: Where did they go? Cortez?
- Vincent Ellis: They went to Mancas, thirty miles down, thirty miles back.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. That's getting an education the hard way.
- Vincent Ellis: It was expensive sending the kids to school, especially high school; we had to furnish the boys a car if they were going to participate in any of the activities - basketball practice and so forth. Then you worried whether they're going to get caught in a snow storm every day they went down, but still it was a good, a good five years.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. I can imagine. I can imagine many worse places in which to spend five years because that to me is one of the most extraordinary one of the most fascinating areas of the whole National Park system.
- Vincent Ellis: Again, that was a period of development. A four hundred site campground in uh was put in down below the or just inside the park, five or six miles,—
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: —to get the camping out of the headquarters area. The concessioner put in a lodge development, roads were constructed, again it was a period of development and active action.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: A lot of my career has been tied into action projects all the way through.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Now was, was Ansel Hall still alive when you anytime while you were at Mesa Verde?

Vincent Ellis: He was there uh died about a year before I left. A year or year and a half.

Herbert Evison: Before you left.

Vincent Ellis: Before I left, yes. Ansel was there when I first got there.

Herbert Evison: Uh huh.

Vincent Ellis: Then Roger, his son, took over the operation.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Did you ever have any particular experiences with Ansel?

Vincent Ellis: I didn't particularly because Art Thomas, it was a period of negotiation at then that time with Ansel for attempting to negotiate new contracts.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: So, I avoided Ansel, other than social activities and Art Thomas the Superintendent handled the business operations with Ansel and also primarily with Roger.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Did did Mrs. Hall, Ansel's wife, take any active part in the operation there?

Vincent Ellis: A very active part as long as and even after Ansel passed on. She handled the sales operation, and curio operation.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: She was a wonderful person.

Herbert Evison: Well, anything else that you want to get on the record that relates to your stay at at Mesa Verde?

Vincent Ellis: Well, we've covered an awful lot of time uh tape; time's going to run off, maybe we better get down to Georgia.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Let's do. You went there in when? Sixty uh—

Vincent Ellis: In March of 1966 I went to Marietta, Georgia, as Superintendent of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. And again, another exciting four years. Soon after I arrived there and once I had my feet on the ground, the Regional Director designated me as state coordinator—

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: —for the state of Georgia. So, I had the opportunity to become acquainted with the state. This soon was followed by designating as key man on the

Andersonville National Historic Site proposal and the Cumberland Island National Seashore proposal, so I become quite involved in the activities in Georgia because they were all hot.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. You really did land right in the middle of an active time.

Vincent Ellis: THEN another thing that really became a quite a project was environmental education.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: We dived into it headfirst and started not only just the park operation, we involved people throughout the state. As a result of my state coordinating activities, I knew conservation people – federal, state, private, all-over the state of Georgia.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: So, we started involving them and that became quite an activity there. I worked my four Rangers and historians to death; they never had time to look up, but they had fun.

Herbert Evison: Uh hm.

Vincent Ellis: We were quite successful with our environmental education, at least a kick a the kick-off of it for the first couple of years. Now it's going in and carrying on down there to the second stage of taking it away uh expanding it statewide. Getting it in fact I had a report from the present Superintendent Jack Ogle. The Georgia State College is giving ten hours credit for environmental education in the study areas – either at the park or those that have been established in surrounding school. So, it's becoming a part, this environmental education, becoming a part of the education system of Georgia.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. And you feel that you yourself and the Park Service played an important part in stimulating that development in Georgia.

Vincent Ellis: Definitely. If we hadn't, it would have never been stimulated.

Herbert Evison: Hmm. Well, that's really something to get—

Vincent Ellis: The thing is they were ready for it.

Herbert Evison: —that down.

Vincent Ellis: The environmental education idea came out and we started discussing and people were begging for this type of operation. It was the appropriate time and the appropriate audience, and it was a wonderful experience getting into something like that.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Tell me something about that Cumberland Island situation as you were in contact with it.

Vincent Ellis: It the there had been a great change since the time I was involved with it in that the foundation has uh managed to attain funds and buy over half of it. I think we have at least sixty per cent under option now.

Herbert Evison: The foundation, the National Park Foundation?

Vincent Ellis: The National Park Foundation.

Herbert Evison: Huh.

Vincent Ellis: At the time I became involved in it, some people wanted it, and some people wanted it to be commercialized.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Particularly the people of Camden County, they could see Jekyl Island up in Glenn County Glynn County bringing in all these tourists and all the development and all the tax money. They wanted a similar operation and the thing that has held Cumberland Island up was our uh stand that there would be no bridge or causeway between the mainland and Cumberland Island. It would remain an island.

Herbert Evison: You'd get there by boat.

Vincent Ellis: You would get there by boat.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Uhh, the Camden County politicians wouldn't buy this. For years we couldn't get the Congressmen to introduce legislation. Finally, he did introduce legislation, but then it died in Congress. Cumberland Island - have you ever been there?

Herbert Evison: No, I never have.

Vincent Ellis: It's one of the series of Golden Isles beginning up by Savannah and extending to Florida that have had very little development.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: They did preserve primarily in private hands since sometime in the late eighteen hundreds. Cumberland Island has had very little development although at one time it was famous for sea island cotton.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: Back before the Civil War. It has some eighteen and a half miles of the most beautiful beach you've ever seen. Then your dunes that go up some fifty feet. There's almost virgin forest, live oak, pine uh, well all your a lot of your tropical growth. Very few roads, shell roads, it has a lot of the areas the entire line of Golden Islands being up involved with the Cumberland Island I was involved with the Golden Isles, the entire group, one way or another. You have quite a bit of historical interest, uh going

back some ten thousand years to the Indians and their shells and their development on up to through English occupation, the French, the Spanish, the Huguenots, the whole ball of wax, as along that coast.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: And there's evidence of it and the stories are there. So, Cumberland Island if we get it as a seashore is going to be a great recreation area, but furthermore it'll have the great amount of historical interest, natural and historical and archeological.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: So, uh—

Herbert Evison: It has just about everything.

Vincent Ellis: —just about everything plus a darned nice climate.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Someday it will be I'm sure a an area under the National Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: The only thing that worries me, will it be over-used.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, that's something to worry about.

Vincent Ellis: We all have that's something we all have to worry about, and we'll have to take steps to control that.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Well, we uh ah our time is getting along. What time is that? Twenty-five til twelve?

Vincent Ellis: Yes, Herb.

Herbert Evison: Uh I have to kept you away from your regular job for about two hours this morning and that's probably about all I should take, but I don't want to leave off anything in connection with your Georgia assignment that ought to get on here and I certainly want a little something about your present rather unusual assignment.

Vincent Ellis: Just a minute. Let me do a little digging. Well, that was another good experience. I covered the highlight. We wanted to stay in Georgia. My wife loved Atlanta. She had been a country girl all of her life, dropped into a metropolitan area and thought it was wonderful. Climate was delightful, but like everything else you move on. The Director and Len Bolt decided that for some reason I should be up here in the Regional Office. I had gone for some thirty years without a regional or Washington office experience, so they were going to cure that.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

- Vincent Ellis: So last March Len Bolts called up and told me that we were being the reorganization was underway and my name was on the list which had been approved by the Secretary to come to Richmond as Assistant Regional Director - Park Support and that I should come up the next week end and they were going over to Williamsburg for a get acquainted session and a group meeting to air all of our problems and all of our life's history, something of a managerial bred ((grid?)) tea group experience situation, so we went over there for a couple of days, then I come up on detail because my daughter was still in high school and I couldn't move until March and under this job the Park Support Division provides the expertise of primary support for maintenance, interpretation, resource management, for the small park with which do not have these high grade expertise. In addition, we coordinate at the regional level the park support activities for all parks - the various reports and things pertaining to the park operations.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: Function, but in effect my job is general superintendent for some for some eighteen parks, small parks in the region.
- Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.
- Vincent Ellis: Including San Juan and the Virgin Islands.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.
- Vincent Ellis: As you know yourself east region has probably accomplished more grouping of parks than any other region such as the Blue Ridge Group, the Natchez Trace Group with four or five small parks as satellite to the big park because they have the expertise, the equipment; they can give them aid and they're much closer than they would be here.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hm.
- Vincent Ellis: So, although I started out with, I believe twenty-eight small areas, we did group a number of them, now down to seventeen, under my wing here.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Now uh Everglades is the top area for one of those groupings?
- Vincent Ellis: That is right. For all the areas now in Florida.
- Herbert Evison: Does that extend clear up to—
- Vincent Ellis: Castille.
- Herbert Evison: —Fort Caroline, Castille, and Fort Matanzas, huh?
- Vincent Ellis: Yeah. It was a recent, well when Joe Brown went down there, they switched the entire state of Florida - all the areas of the state of Florida under his wing.
- Herbert Evison: Uh hmm.

Vincent Ellis: A little protocol in reporting - the small areas report to my office Assistant Director Park Support - the superintendent of the large areas, such as Everglades, Smokies, and so forth, report to the Associate Director.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yeah.

Vincent Ellis: But that divides the workload, but there's a funny thing this Associate Director has no staff to give him support. ((Evison chuckles)) So park support then has to fall in and take care a lot of this.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well now how much of a staff do you have here?

Vincent Ellis: I have a chief of interpretive services, Don Robinson,—

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: —Bill Kaye as living history—

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: —Al Manussi as curator.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Now in those two they're involved with all parks.

Herbert Evison: Uhhmm.

Vincent Ellis: Don Robinson primarily interpretation for small parks, then maintenance I have one man, a Ed Ashman who's maintenance supervisor and resource management or and safety, Tony Stark.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: That is the extent of it on paper. I had borrowed one man from coop programs to help on resource management.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. Now where does Pete Shadd come into this picture?

Vincent Ellis: This is a special division of park evaluation headed by George Frye with two members, Pete Shadd and Earl Stottle. They go out and take a look at the operations of the parks.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Vincent Ellis: Find out what's wrong, what's right, where their strengths are, what they need and so forth and come back in and prepare a report to the Director to guide him in hand or operating his region.

Herbert Evison: Hmmp. Do you like this assignment?

Vincent Ellis: Yes, I like the assignment.

Herbert Evison: Not as well as you did the one in Georgia, though? Huh?

Vincent Ellis: Well, any of your field areas - the thing you're I've been tied closely to the desk here. I if you're in the field you get tired of paper. You can go out and inspect something.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: Now it's so much trouble to catch a plane to go inspect something I and has been a period of change, the Director and Associate Director have been on the field or travelling a lot and I have had to fill in behind them, so that I have been somewhat confined to the desk for the last few months.

Herbert Evison: Uh hmm. You'd like to get out and inspect a little, huh?

Vincent Ellis: Yeah. I like to get out in the field once in a while.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Nobody can blame you for that. Well, anything you'd like to add?

Vincent Ellis: Well, I feel that the National Park Service has been wonderful to me. It's a great organization. It's been awfully good to me—

Herbert Evison: Well—

Vincent Ellis: —and the main thing is the people that's in it.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Vincent Ellis: I couldn't be where I was if I hadn't had a hell of a lot of support from my supervisors and a great deal more from the people that worked with me in Florida.

Herbert Evison: I think that's a that's a very fine concluding statement, Vince. Shall we call it a day?

Vincent Ellis: I think we should. I'm getting hoarse.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, I'll tell you this, you have given me a wonderful tape and I certainly do thank you for having been willing to give me this time to get you on tape and also and here's that good old National Park Service personal relationship to get acquainted with you.

Vincent Ellis: That is right. Well, Herb, come back in about ten years when I'm retired and pick up the next ten.

Herbert Evison: ((chuckles)) I'll look forward to that, Vince, and thank you much.

[END OF SIDE 2 OF TAPE #50]

[END OF INTERVIEW]