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Ernest Connally
May 17, 1973

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison
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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Oral History Interview
With Dr. E. A. Connally
By Mr. Evison
Reel 191

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PROCEEDINGS

[START OF INTERVIEW]

Herbert Evison: This is May 17, 1973. I'm Herb Evison. This morning I am in the recording studio up in the penthouse tower in the Interior Building in Washington, D.C. and with me is a pretty brand new acquaintance, Dr. Ernest A. – now, is that Connally?

Ernest Connally: Connally.

Herbert Evison: I wondered where you put the accent.

Ernest Connally: Just Connally.

Herbert Evison: Who is an associate director of the National Park Service, the one concerned with professional services, and I noticed just running through the Interior Department directory this morning, Doctor, one thing that struck me as I did it was the very free use nowadays of the title "director." In my day in the Park Service that ended 15 years ago, there was one director. (Laughter.)

Herbert Evison: There were regional directors; now they're all "directors, such and such a region." And I notice you have under you no less than four directors of offices.

Herbert Evison: Now, as I suggested, let's start this off by getting some of the bare facts of your biography on the tape. When and where were you born and tell me something about the family you were born into?

Ernest Connally: Well, that's a subject of which I can speak at almost unlimited length. (Laughter.)

Ernest Connally: I was born on November 15th, 1921, in Limestone County, Texas, and my family had been in Texas for some time. I was born right near where my grandfather was born, and I grew up there. The Connally family – it's a good Irish name, but you notice we spell it with an "a" at the end.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Ernest Connally: C-o-n-n-a-l-l-y, and all the Connallys I know who spell the name that way are related. It's an old Irish name and that is the closest Anglicization to the old Gaelic spelling, and they came to Virginia in the 17th century, and they were Anglicans when they came and so they moved along from Virginia to North Carolina and Georgia and Texas and that's where you find most of them now, in Georgia and Texas, except a lot have gone on farther west, of course.

Herbert Evison: What did your father do?

- Ernest Connally: My father was a local businessman. His ambition had been to be a United States senator. We had a distant cousin, a cousin of my grandfather's, who was a United States senator. But he went off to World War I and he's a man of rather small stature and he couldn't qualify to be an officer in the new machine gun companies that were being organized. So, he was a bandsman in a field artillery band. (Laughter.)
- Ernest Connally: And he came back – he didn't continue in the university; he went into business and was in the furniture and undertaking business in a small town and then later, moved to Waco. Well, this small town where my father was in business is called Groesbeck. It's a small courthouse town in east-central Texas. After World War II, he moved to Waco and was in insurance and other business there and he's still living in Waco. My mother's still living, too. Waco's just 35 miles away from this county where my mother was born and where her father was born and where I was born and so on.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, how – did you have brothers and sisters?
- Ernest Connally: I have two sisters; one lives in Waco. Her husband's in the public schools. He's the principal of a high school in Waco and another sister, a younger sister, whose husband was a professor of economics and they moved to California and lived in San Marino.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, now, how about your own education?
- Ernest Connally: I finished high school in 1939 and entered Rice University in Houston, Rice Institute, it was called then, and started the study of architecture. I'd been interested in architecture all my life, ever since I was a small boy, which was rather curious, because there weren't any architects in the family. Most members of the family were either cotton farmers or businessmen or lawyers.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, yeah.
- Ernest Connally: And then I transferred though to the University of Texas, where they had a stronger architecture school and then World War II interrupted my education before, I was through, and I served four and a half years in the Air Force and was in intelligence in the Air Force and came out as a major in 1946.
- Herbert Evison: Did you start in the Air Force as an officer?
- Ernest Connally: No, I went as a cadet at the _____ Field in Colorado. That's the only place where they train non-flying cadets. Everybody else was in something else, but I was an aviation cadet, but in a technical field. I was the only one they had, in that _____ Field.

- Ernest Connally: So after – then I had to finish up my professional training in architecture. By that time, I was very much interested in the history of architecture, so I spent a year traveling in Europe and studied one summer at the University of Florence and then went to graduate school at Harvard, graduate school of arts and sciences, and took the Ph.D. degree in art history, specializing in the field of the history of architecture. Then I started an academic career and from 1952 to '55, I was an assistant professor of architecture, teaching the history of architecture, at Miami University at Oxford, Ohio and from '55 to '57, I was an associate professor of architecture at Washington University in St. Louis, at the same time George Hartzog (PHONETIC) was there, but I didn't know him at that time. (Laughter.)
- Ernest Connally: Then in '57, I went to the University of Illinois at Urbana and in 1961, I was promoted to full professor. My wife gave me a ring in 1961. That was our tenth wedding anniversary, my 40th birthday and my promotion to full professor. They all happened about the same time. (Laughter.)
- Herbert Evison: Big day.
- Ernest Connally: It wasn't all in one day, but it was all in close enough time that her economical nature allowed herself to give me a present to celebrate those combined occasions. (Laughter.)
- Herbert Evison: I think we ought to interrupt here to get on the record who this girl was you married and when and do you have any children?
- Ernest Connally: Yes, yes, we do. I met my wife – my wife's from Wisconsin, from Wauwatosa, which is a western suburb of Milwaukee. Her maiden name was Janice Wegner, W-e-g-n-e-r. She had graduated from the University of Wisconsin in art history and was a graduate student in Radcliffe and I was a graduate student at Harvard, and we met up there and married while we were there, and we were married the last year I was completing my residence at Harvard.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Ernest Connally: That was in 1951 that we married, and we have two children, a daughter named Mary, who was born in '57 and a son, John, who was born in '59.
- Herbert Evison: Fine.
- Ernest Connally: Both of our children were born in Illinois while we lived there.
- Herbert Evison: Okay, let me interrupt you to ask you were you at Illinois during any of the time that Bill Carnes (PHONETIC) was on the faculty there?
- Ernest Connally: Yes, as a matter of fact, I had something to do with Bill Carnes coming there.

- Herbert Evison: Oh, did you?
- Ernest Connally: Yes, because I had met him before. I knew who he was, and he knew who I was, because I had had associations with the Park Service since 1952, doing various things, so when Bill Carnes came to – was considered for the post of chairman of the department of landscape architecture at Illinois, he got in touch with me and I remember, after his discussions with the dean and with the faculty committee, we got together one night in the bar of the Lincoln Hotel in downtown Urbana and talked about it and he asked me for some advice about how he ought to approach them and I said, “Just tell them what your salary requirement is and see what they’ll do.” (Laughter.)
- Ernest Connally: And he did, and they met his requirement, so he accepted the job.
- Herbert Evison: Which reminds me that Bill and I were out there at the University of Illinois together for a kind of a seminar a year, two or three before he went out there, with a bunch of landscape architectural students, discussing the Mission ‘66 program.
- Ernest Connally: Yes. I remember his association with it. Now he was chairman while I was still there. I was in the department of architecture, and he was in the department of landscape architecture, but we were there at the same time and had been at each other’s houses.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, I would expect there to be a fairly close association anyway between the two groups.
- Ernest Connally: Yes, there was.
- Herbert Evison: Okay, let’s go ahead with that professional history.
- Ernest Connally: Well, I was at Illinois until 1967. That’s a total of a little over ten years there. After I was made full professor, I was away one year as a Fulbright lecturer out in Australia, lecturing on historic preservation and the history of American architecture. The Australians were interested in getting a national program started.
- Herbert Evison: What a natural you were for the National Park Service.
- Ernest Connally: Thank you. (Laughter.)
- Ernest Connally: They thought that the American experience would be more relevant than the British experience, because the age of the countries was closer together, the size, and kind of monuments, closer together. So that was a good year. Then the last year I was in Illinois, I was a member, an associate member, actually, of the Center for Advanced Study. That meant I had a year to do anything I wanted to, and I was actually working on

some books and that's when George Hartzog interfered with my life, and I ended up coming to the National Park Service in that year.

Herbert Evison: I'm very curious as to just how that contact was established, yes.

Ernest Connally: How that happened? Well, let me go back just a little bit because I have known the Park Service now for over 20 years, although I've only been fulltime employee of the government since 1967. That will be six years this June, six years next month.

Ernest Connally: When the Independence National Historic Park was being established, at first it was called Independence National Historical Park Project.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Ernest Connally: And they were simply doing the initial study and reconnaissance of the buildings there and all that and the whole area still had all of those old buildings and it was a rather decayed neighborhood with some rather seedy occupants and grimy, deteriorated buildings. Charles Peterson (PHONETIC) was resident architect at Independence and Riley (PHONETIC)—

Herbert Evison: Ed Riley.

Ernest Connally: Ed Riley – I was trying to think of his first name – Ed Riley, who is now at Colonial Williamsburg, was resident historian there. Well, Pete needed some help on the – in the study of the historic buildings, so he wanted to have a historic American building survey team there which would, at the same time, do work that would be necessary for the park. So, he was looking for someone to head the team and he wrote to Kenneth Conant (PHONETIC), who was one of my professors at Harvard, asking for any suggestions and Kenneth gave him my name. Actually, as a member of the team, but I was already farther along, and I wasn't interested in being a draftsman for the summer. But I wrote back that I'd be glad to supervise the team for you. (Laughter.)

Ernest Connally: So, I was supervisor of that team. That was my first work with the Park Service.

Herbert Evison: That would have been in what year?

Ernest Connally: 1952.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Ernest Connally: And I believe I'm correct, it was either '51 or '52. It was '52, the summer of '52. And that summer, I made the first restoration study I ever did for the Park Service and that was for the Dr. MacElvane (PHONETIC) house, the one that now has the park headquarters in it and years later, they

finally got around to carrying out that work and they found the drawings and they called me up from Philadelphia and talked to me about it and anyway, they had had some further evidence and they went ahead and carried out that restoration a number of years later.

Herbert Evison: Oh. Is that just around the corner from the regional headquarters?

Ernest Connally: Yes, there on—

Herbert Evison: I was in there briefly a couple of years ago.

Ernest Connally: Yes, it's either Walnut or Chestnut Street. I get those two streets mixed up.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Ernest Connally: But it's part of the row of houses where the park headquarters is.

Herbert Evison: Yes, yeah.

Ernest Connally: Then after that, I wasn't so much interested in doing work for the Park Service. I was more interested in writing, and I was still finishing my thesis at Harvard and writing on a different subject and was traveling some in the summers. But I told Charles Peterson – he had asked me several times if I would be interested in doing more work for the Park Service in the summers and I said, "Yes, but I'm not interested in any routine assignment, just to supervise a group of draftsmen. If you have some project that has something more to it than that, some scholarly interest, where I can make some contribution that would feed into my own career, too, I'd be more interested."

Ernest Connally: So, the next time I did anything for the Park Service was in the summer of 1956 and this was when Mission '66 was getting started and the project I worked on there was the study and restoration of Andrew Johnson house in Greenville, Tennessee.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Ernest Connally: And I went down there with a group of three students to help me and we made measure drawings of a number of buildings in town, but especially those concerned with the national historic site that was just being developed and I did the research and did the historic structure's report on the Andrew Johnson house. We made the preliminary drawings for the restoration of that house. Near the end of that season, Hank Judd (PHONETIC) came down, moved into Greenville. He was going to be the architect who was actually going to carry out the restoration and he carried on that research in the physical evidence in a more detailed way from the point we had been able to take it in three months' time and then supervise the actual restoration.

- Herbert Evison: Now the restoration has been—
- Ernest Connally: It was finished that next year and it's considered now one of the most accurate 19th century restorations in the United States. We found an answer to just about everything there, either through documents or through physical evidence and Judd carried that on and refined it and it was really carried out to a very fine point. That's one of the best restorations in the Park System, I believe. This is what I've been told. But now that I look back on it and I've seen more of some of the others, I believe that's probably true.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah?
- Ernest Connally: Then in 1958, I headed a team which was located at Salem, Massachusetts, at Salem Maritime National Historic Site.
- Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.
- Ernest Connally: And I had a group – had an architect for an assistant and six student architects there and we made a lot of HABS drawings in the town of Salem, but also some very fine drawings of the Customs (PHONETIC) house in Salem and other buildings in the site and I completed a documentary history of the Salem Customs house. There had been one done already by Ed Small (PHONETIC), who had been detailed there, but it was more historical and purely chronological. It didn't have the architectural analysis in it.
- Ernest Connally: This was supposed to have been published, but Pete couldn't – or at least written up properly – but Pete couldn't get the money for a contract for me to carry that on and write it up so that my findings of that summer have never been put together and put in the files of the National Park Service.
- Ernest Connally: But we did determine the original paint colors of the building and determined the policy to carry out a very limited restoration there.
- Herbert Evison: I should imagine that material that Ed Small got together and the material that you got together would supplement, complement, each other perfectly.
- Ernest Connally: They do. In fact, Ed had most of the material, but if I recall it correctly, he hadn't seen all of the documents and I came down to Washington to the archives and we got microfilms of all of them that pertained to the building and we went back through it, so we could date the changes and additions. On the basis of those findings, we decided not to try to restore that building to any period in time. It would have been a very difficult thing to do.
- Herbert Evison: The Custom house?

- Ernest Connally: Yes. But just to leave it the way it was, with the changes that were made in the middle of the 19th century, but to restore the paint colors wherever we could, to their original appearance. So, the building doesn't look now exactly the way it did in either 1819, when it was finished, or in 1854 or so, when some changes were made. But it does have the right character. The colors are the same that they were in both times.
- Herbert Evison: It's been a long time since I've been in Salem. As I remember it, the Custom house is a handsome one.
- Ernest Connally: Oh, it is. It's a very good building. It's a good New England building.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah.
- Ernest Connally: The interesting thing about working on federal buildings is they're so well documented.
- Herbert Evison: Yes, I suppose so.
- Ernest Connally: Yeah, because they had to get permission for everything and federal records are well-kept, so you can – it's the most completely documented building I ever worked on, from 1833 on. Earlier than 1833, there weren't but sketchy records, because the Treasury Building here in Washington burned in 1833 and the original drawings and other records of the building apparently, presumably, were in the Treasury Building and were lost. But from 1833 on, the record's very complete. We even found that shelf on the wall cost 85 cents to build, you know, to put up, in 1880 and things like that. (Laughter.)
- Ernest Connally: Then in 1959, the next year, I made a preliminary survey for the Cape Cod National Seashore, for the historic buildings. I had to make the base map, worked with Hodge Hanson (PHONETIC) and Ben Howland (PHONETIC) and a group from the old EODC, the Eastern Office of Design and Construction, which was headed by Ed Zimmer (PHONETIC) in those days.
- Herbert Evison: Yes.
- Ernest Connally: I think '59 was the year of that first survey. What I did was take some USGS maps with proposed boundaries of the park – the boundaries hadn't been set at that time – and to go through there and make a visual estimate of the number of historic buildings, that is to say, the number of traditional Cape Cod houses, and that is easy to do, because building stopped on the Cape along the middle of the 19th century and there was very little more building until very recent times. So, it's easy to recognize the old buildings.

- Ernest Connally: And we came up with a list of about 80 or so, preliminary list, and that helped determine the boundaries.
- Ernest Connally: No, I'm sorry. That wasn't with Hanson and Howland at that time, because we came back later in '62 and I had a group of eight working for me, and we made more detailed record of those buildings. That's when they were working on the historic base map. That was in the summer of '62. That first summer, it was just me. I tell you, it was very interesting, too, because there was a lot of opposition at first on the part of the inhabitants of Cape Cod. They didn't want any national park. Good old Yankee independence, you know. They didn't want any national park there. They were afraid the government would buy their houses and they said, "Oh, our historic houses, our ancestral homes can't be handed on to our children." Ancestral homes, bosh. They were all New Yorkers and people like that who had bought them in recent years, you know. (Laughter.)
- Ernest Connally: But even so, they wanted to keep them. Eisenhower was President then and a lot of these people were writing in rather hysteric letters to the President. Of course, they came over to Interior and then hit the Park Service and so the planners for the park who – well, the planning team hadn't even been formulated. They were just in the stage of gathering material for legislative data, you know, and they had been thinking, of course, in terms of dunes and beaches and things like that and hadn't thought much about the historic houses.
- Ernest Connally: So, Connie Worth said, "Well, we better find out what we've got up there," and Tom Vint (PHONETIC) who was the chief of design and construction in the Washington office – I'm not sure whether he was division chief or assistant director, but –
- Herbert Evison: Division chief.
- Ernest Connally: I think he was a division chief. But he was the one who had the job of doing that. So, I had gone to work in Philadelphia that summer for Charles Peterson up with Ed Zimmer and Charles Peterson in Philadelphia to rewrite the manual for the Historic American Building Survey when this crisis on Cape Cod broke. So, they said, "We've got to have somebody go up there and do this." They didn't want to send a Park Service man, because Park Service people were anathema at that time on Cape Cod and they didn't want to send anybody in a marked car, a government car. So, they looked around for somebody expendable and they discovered they had this professor who was sitting up there and so Zimmer says, "Your assignment has changed. Go down to Washington and see Mr. Vint and

you're going to go to Cape Cod for us." And I said, "Okay, if that's what you want." (Laughter.)

Ernest Connally: So, I came down. Tom Vint got us together in the old conference room, spread out the maps, took a big chaw of tobacco, and we figured out about where I ought to make my survey. So, I went to Cape Cod just as apparently a tourist and hired a Hertz car. The biggest Hertz car bill I ever had, I remember, \$700 for that first one. But at least we didn't have a car with Department of the Interior on it. And made that survey and then that was the basis for the planning.

Ernest Connally: Then they got the boundaries adjusted and in '62, I was back there with this group of eight, an architect and a secretary and six draftsmen, and we recorded those buildings in as much detail as we could and made the final list, about 85 of them. The boundaries had been set by that time and the park was established and Bob Gibbs (PHONETIC) was on hand as the first superintendent.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, now, that figure—

Ernest Connally: Excuse me. That's when Hodge Hanson and Ben Howland were there working on the historic base map.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah. That figure of 85. Were these historic houses that lay inside of the finally determined boundaries?

Ernest Connally: That's right.

Herbert Evison: I see.

Ernest Connally: Traditional Cape Cod houses within the boundaries of the park.

Herbert Evison: Of course, by 1962, the seashore had been authorized then.

Ernest Connally: It was established then.

Herbert Evison: Established.

Ernest Connally: It was authorized and had just been established and Bob Gibbs was on hand to supervise and that was the last work that I did for the Park Service. I had advised them on one or two other things. So, there was a gap of five years between '62 and '67, the year that I came up here, and I think I can tell you pretty quickly how that happened.

Ernest Connally: Ronnie Lee (PHONETIC) had heard me speak at National Trust meetings and I had met Ronnie at National Trust meetings and I think he rather liked me and thought that I had something to offer. He liked the combination of history and architecture that I represented and the fact that I'd had previous experience with the Park Service and we served together

on a special committee to advise the city of Salem, Massachusetts, what they should do in the way of preserving their historic buildings under urban renewal and this was just before the passage of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act in '66 and just before the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act and this special committee that we were on, to advise the city of Salem, developed certain principles and certain approaches that finally were incorporated in the legislation, in HUD's legislation. That was sponsored by the National Trust. So, when the new Historic Preservation Act was passed in 1966, or as it became – earlier in '66, when it became evident that after the hearings, that that bill was going to pass, well, George Hartzog, who'd been director only two years, was faced with the problem of how to reorganize himself to take on the additional responsibilities that would come to the National Park Service. So, he consulted with Ronnie Lee about how to do that.

Ernest Connally: The result was that a special committee was appointed to advise him on the organizational mode that he should adopt and the members of that special committee, at the invitation of the director, were Ronnie Lee, who was former chief historian and assistant director and regional director of the National Park Service—

Herbert Evison: My old boss.

Ernest Connally: —and J.O. Brew (PHONETIC), who was Peabody professor of anthropology at Harvard, representing archaeology, Ronnie represented history and myself, representing historic architecture. We three were the committee.

Ernest Connally: We pointed out to George the old Tom Schneider (PHONETIC) report from back in 1935 when Hickey (PHONETIC) sent Schneider to Europe to find out how he should organize to take on the responsibilities that the Historic Sites Act of 1935 would bring to the Park Service. We went back to that and pointed out that it called for a separate bureau. That's really the way it's done normally. But the problem here is to do it within the National Park Service, so there should be some separate and identifiable body within the Park Service that handles these matters, and our recommendation was essentially the same. There ought to be some separate and identifiable body, a kind of sub-bureau, within the Park Service, that has this clear identity because there's no place in the federal government that you could see in the name of a bureau or agency or anything that had clear responsibility for the preservation of historic sites and monuments. So, the result was the recommendation that he establish an office of archaeology and historic preservation, which would handle the register, the national register, the new grants program, together with the

responsibilities in the division of history, the division of archaeology and a new division of historic architecture. That was supposed to be a little monuments office that would actually have an architect's office in it that would do nationwide all the research and planning and supervision for the restoration of historic structures within the National Park System,—

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Ernest Connally: —as well as the external programs.

Ernest Connally: So that office was finally set up early in 1967. When it was going to be set up, then Hartzog was faced with a problem of finding somebody to head it up. Now, I had got a feeling, as these discussions had gone along, that they might want me in the Park Service, might make an offer to me, that Hartzog might, in connection with historic architecture, since we were recommending this be set up as a new division, and that I might be offered the job of chief of the division of historic architecture.

Ernest Connally: I was thinking about that in my mind and decided that I couldn't afford to accept a post like that. I was a professor in the University of Illinois, an associate member for the Center for Advanced Study, was doing things I liked, and things were going very well for me where I was. So, I had gone over that in my mind and decided I wouldn't be able to accept, and Ronnie Lee and I were staying at the Cosmos Club, and we talked about that one night, the subject came up. I told him that I didn't think I would be able to accept the division chief's job if something like that were offered and Ronnie said in a very gentle way and patted me on the arm, he says, "We would be thinking of assistant director." (Laughter.)

Ernest Connally: So, I began to think about that a little differently. So that's what George offered. Well, we didn't call it assistant director, because of this principle that we thought was very important of having it identified as an office on its own, that would have its own nomenclature, and so that's why my title, although the rank was assistant director, the title was first chief, office of archaeology and historic preservation and then director of the office of archaeology and historic preservation. That was something of a model for all these offices and everything,—

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes, uh-huh.

Ernest Connally: —where everybody now, all the assistant directors have got to be called directors of offices – or a lot of them have, anyway.

Herbert Evison: Part of this almost constant evolution in organization and nomenclature together.

Ernest Connally: Yes. Well, it carried on farther than I ever thought it would and farther than I think it should have, because a lot of the offices that are headed by men called director aren't – don't have the responsibility of assistant directors. They aren't quite at that level. But these were the first of them.

Ernest Connally: At the same time, a natural science committee had met, and a report had been given to Hartzog from the National Academy of Sciences.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Ernest Connally: That report's in 1966 and they recommended a similar apparatus for natural science. So, when my office was set up, the office of natural science was set up at the same time and Dr. Starker Leopold (PHONETIC) of the University of California, was named chief of that office on a part-time basis.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I remember that.

Ernest Connally: And when he found he couldn't serve, well, Bob Lynne (PHONETIC) succeeded him as a full-time chief of that office, now called director.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, now, that comes under you as associate director.

Ernest Connally: Now it comes under me as associate director.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, now, for how long a period were you the – what did you say your first title was?

Ernest Connally: Was first chief and then director.

Herbert Evison: Of the—

Ernest Connally: Office of archaeology and historic preservation.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Now, that was one – that is just one element in the group of which you are now the top man.

Ernest Connally: That's right, that's right.

Herbert Evison: When did your changeover to associate director come?

Ernest Connally: That was in February, 1971, February of last year.

Herbert Evison: You've been associate director for a little more than two years now.

Ernest Connally: Oh, I'm sorry. It was February of '72.

Herbert Evison: Oh, a little over a year.

Ernest Connally: February of '72, just a little over a year.

- Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, now, I hadn't realized that, until you told me now, that you had had all this earlier tie-in with the activities and the people of the—
- Ernest Connally: Been over 20 years now, off and on.
- Herbert Evison: —National Park Service. You're kind of an oldtimer, even though you didn't come on the permanent payroll until '67. Now, one thing that I notice is a physical separation of some of the elements of your set-up. That is, Tommy Gilbert (PHONETIC) and Gowans (PHONETIC) and others are over there at L Street and the rest of your people, I think, are all in this building. I'm curious to know whether that physical separation proves to be much of a handicap.
- Ernest Connally: Well, it's always a handicap to have people who report to you and whom you need to see fairly often off in some other part of the city. What happened, you know, George Hartzog, in 1971, even earlier than that, had a continuing study on organization of the National Park Service and this was done by Kittelmen (PHONETIC) and Associates in Chicago. Kittelmen's recommendation was that there should be – the professional work of the National Park Service ought to be represented at a higher level than ever before, because professional studies, professionalism in general, becomes more and more important in all kinds of organizations.
- Ernest Connally: We had many discussions about this in regional directors meetings and I attended – usually attended the regional directors meetings. That was before George had quite so many assistant directors, when I was head of OAHP. And we talked about that. Well, I thought the concept was basically good. I criticized in some ways the way the office was conceived. I thought it was limited in authority because it didn't have the right relationship to the service center, which is our main professional arm, and _____, not knowing that I would end up in that job, you know.
- Ernest Connally: But the principle was finally approved by the department very wholeheartedly in the assistant secretary's office the assistant secretary for management's office and the Kittelmen recommendation was modified slightly, so that instead of deputy directors, three deputy directors, he ended up with four associate directors. That's the way the department was willing to approve it. So, then Hartzog did away with personal assistants, executive assistants and all of that, and he had his deputy director, Tom Flynn (PHONETIC), and his four associate directors and those six met every morning that George was in town without any intermediaries, and he only had four men to look to. Everything in the National Park Service happened under those four. So, they only had four buttons to push.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest Connally: And really, it was a good system and began to work. So, when that was set up, I didn't know who George had in mind for it. I knew that he was talking about recruiting on the outside and he had one candidate, whom I happened to know, and the man was able in a professional way, but rather limited in his point of view and a terribly abrasive personality and I told George, I said, "I think this would be a big mistake to appoint him." So, he checked with some other people and got a similar reading. So, one night, I was down in my office, and I was just getting ready to go home – it was near 7:00, about the usual departure time around here – and George asked me to come up to his office and he says, "Now, here's what we're going to do. You're going to be associate director for professional services." He didn't say, "Go home and discuss it with your bride," or anything like that. He just said, "Here's what we're going to do." And I moved upstairs the next week and it's been like that ever since.

Ernest Connally: So, the offices that I was given were Bob Lynn's office, natural science, my former office, and we put Bob Utley (PHONETIC), former chief historian, in as director of the office of archaeology and historic preservation. Those were the two main ones and then an office of long-range planning and new program development, which is new. That was a new combination and George Gowans was put in charge of that and that has Tommy Gilbert's group in there and developing new program and an office of design quality, which is a monitoring function over the service center and an office of professional publications.

Herbert Evison: Now, an office of professional publications. That's pretty new, huh?

Ernest Connally: That was just started this last year.

Herbert Evison: As an old chief of information who was very much involved with the publications program of the Park Service, I'm wondering how that program ties in with the other publications activities of the National Park Service.

Ernest Connally: The division's a very easy one to make, Mr. Evison. The old division of publications still exists and it's responsible for the interpretive materials, the literature, that's available to the visitor in the park.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Ernest Connally: The office of professional publications is a book publisher and it's headed by the former director of the Harvard University Press, whom I recruited, and his job is to take the professional studies that embody the results of our professional work that should be recorded in permanent form, you know, that is, books of a more technical and scientific nature, that would

go in the Library of Congress and places like that, in university libraries. That's the distinction between the two.

Herbert Evison: Well, now, of course, in the past, there have been some professional publications, the archaeological series, for instance, which I think three or four items of that were produced during my period as chief of information. Those, I suppose—

Ernest Connally: Those are in professional publication now.

Herbert Evison: —have been pulled out of the—

Ernest Connally: Because the old division of publications was getting overburdened, they had too much to do. (Laughter.)

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Of course, I can't help smiling over that statement, because we had a very extensive publications program in my time, and I think we had three employees in there.

Ernest Connally: Yeah.

Herbert Evison: And we have at least a dozen now and I think probably more, up at the Harpers Ferry Center.

Ernest Connally: Right, and the office of professional publications has about three employees now, but yet we turn out about 12 books a year.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Are they Government Printing Office publications?

Ernest Connally: These usually go through the Government Printing Office, and I think they should, although it's difficult to work with the Government Printing Office because this information is all in the public domain, you know. It belongs to the public and it's our accounting to the public and this is – so you can't copyright it and we'd have problems showing preferment to individual publishers if we gave anybody an exclusive right to publish things that belong to everybody.

Herbert Evison: Of course, you have the example of, I think, Harper and Row, having done one of the historic site survey books.

Ernest Connally: That's right.

Herbert Evison: But I notice that didn't get beyond one.

Ernest Connally: No, and they didn't promote that very well. They only sold 4,000 copies.

Herbert Evison: Oh, is that so?

Ernest Connally: And the books that have gone through GPO have sold around 30,000 copies. (Laughter.)

- Ernest Connally: And they're sold cheaper, too.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah.
- Ernest Connally: The great stinger is that those things aren't usually available in bookstores because GPO won't give the bookstores the 40 percent discount.
- Herbert Evison: No. That's one of the handicaps under which any government publication has to labor, that most retailers are not interested in a 25 percent discount, something I used to scratch my head over a lot.
- Ernest Connally: They really ought to do it because those things ought to be more easily accessible to the public, so that the public has a chance to see them before they buy them. This way they have to buy them sight unseen off of a list.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah. Well, I am sure that you could talk all morning and all afternoon about the activities of these various offices and an office isn't a branch; it's just an office, is it?
- Ernest Connally: An office is supposed to be something more than a division.
- Herbert Evison: More than a division.
- Ernest Connally: But some of them aren't very large, aren't as big as divisions, but they're given that designation because their function is considered important enough that they should. Now actually, I think maybe there have been too many offices set up as such and I think the new director's going to try to consolidate and pull it back in somewhat.
- Herbert Evison: Yes. Well, you know, I can remember when the Park Service consisted of about eight branches, each, except for plans and design, each headed by an assistant director and—
- Ernest Connally: But that's eight assistant directors, right? We don't have many more than that now. It would be the people who have the equivalent rank of assistant director wouldn't be more than about ten or 12.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah.
- Ernest Connally: But there are the four associate directors and Ron Walker, the new director, looks to the associate directors pretty much the way former directors looked to the assistant directors because this does pull things together and a little tighter, smaller, number at the top.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah. You four plus Tom Flynn comprise something very similar to what Connie Worth used to call his "squad," which was, in that time, his division heads, of which there were only, I think, six or seven, not more than that. I was the exception in that I was not a division head, but I attended this broad meeting. But it was a very compact group and I

suppose would keep the director pretty well advised as to what's going on and get his thinking.

Ernest Connally: Yeah, that's the way that works now. Of course, the new director has a personal staff, too, which is fairly large, larger than any previous directors have had.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I understood so. I even heard references to it as the palace guard. (Laughter.)

Herbert Evison: There's one – well, actually, there's so many things that suggest themselves to me as I go through this list. John Corbet (PHONETIC) for a long time was the chief archaeologist of the Park Service. Now I notice there's in your set-up a chief for archaeology and anthropology. I'm curious to know just what the functions of an office like that are.

Ernest Connally: That division's the same. It's the same division that we knew as a division of archaeology. But most of the professional archaeologists in the United States in American archaeology have degrees, university degrees, in anthropology and archaeology is simply a specialty within anthropology.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Ernest Connally: So, under strong pressure from the archeological and anthropological scientific and academic community, we felt obliged to change the name to recognize what the discipline really is.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest Connally: And so, we just added the word anthropology to it. That's just a change in nomenclature.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Now, there's another in here that has interested me immensely because the thing started in my day in the Park Service and that's the national register of historic sites or historical landmarks, I guess it's called, isn't it?

Ernest Connally: Well, it was originally the registry of national landmarks, historic landmarks, and that was the genesis and nucleus of what we now call the national register of historic places, because the act in 1966 provided for the expansion of the register by the inclusion of sites of the state and local significance. Previously, the registry included only the national landmarks, which by definition are places of national significance, and the act of 1966 broadened the Historic Sites Act of 1935 to provide for the protection of historic and cultural resources all across the country, even if they were of local significance, and provided for grants program to assist in their preservation.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. Well, now, this now includes also the natural landmarks, does it? Or is that a separate register separately maintained?

Ernest Connally: No, no, that's a separate register. That's a separate register and separately maintained and we are proposing legislation now that would give that register the same – the contents of that register the same legal protection that the national register of historic places has.

Herbert Evison: I was going to ask about that, if you could tell me that, because I was under the impression that the legal justification for going into the natural landmarks was a rather slender reed on which to rest a program like that.

Ernest Connally: It was a very broad interpretation of the Historic Sites Act of '35, actually.

Herbert Evison: Yes, that was the impression that I got. That was really _____ when I was interesting myself in it.

Ernest Connally: But legislation is being drafted now to be submitted as an administration proposal.

Herbert Evison: Yeah.

Ernest Connally: With the blessing of the new director to—

Herbert Evison: Well, I wouldn't suppose that anything like that would encounter any very serious opposition anywhere along the line anyway, because—

Ernest Connally: I wouldn't think so, but it provides for a grants program, too, to aid states and localities in acquiring these places, so that they can be protected and preserved, and we have word from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation that land and water conservation funds can be used for that purpose.

Herbert Evison: Well, I was wondering if this wouldn't be some sort of extension of the land and water conservation fund.

Ernest Connally: We'd have to do it through the land and water conservation fund. Otherwise, we'd have great problems on the Hill, I think, in getting authority for still another grants program.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah. Now, since I happen to know Tommy Gilbert pretty well and I have taped him on two different occasions, very interestingly, I am interested in your commentary on that particular activity under your supervision. New program development. I'm wondering what you can tell me about it, looking at it from an oversight position.

Ernest Connally: Well, I'm not sure that this is the best arrangement that we have, but this is the organization that was adopted by Hartzog and recommended to the department and approved by the department. The idea is that new programs new thrusts, like Tommy's, would be nurtured in the

Washington office under professional services until they're mature enough to become operational, when they'd be regionalized then.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Ernest Connally: And Tommy's operation is at that point, I think, now. It is becoming regionalized already, and that really should be, I think, a matter for park operations now rather than new program development.

Herbert Evison: Yes, I would think so, yeah. Of course, that word "program" covers a multitude of sins.

Ernest Connally: Anything you want to put in it.

Herbert Evison: And I'm wondering what, in this case, it really – a program to me would mean an activity of some kind.

Ernest Connally: It does, usually, that's right.

Herbert Evison: A land acquisition program, which, of course, does involve some activity, but I'm thinking more of something like your environmental education and development of these environmental study sites and so on and I suppose that it's that kind of program, really, that's implied in here.

Ernest Connally: Well, that's the main one that's there now and all of that, the NEED Program, National Environmental Education Development and NEEL, National Environmental Educational Landmarks, and the STEP Program, which we conduct through an agreement with the United States Commission for UNESCO, as part of that. STEP means Students Toward Environmental Participation. And an agreement with the Peace Corps and a whole lot of things that have just been consummated, some of those have just been consummated in this last year since I've been associate director. So that is developing pretty rapidly. Well, those are programs, because they're sort of action oriented.

Ernest Connally: The other one that we're working on mostly now is transportation studies, to find means alternate to the private automobile for moving visitors through the parks.

Herbert Evison: (Inaudible).

Ernest Connally: And we have over a million dollars in operating money now in the budget that's before Congress now for trial systems which have already been in operation at Grand Canyon and Everglades and Yosemite and elsewhere and \$2 million to study others. That's quite active now. This we do in cooperation, of course, with the regions and with the service center. But the focus for that's in Washington now.

- Herbert Evison: And of course, I think in that, you're involved in one of the major steps toward accomplishing the basic purpose of the National Park Service, which is protection of the values of the areas _____.
- Ernest Connally: I think so. These – yes, we've had quite extensive testimony, both in the appropriations hearings and in the oversight hearings, in our legislative subcommittee, about our approach to this problem. In general, I believe the committees endorse what we're trying to do.
- Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah. Well, I would like to just turn you loose at this point. I don't mean turn you loose from me, but turn you loose to offering any comment that you want on any phase of this work that you give oversight to.
- Ernest Connally: Well, I think the two key offices are the offices of natural science and office of archaeology and historic preservation because we have a dual mission to preserve the historic resources and the natural resources and we need some kind of service wide coordination and stimulation of all the studies that are necessary for us to understand the resources we have and how to preserve them and use them and still hand them on unimpaired and so those two, really, are the two basic scientific scholarly fillers that undergird our management decisions.
- Ernest Connally: I could cite any number of cases where scientific studies have been made that show exactly what the phenomenon is, so that management can make an informed decision. For example, the studies of erosion of beaches and dunes has been completed now and in some places like Cape Hatteras, we see that what the natural process is and that is you go out and artificially try to stabilize barrier island, that you're really fighting all natural processes and you'll actually change the depth of the sea at the point where land and sea meet. You will thereby change the action of the waves, you'll change the habitat for forms of sea life, you'll do a lot of things that would be contrary to our usual objectives. So, management is going to have to make a decision.
- Ernest Connally: Now, to do that, then, you'd have to spend great sums of money, periodically moving in sand and all of that, see? But if you allow the over wash and allow these islands to shift and move, as they do in a natural state, then you're working with nature, and this is what the scientific report shows. Well, it indicates to the scientific mind that this is the decision, this is the alternate that management should adopt. Then management will have to grapple with the problems of private property ownership on those islands and how you handle that and in the long run, it would probably be cheaper to buy them all up and let the island operate naturally, than it would be to go in there and spend millions of dollars

every year hauling a lot of sand that's going to be lost, see? This is the kind of thing.

Ernest Connally: Now we're going into much more sophisticated techniques now, Mr. Evison, and these developments are so recent that they might not have come to your notice. We now are cooperating with the – the NASA, the National Aeronautic and Space Administration, and they have fantastic facilities which are available to us for high-level, very high-level, aerial photography in color to a very fine resolution, so you can see details, great details, and in different colors that will indicate different forms of life and land features and also remote sensing from earth-orbiting satellites. Now we have one for archaeology, primarily for archaeology, but it'll touch all disciplines, which is at the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque, especially for Chaco Canyon, and the regional directors were horrified when we set this up and gave it service wide priority. They really got after me because it cost \$160,000 a year, and that first year, it took about all the money for archaeological investigations in the parks.

Ernest Connally: But it has to be a model. We had to do it sometime, you know, and the results there are simply fantastic. We are discovering resources that we have under our guardianship that we didn't even know we had.

Herbert Evison: Yes.

Ernest Connally: A whole network of manmade causeways that lead from Chaco Canyon to Aztec ruins, great ceremonial causeways, and you can't see those on the ground very easily when you go out and make the usual reconnaissance.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Ernest Connally: And we're finding all kinds of things that happened to the environment there through these new very sophisticated scientific techniques. Now, we have a test facility at Picayune, Louisiana, and Slydale (PHONETIC), Mississippi, called the Mississippi test facility, which is made available to us by NASA and is supervised by the chief scientists, although it's located in one region, so we've got some administrative problems. But it will have to be a service wide center.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest Connally: But this earth-orbiting satellite will go over every spot on the earth once every 18 days and where there's high-level remote sensing, with a very fine resolution in the results. We can really begin to see everywhere what's happening to our coastlines, exactly what the processes are, how much they're moving, and this kind of thing. We can see changes in vegetation patterns in upland regions and many other things like that that you can't see otherwise. So this – those two are illustrations of the kind of

long-range continuing highly sophisticated research efforts that we have to make, even though they're not directly at the moment applicable to any immediate management problem. We have to go on and do that and then we've got this whole reservoir of knowledge that explains phenomena all over the place that we didn't know about before.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. I'm curious to know how such arrangements as that were brought about? Who first realized that you might go to NASA and get this kind of extraordinary service and extraordinary results?

Ernest Connally: Well, we came by it through the geological survey because NASA and geological survey had done some cooperation, so the geological survey was the focal point in Interior for that and there was some memorandum or something that came and so the archaeologists plugged into that right early and then the natural scientists did and the Mississippi test facility was done at the stimulation of NASA. The space program was curtailed somewhat and they had this test facility and they had such an investment there that NASA recognized that it was too valuable for the national good simply to disband and disburse all that equipment, and so they were rather interested in finding other uses for it and Senator _____ of Louisiana said, "We've got a use for it," and he talked to some of our people on his own and he added on the money on his own for us to put our natural science program down there and then died. And then he died right after that and the thing was in the balance for a while as to whether we would get to keep the money and continue. But the assistant secretary made the decision that we could keep that on and continue. So, it has great potential for long-range, ultimately highly useful, bodies of information.

Herbert Evison: Yeah. You may know that around the time that Connie Worth left the service and even partly in connection with it, there was a good deal of criticism of the National Park Service for rather ineffectual efforts at research, especially in the natural sciences. I assume that the director of the office of natural science is the guy who has his hand on the strings of such natural science research as the Park Service is doing or is concerned with.

Ernest Connally: He has had, but two years ago, the director, George Hartzog, regionalized all our field operation. So, the archaeological centers, which had previously reported directly to the chief archaeologist, now report to the directors of the regions in which they're located.

Herbert Evison: Oh, do they?

Ernest Connally: Yes. And so the money is allocated to the regions and the same has happened in the natural science program and this has made the chief archaeologists and chief scientists very unhappy here in Washington,

because they find that it's difficult to coordinate an overall service program that way, where they have to deal with regional directors who aren't themselves scientists and who sometimes question the validity of a lot of the expenditure, because they don't see immediate pragmatic results.

Herbert Evison: Yeah, yeah.

Ernest Connally: So of course, they'd like to get their hands back on the overall program.

Herbert Evison: I imagine they would. (Laughter.)

Herbert Evison: Anything else you'd like to add here?

Ernest Connally: Well, I don't know. I could go on so long, I don't want to take more than the proper amount of time. The functions of the Denver Center concern me a good deal. I have general monitoring responsibility for them, but the line authority is placed under the associate director for operations. So, it makes it a very awkward and difficult arrangement to go trampling around in the service center to review certain projects and try to monitor – set and monitor certain standards of quality into design when those people don't really report to me. Actually, I think this is a proper part of professional services. It's different from line management but in the sense that line management goes to the regions and to the parks it is a professional operation, it is our planning design and construction office.

Ernest Connally: So, I think there's some problems connected with its administration that have to be resolved. The regional directors are generally very dissatisfied with the service center. I think what we have to do there is reduce the service center to the best size – I'm not sure exactly what that is – to do some work ourselves in certain things that many professional firms can't do for us. But otherwise, to try to contract for it, have a basic stable in-house capability that is recognized as such, as a line item in our budget, so that when we prepare legislative support data, that's covered by that line item.

Ernest Connally: Then the construction appropriation can really be charged without such fantastic overhead to the projects and some of those can be done in-house or on contract.

Herbert Evison: All of that Denver operation is part of the overhead of construction.

Ernest Connally: Yes. And our overhead's too high. It's around 40 percent. (Laughter.)

Herbert Evison: Terrific.

Ernest Connally: It's over 40 percent.

Herbert Evison: Well,—

Ernest Connally: Well, I think that covers the main things that I am concerned with now, unless there are some other questions about recollections of personality. This is for some historical purpose, I suppose, these tapes are.

Herbert Evison: Yes, yes. What I would like to do, I'm going to cut this off now as a completed interview, for which, incidentally, I thank you immensely.

Ernest Connally: Well, it was a pleasure to be with you.

[END OF TAPE 191]

[END OF INTERVIEW]