

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

Jack McDaniel



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OPEN FOR RESEARCH



Interview Conducted and Edited by:
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Senior Historian
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents. i

Statement of Donation. iii

Editorial Convention. v

Introduction. vii

Oral History Interview. 1

 Early Life. 1

 Coming to Reclamation. 2

 Hoover Dam is Historic. 3

 Guide Program. 4

 Standard Tour. 6

 Terrazzo Floors. 9

 Security at Hoover Dam. 11

 Medical Assistance. 14

 Elevator Maintenance. 15

 Medical Issues that Arise on Tours. 16

 Visitor Program Budget. 17

 Hollywood Comes to Hoover Dam. 18

 Special Tour Groups. 22

 Tour Schedules. 23

 Guide Workforce. 24

 Dam Maintenance Affecting Guide Service. 26

 Personal Experience in the Guide Service. 27

 Managing the Guide Service. 29

 The Dome. 30

 Tourist Experience at the New Visitors Center. 31

 Visitors Center's Impact on Guide Service. 32

 Tour Guide Experiences. 34

 Guide Service Employment. 36

 Questions Visitors Ask. 37

 Technical Tours. 39

| | |
|---|----|
| Explaining a Leaking Dam. | 40 |
| Tourists Getting Lost. | 41 |
| Tourists Interests. | 43 |
| People are Absolutely Awestruck. | 45 |
| Managing the Visitors Center. | 48 |
| Repeat Business. | 50 |
| Finding the Right Guides. | 51 |
| Dealing with the Heat. | 52 |
| Dam's Ventilation System. | 54 |
| Accommodating Foreign Tourists. | 55 |
| Controversy Over the Visitor Centers Cost. | 57 |
| Working with the Park Service. | 59 |
| Shuttle Buses. | 61 |
| Handling RV Parking. | 62 |

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INTERVIEWER:

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Editorial Convention

A note on editorial conventions. In the text of these interviews, information in parentheses, (), is actually on the tape. Information in brackets, [], has been added to the tape either by the editor to clarify meaning or at the request of the interviewee in order to correct, enlarge, or clarify the interview as it was originally spoken. Words have sometimes been struck out by editor or interviewee in order to clarify meaning or eliminate repetition. In the case of strikeouts, that material has been printed at 50% density to aid in reading the interviews but assuring that the struckout material is readable.

The transcriber and editor also have removed some extraneous words such as false starts and repetitions without indicating their removal. The meaning of the interview has not been changed by this editing.

While we attempt to conform to most standard academic rules of usage (see *The Chicago Manual of Style*), we do not conform to those standards in this interview for individual's titles which then would only be capitalized in the text when they are specifically used as a title connected to a name, e.g., "Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton" as opposed to "Gale Norton, the secretary of the interior;" or "Commissioner John Keys" as opposed to "the commissioner, who was John Keys at the time." The convention in the Federal government is to capitalize titles always. Likewise formal titles of acts and offices are capitalized but abbreviated usages are not, e.g., Division of Planning as opposed to "planning;" the Reclamation Projects Authorization and Adjustment Act of 1992, as opposed to "the 1992 act."

The convention with acronyms is that if they are pronounced as a word then they are treated as if they are a word. If they are spelled out by the speaker then they have a hyphen between each letter. An example is the Agency for International Development's acronym: said as a word, it

appears as AID but spelled out it appears as A-I-D; another example is the acronym for State Historic Preservation Officer: SHPO when said as a word, but S-H-P-O when spelled out.

Introduction

In 1988, Reclamation created a History Program. While headquartered in Denver, the History Program was developed as a bureau-wide program.

One component of Reclamation's History Program is its oral history activity. The primary objectives of Reclamation's oral history activities are: preservation of historical data not normally available through Reclamation records (supplementing already available data on the whole range of Reclamation's history); making the preserved data available to researchers inside and outside Reclamation.

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For additional information about Reclamation's history program see:

www.usbr.gov/history

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**Oral History Interview
Jack McDaniel**

Storey: This is Brit Storey, senior historian of the Bureau of Reclamation, talking to Jack McDaniel, who is the Head of the Guide Service at Hoover Dam. We are in the offices at Hoover Dam on May 3, 1994, at about two-fifteen in the afternoon. This is tape one.

Mr. McDaniel, could you tell me, please, where you were born and raised and educated and how you came to work for the Bureau of Reclamation.

Early Life

McDaniel: Born and raised in Lorain, Ohio, which is just west of Cleveland, in 1929. I joined the United States Air Force in 1948, retired from the United States Air Force in 1968 at the Nellis Air Force Base here in Las Vegas. Other employment from that time until June of 1979, when I came to work here at Hoover Dam in the Guide Service.

Storey: What did you do in the Air Force?

McDaniel: Personnel and administration, Personnel Sergeant Major when I retired.

Storey: And you retired from Nellis and you liked the area, I take it?

McDaniel: Yes. We came here from Germany. My oldest son at that time was in the fourth grade

in school and had been in seven schools, and we decided it was time to settle the family. I had my twenty years in. And we have subsequently raised our children, and now our grandchildren, right here in the Las Vegas area.

Storey: You were living in Las Vegas, or where were you living at that time?

McDaniel: Yes, living in Las Vegas.

Storey: Why did you come to Reclamation?

Coming to Reclamation

McDaniel: It was something different, I think, at that time. I had friends that had retired from Nellis Base Force, also, that were employed out here that I saw occasionally, and they encouraged me to try this. They thought I might like it, and they were right. I tried it and I do like it, and I'm still here.

Storey: Why did you like it?

McDaniel: It's a challenging thing. It's an interesting thing. Hoover has got to be one of the most interesting structures that has ever been completed in this country. The tourists are wonderful, by and large. It's just very hard to describe, but very enjoyable and very satisfying.

Storey: What do you find challenging about it?

McDaniel: Oh, it's ever changing, ever changing. When you deal with people, it's always an ever changing situation. Of course, now with the advent of the new Visitor's Service [Center] and the facilities, the center and a parking garage, it is another whole new avenue approach. It appears that we're going to really go out and market this. We've always had tourists. We've never had to go out and try and gain more tourists. It seemed that they always managed to find them. We'll real close to 30 million people now that have gone through the dam. But we feel that with the opening of the new Visitor's Center that we will be able to handle probably close to 2 million visitors a year.

Storey: What do we handle now?

McDaniel: We're averaging about 750,000 right now.

Storey: Really? Do we know anything about why people stop and all that kind of stuff?

Hoover Dam is Historic

McDaniel: It's historical. Everybody knows about Hoover Dam, it seems. I think it had to do with the time it was constructed, during the Depression. Any of us that were born or lived at that time can always remember it, because it was the most important thing that was going on in the early thirties. And, of course, they taught it in school. I don't think they teach it so much nowadays with our children, but my generation, everybody knew about Hoover

Dam.

Storey: When you came out here, who were you working for?

McDaniel: When I first came to Hoover?

Storey: Yes, in '69.

McDaniel: '79.

Storey: '79, excuse me.

McDaniel: The gentleman was Jim Sweeney [phonetic], who was the man in charge of Visitor Service at that time, James Sweeney and Duell Sullivan [phonetic].

Storey: What kind of training did they give you?

Guide Program

McDaniel: The training has been pretty constant. We were given literature, reading materials. We followed qualified personnel on the tour routes for two days. We had a day break, and we came back on the third day and started taking tours. Experience is very good. And we basically use that same theory today. We basically train our new people the same way today.

Storey: In those days, how many tours did you do a day?

McDaniel: About five. We average five.

Bureau of Reclamation History Program

Storey: Is that what it is now, too?

McDaniel: For the most part, especially right now because of our current manning situation, which is not desirable, and the guides are working more than they would normally. But normally we do four and a half. Well, we'd say four and a half. We'd say nine tours in two days, basically [unclear]. Some days are more, some days are less. We know what our busy days are. Our busy days are consistent with the check-in and check-out of the hotels in the Las Vegas area. Saturday is the busiest day, Tuesday is the second-biggest day of the week, and Wednesday is the third-busiest day of the week.

Storey: Because people are coming in to and leaving Las Vegas?

McDaniel: Coming in to and leaving Las Vegas, with those days being days that they're here.

Storey: Do we have any statistics on where our visitation comes from?

McDaniel: No. Las Vegas Visitor's Bureau and Convention Center keep a lot of statistics. They claim the majority of the visitors into the Las Vegas area are from Southern California. So they therefore would make up a good share of the people we get. However, Vegas is a destination point from all over the world now, so we have people here from all over the world, bar none, every country.

- Storey: Did you live in Las Vegas in '79 when you started working here?
- McDaniel: Yes.
- Storey: Do you still live in Las Vegas?
- McDaniel: I live in Henderson, which is right next door to Las Vegas.
- Storey: You moved a little closer.
- McDaniel: Yes. Well, mileagewise it's exactly the same.
- Storey: Really?
- McDaniel: Yes. To their side here to the far side there, the mileage is exactly twenty-six miles one way. It's been that way all these years now.
- Storey: Could you walk us through one of those tours that you might have given in 1979 with me.

Standard Tour

- McDaniel: Sure.
- Storey: How long would it have been, to start?
- McDaniel: The tour would have been thirty-five minutes. We still operate on that premise today, thirty-five minute tour. We have three stops on the tour. The tour is assembled 528 feet below the street level in the Visitor's Gallery. It's assembled with three elevator groups of people, which normally consists of between

sixty-five and seventy people.

Storey: And when you say the Visitor's Gallery, you're talking about the tunnel—

McDaniel: Tunnels in the dam.

Storey: Walking out from the dam toward the downstream face of the dam.

McDaniel: Right, to the power plant. The first stop on the tour would be the power plant balcony, overlooking the Nevada wing, with the eight units. The units are described with regards to their height, their width, weight, their r-p-m, the amount of power they can produce. At that time, one unit could provide the average requirements for about 65,000 people. Today the units have been uprated, and that figure has gone up to about 95,000 people.

The size of the wing, 650 feet long, 8 stories tall, 72 feet wide. They pointed out the Peldon water wheel, which was our in-house unit. It provides power that we use here on the project. And the overhead cranes, the two 300-ton overhead cranes that can be yoked together, which creates a lifting capacity of 600 tons. It requires that much capacity when you pull a rotor out of one of these units. The rotor weighs 550 tons.

From that point, the tour went outside, alongside the tail race, looking back up at the face of the dam. The transformers were explained. The cantilever towers were

explained. The tunnel, overhead cableway, the tunnel being the tunnel that allowed access, vehicular access, from up above down below. Then, of course, the face of the dam. At that point, you were 560 feet below the top of dam. That, incidentally, is five feet taller than the Washington Monument at that point. There's four louvered window-like openings in the dam which are used for ventilation purposes. They're visible. And, of course, then the center section, which houses the control room, the administrative offices, the machine shop, and so on.

The tour then at that time, and today also, proceeded to one of the added tunnels, which is a tunnel inside the canyon wall. It proceeded into one of the main diversionary tunnels that we used to divert the water when they constructed the dam. And at that point, through a series of pictures and graphs and training aids, the actual construction process was described. The particular aspects of the project, such as the spillway system and what it did and how it was used; the penstocks, or water pipe, their size, their thickness, their weight; the wages of the workers that worked on the project. Reference was made to the 16,500 people who worked here during the five years of construction. And a question-and-answer period.

From that point, you departed and went back up on the balcony on the Arizona side to the Arizona Visitor's Gallery, and back up to the top of the dam.

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- Storey: Up the same elevator you came down?
- McDaniel: No, a different elevator. Went in one and came out the other.
- Storey: So that's the normal route?
- McDaniel: Right, and we use it to this day. Occasionally we'll have some variations, but those are the three basic points on the tour. We do at times conduct special tours for dignitaries, and, of course, those people we do take to other places—that is, like the control room, which is not normally available to the general public. We'll take them down into the shaft gallery and down into the induction gallery and places like that. There are areas that are, as I say, not available to the general public. It's what we call a hard hat tour, because we are in hard hat areas many times. So we do have variations. We're flexible.
- Storey: The image that the visitors get must be an interesting one, because you have the tunnels and their particular area are all terrazzo floored and they're beautifully lined and all that kind of thing. That is not the case in the rest of the dam, is it?

Terrazzo Floors

- McDaniel: No. The power plants are terrazzo, just the power plants themselves, the tunnels, the visitor's galleries in the dam. There are some areas on the eighth floor, the control room, that are terrazzo. It's interesting, but the

books indicate that when they constructed the dam, they had tourism in mind, and it was built with these particular appointments to accommodate tourists.¹

Storey: So it was done originally?

McDaniel: Originally. It appears to be in the original plans.

Storey: And I believe you told me earlier that you met the man who supervised the work.

McDaniel: The laying of the terrazzo. I did have a chance to meet him. I think that was about ten or twelve years ago. He was from Italy. He assembled a crew of people that were expert in terrazzo, and they took the contract and did the terrazzo floors. Back in 1936 is when the majority of the terrazzo floors went in.

Storey: With the Indian designs that are in them?

McDaniel: Yes, the Southwest Indian designs, basket weaving and so on and so forth.

Storey: Did he happen to tell you anything about the size of his crew or anything like that?

McDaniel: No, he didn't. I've read it. It was not that

1. The terrazzo floors and color schemes inside Hoover dam were originally designed by noted Western artist Allan Tupper True. For more information, see Andrew H. Gahan and William D. Rowley, *The Bureau of Reclamation: From Developing to Managing Water, 1945-2000*, Volume 2 (Denver: Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012), 957-959.

large of a crew. I'm thinking in terms like twelve or fifteen people. It really wasn't that many. They knew exactly what they were doing. The terrazzo itself is interesting. Let me see if I can recall. There are six or seven different-colored rock that is polished in the terrazzo that came from different parts of the United States. Each and every one of the continental United States has contributed something to this structure, without exception. That appears that back during the Depression it was one of the few money projects that existed at this time, and it was spread around to every one of the forty-eight states. There's something here from every one of them, some of them more predominant than others. Of course, cement, concrete, the majority of that came from right out in this part of the country. But each and every one of the states is represented someplace. Part of the terrazzo came from Kentucky, part of it from Missouri, part of it from Southern California, I think part of it from Texas. It's been a long time since I've gone off into terrazzo, it really has. You're the first person that's asked about it for a long time. It's amazing how much you can forget.

Storey: Tell me about security. What kind of problems do visitors, do our tours pose for Reclamation in terms of maintaining security?

Security at Hoover Dam

McDaniel: I've been here fifteen years, and I recall only two instances where we've had to request

security come into the dam because of tourists. And in each time, each of those two instances, the people involved had been drinking, and drinking very heavily.

We find that with sixty-five people on a tour, if you have sixty of them that are very interested—and invariably they are or they wouldn't be here—they will control anybody else. They'll tell them to be quiet. They'll tell them to shut up. They'll tell them they better be quiet. It's really interesting to see how this—we worried for a while about some of our girl guides. They're good, very good. But we got a little concerned, especially in the later hours in the summertime, what they might be exposed to. But it was for naught, because the tourists were not going to let anything happen or anyone disrupt these tours. They just don't do it. It's beautiful, it really is.

Security, other than on the tour route, it's like a small, small city, town. Probably they spend more time with traffic control than they do anything else. They have had other instances, criminal activity, breaking and entering in vehicles and something like that. But they're a good group of people. They're a real fine group over there. They contribute.

Storey: You mentioned security. Do we have our own security force in Reclamation?

McDaniel: Oh, yes. Yes, we do. Yes, we do, right here.

Storey: I'm a little confused, because my understanding

is Reclamation does not have law enforcement authority.

McDaniel: Well, our officers do. They issue citations. Citations end up in the district court consistent with the state in which they were written. In other words, if a citation is written in Arizona, seeing how the middle of the dam is the state line, it'll show in district court in Phoenix. If a citation is written on the Nevada side, it'll show in district court in Las Vegas.

Storey: Now, when you say district court, are we talking a federal district?

McDaniel: Federal district court, just like the Park Service. We're completely surrounded by Park Service. I understand our security people have a mutual agreement with not only the Park Service, but also with the Metropolitan Police Department in the Las Vegas area, Henderson Police Department, Boulder City Police Department, Mohave County Sheriff's Department. But to be specific, you'd almost have to talk to those people, but I do know they work hand in glove with them. I do know that we are in contact with them. "We," "they," our police department, if you will. It happened three or four weeks ago with a very hot pursuit out of Arizona. They notified the people here and requested the assistance here to stop these people. They carry guns. That's enough for me. (laughter)

Storey: Guns do give you authority, don't they?

McDaniel: Guns do. They'll make you take notice. All of these people, all of our security people now are ex either military or police department experience, retired. Our chief of police is retired from the New York City Police Department. He is also a recent graduate, last year, from the F-B-I Academy, which is the ultimate in police training. So they're very well trained.

Storey: I understand we also have to have some medical assistance around the dam.

Medical Assistance

McDaniel: I don't know if we "have to have" is a good word.

Storey: We do have?

McDaniel: We do have. We do have.

Storey: Maybe that's the way.

McDaniel: Yes. We may have something that says we have to. I've never seen it. I've never thought of it that way. Yes, we have very highly qualified registered nurses, registered nurses versus L-P-N [Licensed Practical Nurse], not to criticize one or the other. Basically, any time that we have tourists in the dam, we will have a registered nurse on duty and we will also have an elevator repairman on duty, and our elevator repair people are probably some of the best-trained elevator people that you can find.

Storey: This is somebody who works for Reclamation?

Elevator Maintenance

McDaniel: Yes, they are employees. They are electricians here in the dam. One of the two gentlemen we have working elevators right now—in fact, both of them. We have two—were here and with the contractor when these elevators were installed. Our original elevators were Otis. They've been replaced once, about four years ago, by Otis, so the current elevators we have are still Otis elevators. But our elevator people here now worked with Otis when these were installed. We have eight. Six, I'm sorry. We have six elevators on the project.

Storey: Of course, we have to maintain the elevators in any case because of the offices and so on in the dam.

McDaniel: They have access. They can come down to Lower Portal Road and get to their offices. They do not have to come in from the top of the dam. The only people on this project that have to have the elevators in order to function is the Guide Service. We can't function without them. However, the project can function without them.

Storey: So, really, we have eight elevator persons largely because of the visitors.

McDaniel: Yes.

Storey: It would be inconvenient, would it not, to do

all the [audience] stuff and all the checking in the dam without the elevators?

McDaniel: You know, I was trying to think faster than you were talking, and I should not have done that. Would you repeat it for me?

Storey: Well, basically I'm saying, there are functions that our people need to do within the dam that are helped by having the elevators.

McDaniel: Oh, yes. Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. I skipped ahead of you there and then lost you. Now I lost my train of thought. Forgive me.

Storey: That's okay. What kind of problems and issues come up that cause us to keep the nurses available?

Medical Issues that Arise on Tours

McDaniel: Oh, probably the most repeated situation we'll see is severe claustrophobia, and claustrophobia, different people react different ways. We've had people also that have been epileptic. We've have people who have become ill. Unfortunately, I have seen one death of a heart attack on a tour route. The individual was not pronounced dead here. The nurses, through C-P-R, managed to sustain the individual until at least we could get him up to the Boulder City Hospital, but he did die.

The nurses also handle our employees. We have close to 300 employees, and for any on-the-job injuries, they're just one step up

ahead of the first-aid training, if you will, and they can administer anything, so from that standpoint.

The train of thought that I lost a few minutes ago was, the nurses and the security, they're budgeted, to a degree—and the same way, the elevator repair people—into our budget, our budget being the Guide Service. Currently we are charged—we, the Guide Service—for one nurse of the two every day they work. We're charged for 25 percent of the police force, figuring that they do contribute to our tours. And we are backcharged, if you will, through the accounting system for the elevator repair people. So they're all in our budget, if you will.

Storey: Well, that raises an interesting question. Where does your budget come from?

Visitor Program Budget

McDaniel: They project it, just like we do. We're working—what is it. They're working on the '98 and '99 budgets now, and even into 2000.

Storey: But is it general administrative expense money? Is it reimbursable money?

McDaniel: No. Now, I'm not that up on that aspect of it. I do know it's in there. I do know that our people are paid out of appropriated funds. They do appropriate the funds for us to be paid. And I'm sure what they do then, all of

our people are employees. The nurses are Bureau employees, the elevator repair people are employees, and then it's an inner-accountability of who is performing the work for whom and how to charge it.

Hollywood Comes to Hoover Dam

We just did—completed it this morning—a movie. *Beyond Desire*, I think was the name of this one, John Forsythe. We had people involved with that. They filmed three days, and those three days were from basically six o'clock at night till six o'clock in the morning. We had people with them at all times, and we will back charge the time to that movie company.

Storey: Where were they filming?

McDaniel: They were filming on the end of the Arizona ramp. They filmed in the Arizona wing of the power plant. They filmed in the Induction Gallery on the Arizona side, which would be Level 1, as far down as you can go, and also in the Shaft Gallery, which is Level 2, on the Arizona side.

Storey: So it wasn't all indoors?

McDaniel: Those were all indoors, and then they filmed at the end of the ramp. It was some mystery, I think. I was involved with them for a while, but then I got away from it. One of our people took care of them.

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- Storey: But six in the evening until six in the morning is very much away from the visitors.
- McDaniel: True, it is. It still is a "visitor function," I guess. *Universal Soldier* was the latest big picture they did here on top of the dam, where people walked down the face of the dam, down a long dry site. *Return of the Man From U.N.C.L.E.* was done here. *Alien From Outer Space* was done here. These are just the ones I can remember right off.
- Storey: Those are the ones you were involved with?
- McDaniel: Not really involved with. The Guide Service was involved with, let me put it that way. Some of them I was with more than I was with others, but we were all involved in it.
- Storey: So the Guide Service would have been sort of escorting?
- McDaniel: Yes. We would escort the people. They also serve as protectors for Reclamation's property.
- Storey: Which can be a problem, I gather.
- McDaniel: Well, it could be. We've never had a big problem with it, though, because we put people that have been with us, and it's another learning experience. We get people involved with film crews with somebody that's been exposed to them, and then they in turn train somebody. Film people are a little different. I don't really know how to describe them. They're just a different group of people.
-

Storey: Do you happen to know who would be talking to them about what they can and can't do and all of that sort of thing?

McDaniel: Usually this is discussed the first time they come down to site the dam. We ask them what they have in mind. The crew that left today, the first thing they said they wanted to do was film at the end of the Arizona ramp and they wanted to blow up a car, and we said, "You will blow up no cars in this project." That was all there was to it. They did not blow up a car. They can go someplace else and blow it up and dub it in or whatever they do in Hollywood. But we do have the final say-so.

They sign an agreement. They come out and they look. They say they are interested. We say, "Here's an agreement. We need your signature. We want a million dollar bond liability. It will cost you so much per day, depending on how long you're going to be here and how many people are going to be here."

This is comparatively new for us. We got so we were spending so much time without reimbursement that it was determined that we could get reimbursement for the time we spent, so basically that's what we're doing now.

Storey: And that's what you mean when you say, "It will cost you so much per day"?

McDaniel: Yes.

Storey: It's out-of-pocket expenses?

McDaniel: We give them a bill, usually ahead of time. They tell us how long they're going to be here. We estimate, and then also maintain the option to back charge if we run over the estimation.

Storey: It must cause a little heart failure when you hear about people wanting to walk down the face of the dam and things like that.

McDaniel: Well, those two gentlemen are expert special effects and stunt people. That was the same where they jumped out of a helicopter up here in the lake, and the same when they did *Cherry 2000* here. They had people down in the spillways. But these were expert climbers and expert rope people. And we had the bond, which cleared us, and we supervised to make sure they did no damage to any government property, or Reclamation property, in any way, shape, or form.

The one crew left here, and we called them back, made them come back and clean up a mess they had left over in the Arizona side. But that was part of the agreement. They had agreed to put it back the way it was before they got here, and we will hold them to it. The contract is very explicit in what it says and what they will do and what they can't do.

We will do, Thursday, a commercial. It's a political commercial. We will allow the

dam to be used as a backdrop. We will have no government employees involved in this because it has to do with the upcoming elections. We had provided this once before, and, of course, if you've done it once, you can't very well not do it again. But here again, it's all been explained exactly what the limitations are, and they have agreed to it, and we can't ask for any more.

Storey: Are there other groups that come out here and do special things?

END SIDE 1, TAPE 1. MAY 3, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 2. TAPE 1. MAY 3, 1994.

McDaniel: [Unclear] group that comes out. I'm trying to remember when it was. I think it's in April or May. Maybe they're due. They're probably due the 15th of this month.

Special Tour Groups

We get a lot of charter groups, charter bus groups from New Jersey, Ontario, Canada, New York, all over the United States, all over the United States. That would be a group, because they are a charter group. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, schools, colleges.

We give complimentary tours to any student, regardless of age, provided the group is being handled by a qualified instructor, professor, and/or teacher, and we do extend that courtesy. Maybe that's why we've perpetuated ourselves, too, all these kids that

we get from school. We are a great focal point for the Clark County School District. Every spring, when it's time for field trips, here they come. We get them every spring, just hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of kids.

Storey: Can they make reservations or something?

McDaniel: No. We operate strictly on a first come, first served basis. We always have. The reservation possibility is being considered in the new Visitor's Center. We do have a program, computerized program to handle the reservations. If we do go to that concept, it appears that it will be in our off-peak hours. In our peak hours, we don't need reservations, because we've got all the people we can possibly handle. But we may offer reservations on, as I say, non-peak hours to enhance more.

Tour Schedules

Storey: What are the peak hours?

McDaniel: Usually between eleven and four.

Storey: So before eleven is a better bet?

McDaniel: Before eleven, and, of course, then in the winter months, after five. The winter months. The summer months. The summer months we're open eleven and a half hour day, whereas we're open seven and a half hour day, seven and a quarter hour day really, in the wintertime.

Storey: So you're open in the winter from nine until four-fifteen?

McDaniel: That's correct.

Storey: And in the summer?

McDaniel: Eight to six forty-five is our last tour, which means that tour's coming out and they're clearing it about seven-thirty. So we've worked from eight in the morning till seven-thirty in the evening.

Storey: What are the dates for the summer?

McDaniel: The Saturday before Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Storey: Through and including Labor Day?

McDaniel: Right. The end of this month, we'll go to our long day schedule, and then we'll come back off of it the day after Labor Day.

Storey: How many guides do you need to handle that effectively?

Guide Workforce

McDaniel: We have not been in a "normal" mode since they started the upgrading because of the maintenance in the power plant. The upgrading is completed, basically. They're into a warranty check on the units now. But it's going on for about ten years.

Last summer, with the maintenance program and everything else, we had reached a requirement of about thirteen guides per day, and to maintain thirteen guides per day on a seven-day work week, you need about nineteen or twenty, to give the days off. I think we started last summer with twenty-one guides, four guide supervisors. Also, in Visitors Service at the current time we have five bus drivers, because we run the shuttle buses until the parking garage is completed, and we have what we call our dome, which shows the movie on the construction of the dam. So we do have the three different entities within the Guide Service at this time.

This summer, we're looking at, there is still maintenance going on. We would like to man not less than eighteen or nineteen guides, which would give us twelve and thirteen per day. Of course, this allows for no leave and it allows for no sickness, which is really running tight.

Storey: Do you use summer hires to supplement in the summer?

McDaniel: Yes, we do. In the past, up until this year, we had five schoolteachers that were available to us when school was out. They were all high school teachers in the local area. Two of them resigned this year because the school system now has put a requirement on them to get more education in their off time, if you will, which they need because they are paid proportionately, so we can't fault them when

they say they're going to. So we had two of them resign this year, so I have three this year. I have ten guides right now, and I've got an announcement that just closed the 20th, and we're in the process of hiring nine more.

Storey: We just had, what, four or five guides for—

McDaniel: Well, I had five people which directly impacted the guides.

Storey: And they retired?

McDaniel: They retired, yes, because what happened is that you had to replace the supervisory level which came from the guide level, and so it was a direct impact on the guides.

Storey: You mentioned maintenance a couple of times. What kind of maintenance are we talking about, number one, and number two, how does it affect the Guide Services?

Dam Maintenance Affecting Guide Service

McDaniel: The maintenance I was referring to was the operating of the units. This was a ten-year project where they took—

Storey: The generating units.

McDaniel: Generating units, where they took the original units, dismantled them, rewound them, reset the stators. They took the units and uprated them, where they used about 10 percent more water, but we realized about a 40 to 50

percent increase in the electrical output for that unit, which means we were able to produce far more power. Our power rating went from 1,300 megawatts to 2,080 megawatts, so that was the difference.

When work is done, heavy work, heavy maintenance work, or rebuilding work on the main generators, the rotors must be taken out of them, and they have one place in each wing where they can sit these 550-ton items, and that does impact our tour route. They are doing construction this year in one of our added tunnels. They're adding a new platform. But with the very construction, with the sound, the echoing, the noise level, because they're building the new one, you can't use the old one. It's one of those things. It'll be nice when it's done. It should be done by the 24th or 25th of this month, which will be in time for our summer schedule.

Storey: How long did you serve as a guide walking tours through the dam?

Personal Experience in the Guide Service

McDaniel: About five years. I did it for about five years.

Storey: Around '79 to '84?

McDaniel: Roughly, yes.

Storey: Then what did you do?

McDaniel: Now that you ask me, I need to think about

that. It wasn't that long. It was four years.

I was then a Desk Supervisor for almost eleven years. Last June, I came over as Assistant Manager, and the Manager retired last week, so that's what's involved.

Storey: So you became the Manager?

McDaniel: Well, yes. Of course, we also yesterday went into the team concept, which made me not a Manager but a Team Leader, another new reinvention of government.

Storey: On your first day on the job. Was that the first day?

McDaniel: Yesterday was the first day. Well, really Sunday was the first day. I did work Sunday. And yesterday was when they started the changeover here at the plant.

Storey: Tell me more about what you did at the desk for eleven years.

McDaniel: We are the ones that tore the tickets and supervised the cashier and were responsible for the tickets accountability and the money and were responsible for the orderly assemble of the people and dispatching them on tour with qualified guides, teaching new guides, scheduling, approving leaves, maintaining time and attendance for payroll, if you will. I was almost eleven years in that capacity.

Storey: This is for all the guides?

McDaniel: Uh-huh. When you say all of the guides, the job covered all of the guides, the payroll and the leave and everything.

Storey: I'm having difficulty understanding what the manager did.

Managing the Guide Service

McDaniel: Oh. Okay, I see where you're coming from. You know, that's awful hard to describe. There is not a want for something to do. They had one person in there for quite a while, and it was just a never-ending telephone calls and scheduling and leaves and coordinating and coordinating. The manager is the checkpoint between the tour routes and the maintenance people, or the tour routes and the custodial people. The manager, more than anything else, is the coordination point or center point, I do believe.

Storey: The project interacts with the tour service?

McDaniel: Absolutely.

Storey: And then you were a guide supervisor for those eleven years, is that right?

McDaniel: Uh-huh.

Storey: So then the guide supervisor really had direct supervision of the guides?

McDaniel: Yes. Performance reports included, yes.

Storey: The manager, then, only had to do the guide supervisor.

McDaniel: The guide supervisors. The manager did the five bus drivers, the manager did the two people in the dome, and at one time the Manager also did the cashiers, which we had three cashiers.

Storey: So the people in the dome are stationed there fairly permanently?

The Dome

McDaniel: The dome has been here since 1989, '88. I've got to stop and think. The dome came. It was here for a while. It left. It went to New Orleans.

Storey: It went to New Orleans for the World's Fair.

McDaniel: Then it came back. And the World's Fair was '88.

Storey: I don't remember, but that's something someone's who's interested can check on.

McDaniel: Okay. The dome will close. We estimate that will close now the 30th of November this year. The new Visitor's Center has a theater that is in itself three separate theaters. Each theater will seat 126 people, and the seated spectator will then rotate with inside of the cylinder which makes up the three theaters. So you'll sit in one place, and the whole platform will turn from the one you're in to two other

theaters. It'll take a thirty-minute trip, experience if you will. That will come in with the new exhibit after the first of the year.

Storey: What's the new Visitor's Center going to do for the visitors to Hoover Dam?

Tourist Experience at the New Visitors Center

McDaniel: It's going to present this theater concept. The Bureau, of course, has gone to a conservation and environmental mode. It will display, through pictures and photographs and exhibits, the Southwest and what's been accomplished with the controlling of the water in the Southwest and how it's developed the Southwest and how the structure in itself did contribute, in fact, to the whole growth of the Southwest. Without this structure, we store all of the drinking water for San Diego right here in Lake Mead. Not all of the drinking water for Los Angeles comes from here, but a portion of it does. Fifty-six percent of the power we produce goes to the Metropolitan Los Angeles area currently.

But this will have displays on ecology, on environmental conservation. They will have the flags of the seven states that make up the Colorado River drainage system. They will have displays. They will have, also, the step-off point for the tours into the dam will also be from that new Exhibit Center.

We're quite anxious. We think it's going to be quite a display. We really do. It's

unusual in that the entrance will be below road level. The basic entrance to the building will be down an escalator after you've come out of the garage, which will go under the main highway to enter into the Exhibit Building. It's an interesting thing. It's going to be very nice, very nice.

Storey: What's the new Visitor's Center going to do for the members of the Guide Service?

Visitors Center's Impact on Guide Service

McDaniel: They're all looking forward to it. It's going to allow us to enhance the image, to portray the image. I'm fishing for words now. I know what I want to say. All of the guides are really looking forward to this. We think that it's going to do so much more for our customer, or the tourist, if you will, and that's, of course, our basic function is to have them have a memorable trip here. That's what we want.

We know that you can give an outstanding tour, but if at the end of the tour you put thirty-five people in an elevator that's designed for twenty, they don't remember the tour, they remember the elevator ride. Of course, this is the type of thing that we—anything that will enhance what we do, anything that will make us and with us, the Bureau will look better is great, and that's our job.

Storey: I think you mentioned a few moments ago that the new Visitor's Center will more than double

our capacity to bring visitors through. Could you explain how that will happen?

McDaniel: Basically, we have larger elevators, and that in itself tells the whole story. We dispatch right now three tours. I beg your pardon, two tours in twenty-four hours. I am way off. I'm glad you can edit this. Currently we can dispatch two tours in twenty-four minutes, each tour consisting of about seventy people.

The new Exhibit Center, with the larger elevators, in the same twenty-four minute time frame, we will send three tours, with an average of eighty-five people per tour. So we are going to increase the size of the tour about 25 percent, number of people on the tour, and we will increase the number of tours by one-third, 33 1/2 percent. By sheer statistics alone, this will give us the capability to handle this number of people.

Storey: Is that going to require an increased number of guides?

McDaniel: Yes. The hours of operation, if we go into that operation, and it has not been decided yet to my knowledge, on a fixed hourly basis per day, and we maintain that for 365 days, then we'd man on that figure. If we go in there and operate on a reduced schedule in the winter and elongated schedule in the summer, then we're going to have to have more flexibility. We'll have to go to the intermittent concept. There's a few of us who would like to go to a fixed day and man that way and operate that

way 365 days a year, 364 if we we're closed Christmas. But if we're going to get more visitation in the summertime and it warrants keeping the place open longer, that's what we're going to do. We're going to market it.

Storey: When you're sitting around the coffee table with your other guide friends, what are the stories you tell one another about your experiences on your tours?

Tour Guide Experiences

McDaniel: Almost anything. Almost everything. The child that never stops crying. The mother that has to take the baby to the rest room. The claustrophobic. There's much more humor than there is sorrow involved in the tours. The tour guides, they're here because they want to be here. They enjoy it. It's like we said at the offset, it's hard to describe why, why you get into something and stay in it so long. If it wasn't interesting, in my case I wouldn't be here, but I find it enjoyable, I find it interesting, working with some of the greatest people in the world, as far as I'm concerned.

Storey: Do you mean the tourists or do you mean the other tour guides?

McDaniel: The tour guides, the group, and the tourists. By and large, you deal with people that are here, in a vacation frame of mind, because they want to be here, and that's easy. It's when you deal with the person that's where they don't want to be that it can be difficult, and that

doesn't happen very often. It just doesn't happen very often. We get far more letters that compliment the operation and specific guides than we do get letters that say they don't like the way we did something, far, far many more good comments, which I think is a good yardstick, really.

Storey: What's the average age of our tour guides? Or maybe I ought to ask you just to characterize the population of the tour guides.

McDaniel: Let me think here a minute. Don is a retired civil engineer and will be seventy-two in November. He's the oldest of the group. The youngest of our current group is a young lady who moved here from Salt Lake City, and when she was in Salt Lake City she worked in the zoo, and she kiddingly says that it was just from one job to another at times.

Storey: One zoo to another.

McDaniel: She appears to be in her early twenties. However, she has two children, both in their twenties. Average, I would probably say fifty-two, fifty-three. We have one, two, three, four. You know, with the five people that retired last week, it changed the composition. We have retired military people, of course. We have retired schoolteachers, people who have completed their school, thirty years with the school district, and then have come on with us. Varied backgrounds.

Storey: Is it a job people tend to stay in for a long time

or is it a very transitory kind of a job for people?

Guide Service Employment

McDaniel: It appears to me to be far more permanent for people who are forty and over, let me phrase it that way. We have had people that are younger than that, and if there is a transitory group, it is that group, it seems.

We've have quite a few people who've come to work with us who are, or were before they came here, involved with the National Park Service. Because of their temporary hiring and the way they handle their personnel, the people would come to us with their Park Service background, become career conditional with us, and then turn right around and apply for a full-time position back in the Park Service. We've had that happen quite often. However, I must say that for each and every one of those people, they all performed very well for us and contributed when they were with us. I haven't had a sad situation in any of them. We hate to see them go. But we know at the time, if they've got Park Service background, they're usually not in a voluntary status. They're in a term-type situation with the Park Service and they need to get career conditional, and they'll come over with us.

I had one that we hired in February and left me last month. That's exactly what it was. He was out of Southern California. He was thirty. He was the youngest one we had at

that time. He was a good tour guide. He was with us for sixty days, and he performed very well for us for sixty days. But within sixty days, he had a job up in Zion [National Park], and that's exactly what he did.

Storey: I'm sure that you have certain groups of questions that the visitors ask. What are the ones that, should I say, bother you the most?

Questions Visitors Ask

McDaniel: I don't think there's any particular question that is bothersome. We tell our guides that, from the time they get their first group to make up the tour until the time their tour is completed, every bit of the time is devoted to presenting information before the question is asked. We teach that if on your tour route or during the course of your tour, if you go for two weeks and every day for two weeks somebody asks the same question, then it's of interest and put in your tour someplace, because that's all we really basically do, if you stop and think about it. We take the people on a balcony and we say, "This is a power plant." Fine. But then we point out the generator and what it is and what it does, which is nothing but a series of responses to unasked questions.

We've had people that get upset. I've seen them a little bit upset. I do not want to discuss suicides, for one thing. I think if I had to pick one thing I'd rather not discuss, it would have to be suicides. But that's not to say that if we're asked, we won't answer,

because we will answer. We just prefer not to be asked. And then personal questions, how much money do you make, that type of thing. We don't have to put up with that, and, of course, we say, "That's personal," and then smile and nod, "Any other questions?"

This is what we've always done with our people. If you consistently get the same question, then it's a question that needs to be answered, and that's what the whole tour is. That's the way I was taught, and I thought it was very good, I really did. Some people get, how many fatalities during construction? That's a matter of history. We have a display over in our current Exhibit Building that lists the fatalities and how they happen, so to be questioned about it shouldn't bother anybody, really. It's morbid, if you will, but people ask.

Storey: There are a lot of morbid people around.

McDaniel: As I say, the suicide is even worse. I've never run across anything consistently that has ever really bothered me, other than personal questions, which I just grin and nod.

Storey: What did you like the most about dealing with the people when you were actually doing the tours?

McDaniel: Oh, I don't know. This facility, this project, is a fascinating engineering marvel. It's easy to talk about this place, it really is. It really is. The people, I don't know, I just had a great rapport with an awful lot of them. I really

enjoyed walking tours, I really did. I still occasionally take specials to get back into the dam. I don't have too much time for it lately, but I do enjoy it from time to time.

Storey: Tell me about specials. What are specials?

Technical Tours

McDaniel: Oh, the specials, I made reference to it earlier about where we take certain people to different areas of the dam which are other than the normal route—control room, hard hat areas, so on and so forth. That's why we refer to it as special and/or technical.

We play host to a lot of engineers, dam engineers if you will, from other countries, and the United States Government, in many cases, through the State Department, hosts these people. When they come here, we do not take them. We will take them on a normal tour for the sake of the history and the construction. But if they're specifically interested in the generators, we'll spend more time in the generators. If they're more interested in seepage or if they're more interested—we will conduct. If we get into an area that's far more technical than any of our capabilities, we just pick up a phone and call someone that's the technical expert in the area. We get all the support in the world inside the structure.

Storey: What do you say to somebody who asks if the dam leaks?

Explaining a Leaking Dam

McDaniel: Yes, it does, 100 gallons a minute through the face of the dam and 150 gallons a second around the abutments. It would be a lot if it was in your bathroom, but it's minute for us. We leak a lot less than a lot of other structures that aren't quite as big as we are.

Storey: That really came as a shock to me to find out the dam is leaking. (laughter) I imagine the tourists react that way, too.

McDaniel: Oh, yeah. When you go into the tunnel of the power plant, up into the attic, there's water on the sides of the walls. That's spring water. At that level, most people lose the perspective of where they are with regards to like the bottom of the lake, on a lake sitting out there 476 feet deep, and when you get down there, if you say, "At this point, we know that's not lake water, because we are 48 feet below the bottom of the lake, and if that was lake water leaking, we would have an awful big mess real fast." It's spring water.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 1. MAY 3, 1994.

BEGIN SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MAY 3, 1994.

Storey: This is tape two of an interview by Brit Storey with Jack McDaniel at Hoover Dam.

McDaniel: When you get off the elevator, at that point you're 16 feet below the bottom of the lake right there, where 45,000 pounds pressure per square foot is. But people don't realize that,

and a lot of times when they do, their eyes get exceptionally big. You stand down there and say, "Well, that intake tower out there is 395 feet tall, and at this point we're 225 feet below the base of it," and they start looking. The whole project is mind-boggling, it really is.

Storey: Did you ever lose anybody from a tour?

Tourists Getting Lost

McDaniel: It's uncanny. Yes, to answer your question. Yes. I could go to the telephone and I could call up to the guide supervisor on duty and say, "I've lost two people. It's a man and a woman, and she's wearing white slacks and a blue top and he's got Levis on," and people would say, "How do you know that?"

If people are going to wander away from you, you're going to know it usually in the first ten minutes, because they will lag behind. We always made it a point, when we left the balcony, to identify the last person, screen it, visually look to make sure who that last person was. Then you took your elderly people down the elevator, and then you begin right then to look for that last person again, because invariably it's going to be the last that are going to drop out or wander off. When you identify the people who are always last, when all of a sudden you don't see them, you know they're gone, then you can invariably describe them. That's been my experience.

I've had the same experience when I

worked the desk, when a guide would call me and say, "I've lost a family. It's a man and a wife and two kids." People are, "How do you know? How can you keep track of that?" But you just can. I don't know if it's a inbred sixth sense or what it is, but they just seem to know.

Storey: Why do they get lost?

McDaniel: They wander off. They get preoccupied. I think a lot of it is, in many cases, a language barrier. We're dealing with people who do not speak and/or understand English. We have a lot of foreign people that come here. Invariably when they come in a group, they'll have an interpreter, and that interpreter will interpret, in many cases, depending on how busy we are and we can allow a little bit more time, or if we can isolate a foreign-speaking group, we will with an interpreter, and then allow time for the interpreter to interpret for them so they enjoy their experience here. We can't always do it, because if there's only ten of them, we can't tie up a normal tour of seventy with only ten, when we have people waiting. But I think that that's part of the problem there is they don't understand.

And, of course, shutterbugs. People who are always going to get the best picture and are always going to set up, they will lag behind.

Storey: Have you ever had anybody do it maliciously?

McDaniel: No, I never have. I have only known of one

case since I've been here where they had a couple of teenagers and it was on a weekend and they managed to slip a tour and got on one of the three-wheel scooters and were joy riding down in the plant. But it didn't take long for the plant workers to pretty much corner them.

The plant workers themselves are very much aware of us and what we do and where we go, so when a plant worker, even on a weekend, if they'll be control room people, if they see an obvious tourist where they're not supposed to be, they will pick them up and they will escort them to the nearest tour or even all the way back up to the top of the dam, both for safety reasons and security reasons.

Storey: It doesn't sound to me like it's a big issue, though.

McDaniel: No, it's not. It doesn't happen three times a week or it doesn't even happen three times a month, I don't think, anymore. It's isolated. It will become more predominant this summer when we get more people.

Storey: What do the visitors tend to be the most interested in? What are the things that fascinate them?

Tourists Interests

McDaniel: It depends on what their background is. If they are a convention in Las Vegas that has to do with concrete, they're interested in the concrete and the structure. If it's a convention

in Las Vegas that is the Rural American Electrical Association, which is very large, they're interested in power. Then the individuals, the tourists that's a regular tourist, and then, of course, you've got people who work in other power plants.

I had a young lady yesterday that worked up at the Columbia River Project, and she was interested in the flow, how many cubic feet of water per second flow and how many through units and so on. I said, "Let me show you a chart. I just happen to have a chart. Here's what the river flowing per day. Here's what our storage is." She could understand it, but it was so much less than at Columbia River. I said, "We're talking two different things. You people produce power. We store water, and it's an entirely different situation."

We have the capability to drain the lake. If we want the generators up full, we could drain the lake. Like I said to her, it's a foregone conclusion. You can live without electricity, but you cannot live without water. So water is our product, and that's our main product and that's why we're here. A lot of people don't realize that. They'll say, "Why aren't you running your units?" Well, we run the units when there's a requirement for water. We probably right now are running at about 35 to 40 percent of our capability, because that's what the requirement for water is. 1.5 million acre feet of water flow to Mexico every year. We store it for Mexico, and when they call for it, we release it. And, of course, we produce

power here for Davis, Parker, and Hickey [phonetic], so that water's being used over and over and over again as it's going downstream. It takes ten days to get water from here to Mexico, 400 miles.²

Storey: Forty miles a day.

McDaniel: That's about right.

Storey: That's interesting. I've never thought about the difference between the Colorado and the Columbia in terms of what our projects do. Very interesting.

The tourists that come, what are some of the things they've said to you about what fascinates them?

People are Absolutely Awestruck

McDaniel: Oh, I've talked to an awful lot of people that are absolutely awestruck. They just can't believe the project. They can't believe that it

2. The Mexican Water Treaty and Protocol is a treaty relating to the utilization of the waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande. (Signed at Washington, February 3, 1944; Protocol signed at Washington, November 14, 1944; ratification advised by the Senate April 18, 1945, subject to certain understandings; ratification by the President November 1, 1945, subject to said understandings; ratified by Mexico October 16, 1945; ratifications exchanged at Washington, November 8, 1945; proclaimed by the President November 27, 1945, subject to said understandings; 59 Stat. 1219.) Source: United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation. *Federal Reclamation and Related laws Annotated, Volume II of IV, 1943-1958.* ed. Richard K. Pelz. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972, p. 750 *et. seq.*

was done in twelve days short of five years. Obviously they're thinking of things of a comparable size in their area, wherever they may live, that had gone on for years and years and years and years.

One of the most frequently asked questions, which we don't have an answer for, is, what would it cost today? It's a good question. Usually my response to that was, "This project, which included the All-American Canal and Boulder City, was \$175 million. Today we would probably spend that much on the impact statement, if we were going to build the project today."

The only comparison I can give you, on the Hoover uprate Hoover mod that was in existence seven, eight, nine years ago, they were going to add two units here. They were larger than our current units, but they were going to add two, and the cost factor, as I recall, at that time for those units was like \$210 million to install those units, and this whole project cost \$175 million, if that'll give you a comparison. I don't know if it does.

Storey: And the dam construction alone it was—

McDaniel: \$175 million to build the project. \$200 million to add two units. That particular program comes up and goes back down and comes up and goes back down. The water is so regulated. The Colorado River water is the most litigated stretch of waterway in the United States today. And not a day goes by in

the southern Nevada area that you don't pick up a newspaper and are going to find a story about water.

Of course, Nevada now is bemoaning the fact that when the water was divvied up many, many years ago that they got the less of any of the seven states the river drains. Of course, Arizona for years and years—they never did ratify the agreement on water, and for years and years and years never took their water, because they didn't have the capability. Then, of course, we got into the C-A-P [Central Arizona Project] project, and that's now completed, and that is another story.

But they don't want to give up any of the water, either. And while they couldn't take it, Nevada did not take it. California took it. When Arizona got in a position that they could take their allocation of 2.4 million acre feet, California now was all of a sudden didn't have what they needed because they got used to living on Arizona water, so that created problems. That's when they started talking about the Peripheral Canal ten years ago.³ It

3. In the 1960s and 1970s, another canal was proposed, one that would divert the Sacramento River at Hood around the "periphery" of the Delta region. This canal would have been about 43 miles long and would have delivered canal water directly to the state and federal pumps near Tracy. The 1982 design for the canal would have enabled it to carry 15,000 cubic feet of water per second.

The "release points" designated on the plan would enable the Department of Water Resources to provide water from the canal into existing channels of the Delta to address flow needs for salmon migration and water quality and water level concerns. This required

was going to take ten years to build, and, of course, they were going to build that out of the Sacramento River Delta and all that water to southern California and northern California said, "They're not going to take our water."

Storey: Since you're the new Manager of the Guide Program, tell me about the things that have to be done to have a good visitors program that aren't the things I'm going to see. The kind of management stuff and so on that you have to do in order to make sure that the program works, that Reclamation has to do to make sure the program works.

Managing the Visitors Center

the public to trust DWR and its contractors to protect fish and water quality—a situation analogous to trusting the fox to protect the henhouse. Instead, the issue went to the voters for final disposition. Subsequently, a public referendum (Proposition 9) supporting the legislature's approval of bonds for the canal was defeated in June 1982 by a vote of 63 to 37 percent of the electorate.

By 1998, the CalFED Bay Delta Program developed three alternatives for moving water through or around the Delta, including a so-called "isolated conveyance facility." This plan called for a canal smaller in capacity than the original peripheral canal (around 5,000 cubic feet per second). The CalFED plan also included an ecosystem restoration plan, a multi-species habitat conservation plan, a levee repair strategy, reservoir planning studies, an ambitious science program to study Delta estuarine and river systems, a water transfer program, an "environmental water account" program to mitigate export pumping losses of fish and of water to contractors, and programs for water use efficiency and drinking water quality. This plan failed to receive sufficient funding, and (with the exception of the science program) essentially has been retired.

<https://www.c-win.org/peripheral-canals-way-past-past-and-present.html>

Bureau of Reclamation History Program

McDaniel: We've got to develop and maintain a program that's both attractive, informational, and interesting to our customers, tourists. We have operated for all these many years on a word-of-mouth type concept. We have not merchandised for the project. We've never really had to. We've always seemed to have had enough people.

We are going to merchandise it, I believe, in the future. The high-tech equipment that's going into this new Visitor's Center, this has all got to be coordinated. The people to maintain it and operate it have got to be brought on board and trained.

Our tour guides, per se, are not going to have to undergo much training, because you can't change the history and you can't change the way it was done. Even though if there's some aspects that is not favorable or what have you, you still cannot change it. It still exists. It's fact. So we don't have much problem there. I don't anticipate any problem there.

There's an awful lot of coordination that's got to go on. We're exploring the possibility of putting in a boat dock to dock the *Desert Princess*, which is the largest commercial craft on Lake Mead. It will hold about 300 people. We're working with the Park Service, who has a contract with these people as a concessionaire, that they will load the people and make this part of their trip. They think it will enhance the people's

experience on the lake and, of course, what now has created the lake. So we're exploring that possibility at this point in time. We've asked that, if we do go into this, that they would bring people here and drop them off and come back and pick them up in two hours. We figure two hours is about the time it would take if the people were going to experience everything that we're going to make available to them.

You asked me what's going on, and there's so much going on. That's what we want to do. We'll never become, I don't believe personally, a destination. But anybody that's in this area, we then become a destination, and as long as the area grows like it has grown, I think that we will grow right along with it. I have that feeling.

Repeat Business

We get a lot of repeat business, people who live here, who every time they have company. It's not uncommon to have someone come up and say, "Hey, I've been through this six times, and this last one, that's the best guide I've ever had." This happens quite often. All of our people are not first-time people. We get a lot of people that come back.

We like the tour set up the way it is, because every time someone comes back, invariably they'll get a different guide. They get basically the same information. It might be presented a little different. But they learn

more, and admit it. You know, "The guide said that last time, but I didn't realize how important it was." Of course, that's the human aspect. There's things here that impress me more than other things, so when I talked about them, I had more enthusiasm, and I'm sure all of the guides are that way. But we've had many, many people that say that every time they come back they get more, and this is why we have always resisted the canned tour, if you walk in a push a button and you got the monotone that says the same thing. Our people are in it, they're involved in it, and this is what they like. This is what we like. I think this is what really sells the product, and we're sold. If we're going to put it in a can and you're going to walk up and push a button, like your little machine there, it's not going to have near the presentation that you're going to have if you're talking to somebody that's really in it, I don't believe. That's personal opinion, of course.

Storey: What about problems with voice, though? Do any of the guides—

Finding the Right Guides

McDaniel: No, we don't have a problem, or have never had a problem. I've had this discussion with personnel more than one time. You announce and you're reading an application and it looks good on paper, but if there are restrictions, like you have to be able to walk up and down stairs, you have to be able to withstand 120-degree heat, you have to be able to talk

distinctly and plainly.

I think what I'm trying to say is, handicapped people have a very definite disadvantage to try and engage in this type. We support the program. However, we realize that—and we have had handicapped people. But if they are speech impaired, we have a problem, of course, because you're now presenting information to this large group of people. If you have seventy people and you have four tours a day, that's 280 people you're talking to. We have had people that have been with us that have come down with arthritis so bad they have trouble walking, and what we've really tried to do if they wanted to continue with us, we've kept them on intermittent status and worked them like every other day or one day on and two off or whatever. But have a voice problem, we never have. I've never experienced it.

Storey: You just mentioned the heat. Where do we run into 120-degree heat?

Dealing with the Heat

McDaniel: Right up on top of the dam in July and August. In 1980, I had a tour on the ramp and I had a thermometer, and it went to 147 degrees. That was in August. The amount of concrete here draws heat. But for 120, that's not uncommon in July and August up on top of the dam.

Storey: That must be pretty hard on those folks who

have to stand up there and wait.

McDaniel: It is. They won't have to do that in the new Exhibit Building. It is if they're not familiar with this area. From the standpoint, they have got to drink liquids. We all do. We live here. It's a very dry heat. You don't perspire, as such. It evaporates the minute it comes through the skin. People who come here and party all night and don't drink water, don't drink liquids, are going to get sick when they get up here in that kind of heat, there's no question about it.

In the summer, we physically geographically move one of our nurses to the top of the dam. We have a nurse's office up there, also, a little substation, and she will just more or less patrol the line and look for people that are on that border heat. The last couple, three years, we've used a little squirt bottle, like a Windex or whatever, and sprayed, and we used that very effectively on people. That will cool them off real fast, and it's almost like they're not going to get wet.

Storey: You just spray them?

McDaniel: They just spray them, sure.

Storey: That brings me to the next question. You mentioned a couple of efforts for ventilating the dam.

McDaniel: Uh-huh.

Storey: What are those for? I'm not following exactly what you mean.

Dam's Ventilation System

McDaniel: The water coming through the face of the dam, 100 gallons a minute, is channeled down to the sump. It's collected in the sump. That's how we know how much it is, because it can be measured, and then it's, of course, pumped back into the river.

That water at the lower levels of the lake is going to sit right around 53 to 55 degrees. As this water is channeled down to the sumps, through the louvered openings in the face of the dam and a series of fans, we draw air from the back side of the dam, down through the tunnels, across the cold water, and blow it back out into the Visitor's Gallery. So our Visitor's Gallery will vary between 72 and 62 year round, I don't care what the temperature is on top. I've seen a chill factor on top of minus 10, and it'll be like 62 in the dam. I've seen it 120 on top of the dam, and it might be 72 or 74 in the dam, because the dam, when we get down at that level, it's not influenced by the outside atmospheric conditions.

Storey: So it's fairly comfortable.

McDaniel: Fairly comfortable.

Storey: Am I hearing that we don't heat anything?

McDaniel: Basically, yes. They've got radiant heat in the machine shop, where we have those great big overhead doors for moving equipment in and out, and when those are open in the wintertime, it gets nippy. Wintertime is—well, Chamber of Commerce talk now. In this Vegas Valley, our average winter temperature is about 52 degrees. I indicated a little bit ago I've seen a minus-10 chill factor, but the average is about 52, and the average summer temperature is only 82. Needless to say, and as I said, we go much higher and we do go lower. But basically we have very little heat that we use.

Storey: You mentioned handicapped folks as guides earlier. How does the tour work for handicapped visitors?

McDaniel: We are absolutely handicap accessible. We provide wheelchairs if people need them. We provide literature for the hearing impaired. We have our brochures in different languages. This is, of course, not handicapped, but dealing with the customer again. We have brochures. We print them in Spanish, English of course, Spanish, French, German, Japanese, and Chinese.

Storey: Chinese? Do we have a lot of tours from China?

Accommodating Foreign Tourists

McDaniel: Yes, surprisingly.

Storey: Really?

McDaniel: Yes. That's one of the harder brochures to keep on hand. I don't know how much longer we can do it. The cost containment that we've been going through lately, and that is quite expensive. Our brochures run about 8 cents apiece. This year we ordered a million of them. We got them in in January. Our foreign language, we don't order a million at a time. We order probably 50,000 at a time. But here again, the lesser number, we're paying a higher price for them. After the plates are once set, that's the initial cost, to get the plates set for them. Everything we do, we try to do to enhance the visitor's experience, I guess is a fair analogy.

Storey: What should I be asking you about the Visitor's Service that I haven't asked you yet?

McDaniel: Gosh, I don't know. What haven't I told you that you'd like to know?

Storey: Anything interesting that comes up repeatedly? I don't know.

McDaniel: Well, like you indicated earlier, my new position is such that I'm a little awestruck, because my predecessor's retirement was on very short notice. Of course, we had worked together for almost fifteen years, and I had worked as his assistant for the last nine months or so. That is definitely an asset. But it's a whole new ball game, if you will, along with the new Visitor's Center and the new parking

garage. The two of us kept busy all the time before, and I'm getting stretched pretty thin now by myself, as he was before I went to help him. So I don't know. It seems like each day I'm getting a little further behind, but we'll catch up.

Storey: Were we getting a lot of questions from visitors about the cost of the new Visitor's Center?

Controversy Over the Visitor Centers Cost

McDaniel: No. News medium, they're the ones that have the heyday, and occasionally the news media will come down here. It happened Sunday morning. We had local television people down here unannounced, but they were recognized, and we treat them like anybody else. We'll answer their questions. We'll take them on a tour. They didn't ask for anything. They didn't announce themselves, but we knew that they were here. They were just tourists. We don't know why they were here. We didn't even ask them why they were here, because we don't care.

Those of us here today look forward to this opening, but, believe me, none of us had anything to do with the planning or construction or cost overruns, if you will, or there's not a thing that any of us could have done to prevent it, if you will. We're glad we're going to have it, and we're glad it's a state of the art. But as I say, I think it appears to me that the media, they take shots at us, but

the media take shots at everybody. It'll rear its ugly head for a while and then it will cool down for a while. Somebody took a shot at us—the news media again—on Sunday in the editorial page, but by Monday it was pretty much forgotten. We're proud of it. When people ask us, we're very, very proud of it.

Storey: You know, Hoover attracting three-quarters of a million people a year, am I recalling correctly?

McDaniel: That's correct. Let me clarify that, if I may. That many people take the tour.

Storey: Uh-huh.

McDaniel: You could probably say that maybe another 25 or 30 percent of people who stopped here and marveled at the project, but did not take the tour.

Storey: Now, the folks who were pulled over up there in the no parking zone.

McDaniel: Those people—I looked at it this morning. I forget what the figures were. Last month, 140,000 two-axle vehicles northbound, going across the dam to Las Vegas, 149,000 southbound, just last month.

Storey: In one month?

McDaniel: One month. That's 240,000 vehicles. What do you say an average vehicle, 2½ people or whatever it is. If you went by that, you could

really, really build it up. The National Park Service here, Lake Mead National Recreation, they say they have 3 million visitors a year. Now, there's no way for us to know how many of those that did or did not cross the dam or look at the dam or saw it from the lake. You know, it's one of those things.

Storey: Well, they're an integral part of the question I wanted to ask you. What are our relations with the Park Service, who obviously, you know, three-quarters of a million visitors is a major attraction, no matter how you cut the cake.

Working with the Park Service

McDaniel: We seem to have a very good relationship with the Park Service. We're completely surrounded by the Park Service. We extend them and their families the courtesy of complimentary tours anytime they want to come over here.

I do know the Park Service police work hand in hand with our police. Their interpretive people are at the Visitor's Center. We exchange brochures from here to there. We pick up their brochures and bring them here. We have a good rapport, I really think we do. There doesn't seem to be any animosity.

Now, if up the line someplace there's, as you say, a very attractive three-quarters of a million people, if that's going on. I am aware

of it, but I'm not in a position to talk about it. I've heard rumbles, let me put it that way, and it is attractive. We've invited them, as I understand, to display in this new Exhibit Center.

Storey: I understand they're interested in maybe using the old railroad, the construction railroad grade as a link between our Visitor's Center and theirs. Have you heard anything about that?

McDaniel: Yes. They've got one tunnel that needs to be shored up. They wanted to put in a hiking path. At one time—and I think it fell through—people here had entered into an agreement with an outfit out of Kingman [Arizona] that wanted to run fiber optics from Kingman to Vegas, and it got around that, if the dam would let them come across the dam, that they would pay to shore up the tunnel, and we thought at the time that it was a win-win situation. Their fiber optics weren't going to have any effect on our operations in any way, shape, or form, and it was a way to get that tunnel. But I understood that fell through, but there's still something ongoing. That's due the year after the Visitor's Center. We're talking in '96.

Storey: The trail?

McDaniel: The trail, '96 or '97. So really, I haven't been looking that far ahead lately. I've been looking just to January or February or the fall of this year. But that's in this mill. It's still working.

Storey: Now, when you lengthen your hours in the summer, does that mean there will be more shuttle buses and more drivers along with that, also?

Shuttle Buses

McDaniel: Yes. This summer, we will have shuttle buses that will start at the same time our tours start, whether it be eight or nine o'clock, and we will have shuttle buses that will be available when the last tour comes out of the dam, whatever time that might be. We do that now.

Storey: What's going to happen to the bus drivers when we open the new Visitor's Center and the parking garage?

McDaniel: The current planning is, we will not have a requirement for the number of drivers we have now. With the number of R-Vs on the road today—this is in the planning stage now—is a R-V park up at the Nevada break check area, and we will shuttle the people from there.

I'm sure that if we continue the shuttle after the new exhibit is open, then there will be a charge for it. But if we designate parking in a specific area, other than the parking garage, the feeling is that we should probably make transportation available to them, even if it might be at a minor cost, like \$1.00 a trip or something like that.

Storey: Is the problem that the garage is not designed to handle R-Vs?

END SIDE 1, TAPE 2. MAY 3, 1994.
BEGIN SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MAY 3, 1994.

Handling RV Parking

McDaniel: . . . R-V spaces. But the interpretation of a R-V varies with different parts of the country. You get out into this area, the Southwest, and you'll find a fifth wheel that might be 36-foot long, and if he puts an 18-foot boat on the back of that thing, then you can triple trailer in the state of Nevada. There's no way in this God's green earth that we're going to be able to manipulate that rig in that parking garage. That's the type of thing I'm saying.

The motor home, the 26-foot motor home, that's fine. There's no problem with that. Even the 30-foot motor home. But when we get off into some of these fifth wheels, which you've seen, I'm sure, and you got a 22-foot truck and you've got a 35-foot fifth wheel and you've got a little car sitting behind it, if you will, or a boat or whatever, then that's a problem. We trying at this point in time to determine how many we can put up in the lots on the Arizona side and also the lot up there, and then maybe take some of those spots that are designed for R-Vs and convert them back so that we can put two vehicles on there.

Storey: In the parking garage?

McDaniel: Yes. The modification there is inexpensive.

Storey: Well, I really appreciate your spending time with me today. I'd like to ask you now if you're willing for Reclamation researchers and researchers from outside Reclamation to use these tapes and any resulting transcripts for research purposes.

McDaniel: Absolutely. Of course, many of the things I said, of course, are my own opinion, which I'm sure you realize, and that is the only thing I would like to add. But other than that, no, fine. If I can help in any way, I'd be more than happy.

Storey: Thank you.

END SIDE 2, TAPE 2. MAY 3, 1994.
END OF INTERVIEW.