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KUED The Alta Experience

BILL SHORTER

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Q. The first thing I'll have you do is kind of
3 say and spell your name for me. So we get that
4 correct.

5 A. Okay.

6 Bill Shorter. S-H-O-R-T-E-R.

7 Q. And with that, you came -- you said you came
8 out from New York.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. What draw -- tell me -- kind of run through
11 that story. What kind of brought you out here, and
12 what -- what got you going.

13 A. Well, quickly, I'd met a friend from my
14 hometown in New York City. We -- we were at a party.
15 And he went to Utah State. And he told me about Alta.

16 And he said, You know, you can't --

17 Because I skied back in New York. I grew up
18 skiing.

19 And basically we jumped in a car on the 15th
20 of January in '62, and came straight back here.

21 He had graduated, and he probably -- brought
22 me to Alta, basically.

23 And I got a job on the 17th of January, and
24 I've been here ever since.

25 Q. And when you -- when you think about that

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1 first time coming up here, did he kind of talk it up,
2 and --

3 A. Oh --

4 Q. -- did you have a picture in your mind of
5 what it was going to be like?

6 A. Well, a little bit. But nothing like when I
7 drove up the canyon.

8 It was a bluebird day, with snow like this
9 year. You know, on the sides of the road. And I've
10 never -- I'd never saw so much snow in all my life.
11 And such a beautiful place.

12 And it -- it's still that way. That's
13 what's great.

14 Q. When you think about that, you know, the --
15 I can remember my first ride up the canyon. It was an
16 inverted day.

17 And my friends were like, Oh, man, it's
18 going to be so bluebird. It's going to be awesome.

19 When you think about, kind of, I guess the
20 surprising nature of the weather up there, talk a
21 little bit about how it can change, and every day is a
22 little bit different.

23 A. Yeah. And there were days that -- that the
24 snow was coming down, you know, sideways. And I
25 remember all thinking, there's two people came in from

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1 New York, and they came down the canyon.

2 They had driven up. They came down the --
3 the ramp of the Alta Lodge, and they -- and they were
4 ready to leave. And Alf comes in from skiing, and he
5 goes, Bill. By golly, Bill, that's the best day ever
6 out there.

7 And these people didn't have a clue what he
8 meant by that.

9 But that's why we lived up there, because of
10 that snow.

11 So, I mean, you had bluebird days, and then
12 you had days when you couldn't stay a foot in front of
13 you because of all of the snow.

14 Q. When you thought -- think about skiing, you
15 know, what, you came out here to ski. Obviously you're
16 a skier. You still ski.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Talk a little bit about, you know, I guess
19 why Alta kind of -- it caters to skiing, and sometimes
20 to -- to -- everything else is kind of blown away.

21 You know what I mean? Kind of put off to
22 the side. I mean, it's just about --

23 A. Yeah.

24 That's because of the snow. I mean, just
25 how great it is. I mean, how deep it can get.

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1 I mean, when you've had a day in two feet of
2 stuff, you blow on it and it just, you know, feathers.
3 And you've done that, and you've skied it, and -- and
4 then you've come in -- you know, come back to the
5 lodge, everybody else has done the same thing. And you
6 have a dinner, cocktail, a dinner, you're ready to go
7 to bed.

8 And that's why you came there. That's why
9 all of these people came there. You know?

10 Everybody wonders why, but it's just --

11 The -- I don't think there's any place in
12 the world that has snow like Alta.

13 And -- and I think that's what brings
14 everybody there.

15 Plus a lot of other little things, but.

16 We had people at the Alta Lodge come back
17 every year. I mean, they -- when they left, they
18 filled out the form. You know, put me down, same room,
19 same week, same days next year. This -- it was
20 unbelievable.

21 Q. But the idea --

22 When you think about, over the years, some
23 of the people that you met, I mean, in -- a lot of
24 people always talk about Alf Engen. And he was one of
25 the, I guess, you know --

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1 A. Yeah. He's --

2 Q. Talk about Alf. Talk a little bit about
3 him, and maybe some skiing days that you might have had
4 with him.

5 A. Well, he and Evelyn had a room at the Alta
6 Lodge in the '60s. They stayed there quite a few
7 nights.

8 That may be when they couldn't get down the
9 canyon, because they lived in -- in -- right at the
10 mouth of the canyon almost.

11 And, oh, just the people that came out to
12 ski with them were -- were fun.

13 There was a fellow named Paul Venanda. And
14 he was a lawyer on Wall Street. And he came out and he
15 just skied with Alf.

16 I mean, that's what he came to do.

17 And Alf was -- I don't know how you explain
18 Alf. I mean, there's books written about him, so I
19 can't describe it.

20 Q. I guess one of the things that always
21 strikes me is that when you see -- I mean, you see
22 pictures of him, you see old movies of him, he's always
23 had a smile on his face.

24 Is he one of the most positive people that
25 you --

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1 A. Yes. I mean, like I said a few minutes ago,
2 I mean, it could be the worst day of, you know, snow.
3 Nobody else would love it. By golly, Bill, this is the
4 best. You know? The best day of the year. You know?

5 And, yeah, he was always positive. Always
6 smiling on his face. Wonderful PR person.

7 And Evelyn too, his wife, the same. They
8 were great people.

9 Q. Over the years, let's talk a bit about
10 the -- maybe some of the change that you've seen.

11 When you came in there and -- in '62, the --
12 there was probably just the -- the Collins lift, with
13 the -- was the original Collins lift still in there?

14 A. Yes.

15 I have one of their chairs.

16 Q. Oh, do you?

17 A. Yeah. But --

18 Q. Can you talk a little bit -- well, talk a
19 little bit about, you know, that lift, and maybe what
20 it was like to ride it.

21 The kind of sounds that it made.

22 A. Yeah. I mean, it was clanky. It was old.
23 You know, it stopped a lot.

24 But you had the Collins lift, you had the
25 Wildcat lift, and Germania.

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1 That -- I think that was all that was there.

2 They put in Albion after that. I know -- I

3 think '64.

4 See, I don't know the exact year.

5 But it -- and they had to dig it out. A

6 lot. They had to dig it out, you know, so the chairs

7 could get up -- up, you know, to the top.

8 Q. Would that -- let's talk a little bit about

9 Chick Morton.

10 Now, he's a character that -- you know, I

11 mean, he pretty much had his thumbprint was on Alta

12 while he was running it, but it still seems like maybe

13 some of the -- some of his ethic is still -- still up

14 there a little bit.

15 But talk about what kind of guy he was.

16 A. Well, I had a special relationship with

17 Chick. He hired me. Mentored me.

18 I started as a handyman. Became the

19 manager. You know? After he left. But there was

20 someone in between.

21 But he -- he did. I mean, he basically

22 reported to Joe Quinney. They had lunch once a week at

23 the Alta Club or Lamb's Grill, and then he ran the --

24 he ran the lift for him.

25 And -- and ran -- and he ran the lodge too,

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1 but -- when I was there, but then he did take over the
2 lifts.

3 But it was pretty much his influence. But
4 he went back. I mean, he -- he worked there a long
5 time. He worked for Fred Spire. That -- and for Joe
6 Quinney, and for Salt Lake Winter Sports.

7 I mean, he worked there a long time. So he
8 had that feeling of what Alta wanted to remain, and --
9 and basically still does today, with not letting
10 snowboarders up there.

11 I mean, that's -- you know, they also -- you
12 know, he -- I think he would be a little amazed that
13 they have quad lifts. High speeds, you know, lifts.

14 I mean, he would be amazed at that.

15 They -- they didn't do anything unless they
16 had the money to do.

17 I mean, they don't borrow money to build
18 lifts. They -- they had the money in the bank. And
19 that was -- the -- the old way to do things.

20 I mean, my parents never owed anybody any
21 money. You know? They paid their bills.

22 Q. When you think about that, do you think that
23 entities -- I mean, do you think that's what kind of
24 keeps Alta kind of the way it is?

25 A. Yeah, I think so. I mean, everybody had

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1 their own agenda, but they wanted to get together to at
2 least put the funds together to do some promotions, to
3 keep things on top. But basically everybody was more
4 concerned about their own identity. You know, their
5 own piece of it, I guess. So it was kind of -- Ohh,
6 ooh --

7 We got together once a month. If everybody
8 showed up to the meeting, that was great. But if
9 somebody didn't, then at the next meeting we'd have to
10 bring them up to speed of what we were going to do.

11 And if -- those people from -- who say that
12 family isn't on the run -- or the Goldminers, if both
13 of them didn't show up, they didn't talk to one another
14 at home I don't think, and told them what was going on,
15 so we'd have to kind of try to bring everybody on board
16 to do something that we already decided to do, that
17 maybe they didn't want to do it after they heard about
18 it.

19 It was a challenge. And, you know. But we
20 were still successful, because -- because of Alta's
21 snow. And people came.

22 Q. When you think about that, think about, I
23 guess -- you know, you talked about -- a bit about how
24 people would, you know, book for a year in advance to
25 come out.

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1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And that they wanted to come out that week,
3 or they wanted room three or whatever.

4 A. Right.

5 Q. What do you think kind of makes that
6 loyalty?

7 A. Well, just the feeling of Alta.

8 Which, I know this is what you're trying to
9 get. You know? And I -- I -- I don't know.
10 Everybody had their own reasons.

11 I mean, there were people that came every
12 Thanksgiving. And they -- and they came years that we
13 didn't have snow. And it would snow the Wednesday
14 night before Thanksgiving.

15 And they would still come, because they had
16 family coming from the East Coast, from California, or
17 wherever. And they would still come, because they
18 were -- you know? And it -- most of the time it would
19 snow that weekend, and they'd luck out.

20 There were times when we did call them, and
21 they -- and one year they didn't come. But that was
22 very unusual.

23 And, I mean, there was another professor
24 from Harvard. He and his wife came every year, the
25 whole month of January. And they -- they were an

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1 interesting couple.

2 And -- but they had the same room.

3 We had to put -- he was a professor, and he
4 had to read his thesis that his students were writing
5 or whatever, so he had to have a special lamp put in
6 the room for him, special light bulbs, very bright.
7 And -- and then his wife wanted seed in the trees so
8 she could watch the blue -- the stellar bluejays.

9 And -- and they -- every year. And they
10 left their skis at -- they left their powder skis
11 there, from year to year.

12 They took their -- they were -- you know,
13 from Ski Vermont, and the East Coast, so they had their
14 other skis that they took with them, but.

15 They were interesting, interesting people.

16 Betty and Barry Moore.

17 He was a professor at Harvard. In Russian.

18 He -- not language, but history or --

19 I don't know exactly what he taught, but.
20 Something to do with Russian history. Unbelievable
21 people.

22 Q. When you think about going back to when you
23 first came up there to go skiing, you know, it's --
24 it's an impressive amount of snow. You know, being
25 from back east. You kind of contrast what it was like

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1 to all of a sudden realize that, you know, this --
2 these mountains are steeper, the snow's deeper, and,
3 you know, you're going to get to ski that.

4 Was there -- was it kind of awe-inspiring?

5 A. Oh, it was.

6 I can remember a day that I went up with a
7 girl from behind the front desk, and we made figure
8 eights on the shoulder. And then that night we had
9 prime rib dinner on a Saturday night.

10 We ate the same meals that em -- guests ate,
11 only an hour before.

12 And I called my father on the phone, and I
13 said, Dad, this is a mecca. You've gotta -- you've
14 gotta come out.

15 And three weeks later, he was out there with
16 his doctor friends that he skied with.

17 And he came back every year and skied. I
18 mean, it -- it's unbelievable.

19 Q. When you go up there now, you think about
20 maybe that it's changed a little bit. But the
21 mountains -- it's the same.

22 I mean, you go out the shoulder, it's still
23 the shoulder.

24 A. Right.

25 Q. It might be a little skied more --

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1 A. You've got to be the first one out there
2 now.

3 Q. Right.

4 But if you think about it, you know, there's
5 not too much you could do to make High Rustler any
6 different. There's not much you could do to make West
7 Rustler any different. It's still the same pitch,
8 it's --

9 A. The Stone Crusher is still the same. All of
10 them are still the same.

11 Q. When you think about your favorite runs up
12 there, what -- which ones do you like to ski?

13 A. Eagle's Nest. I kind of like that hour
14 glass. You know, you'd have an opening little metal.
15 You had to go through the narrow part, and then you
16 came up -- out to another member. So the Eagle's Nest
17 was probably my favorite run. I loved the Eagle's
18 Nest.

19 And it was protected a little bit. So the
20 snow seemed to be deeper in there.

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. And Westward Ho too, was great.

23 Q. How about the -- when you think about Alta,
24 kind of what -- what really comes to -- I guess what
25 comes to mind to you?

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1 A. Well, the people that came as guests, but
2 also the employees. Employees we had every year. And
3 some came back, some didn't come back. Some just took
4 one year, if -- off from whatever they were doing.

5 It -- it was -- it was people. The guests.
6 I mean, we looked forward to the weeks that certain
7 guests came. These ones that I mentioned.

8 I mean, we -- it was so much fun. It -- it
9 wasn't like a job. I mean, the first year especially,
10 when I didn't have any responsibilities. I was a
11 handyman.

12 That was the best year. The best job I ever
13 had in my life. 50 bucks a month, free room and board,
14 and free skiing. I mean, that's the best job I've ever
15 had in my life. And I still tell people that.

16 Yeah, it -- that's it. It was employees and
17 the guests.

18 And (inaudible) still come back.

19 Q. Yeah.

20 A. And I think a lot of them probably live
21 here. I know some of them still live here.

22 Q. When you think -- time Alta's changed quite
23 a bit. Still -- there's still something about it that
24 keeps it the same.

25 Can you kind of -- when you look out -- you

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1 know, you're over on Stone Crusher, and, you know,
2 you're looking back the other way towards Greeley Hill,
3 or, you know, before you drop in, do those -- you know,
4 the scenery up there is still kind of the same. It's
5 still --

6 Do you think -- do you see the changes up
7 there? Do you see -- do you feel them?

8 A. Well, no. I mean, I -- the scenery is still
9 there. It's just more people skiing it, and you have
10 to pick your run and get it first. Because three days
11 after a storm, we could go ski Devil's Castle. You
12 know? Or different places.

13 Today, you know, unless they haven't opened
14 it, you can't -- you can't do it. It's gone.

15 But the scenery is still there. And they've
16 been able to preserve it.

17 I mean, the one thing that -- you know, that
18 Mayor Leavitt did, was he kept Albian Basin pure. And
19 the friends of Alta, and the groups that are trying to
20 do it.

21 And they're still struggling to do it, but
22 that's very important. I think that they -- it hasn't
23 been built up.

24 And that -- that's what keeps it Alta, I
25 think.

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1 And the rest of the resorts, that's what --
2 they -- they own the land, and they build it up.
3 That's where they make their money today, by doing
4 that. And they've been able to not have to do that at
5 Alta.

6 Q. I guess that's kind of interesting to me
7 too, is that when you -- I don't really actually go to
8 many other ski resorts, but, you know, their -- what
9 always strikes me is that there's advertisements on the
10 towers. And they get in the gondola, you know, and you
11 close the door, and there's, you know, an advertisement
12 for Campbell's Soup in there.

13 But Alta is pretty much -- I don't know.
14 It's almost monolithic in the way things move up there.
15 You know? Or --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- in their --

18 A. Well, and, I mean, their -- their theme at
19 one point -- I guess maybe it still is -- Alta's for
20 skiers. Not that the other people aren't skiers, I
21 mean, that's -- that's what they come there for. I
22 mean, they -- that's -- that's -- you know. The lodge
23 is the same -- I mean, the same way. People are still
24 in bed by nine o'clock, 10:00. Because they -- when
25 you ski there all day, you're tired. And if you're

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1 tired, you'll get hurt, so. You pay attention to it, I
2 think, a little more.

3 They groom it a lot better now than they
4 ever did. I mean, it's super.

5 But some areas they can't groom, so. You've
6 got to -- you know.

7 Q. Yeah, I think over the course of the summer,
8 they're slowly putting in more winch balls and --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- places, because they're -- you know,
11 there were some things that they groom --

12 A. Well, the public demands it. And so forth.
13 And, of course, the equipment today makes it a lot
14 different too.

15 I mean, more people can ski those steeper,
16 deeper runs, because of the equipment.

17 Q. With -- when you started skiing, what --
18 what kind of equipment were you on?

19 A. I was on Northlands. Wood -- hickory skis.
20 Without edges. I think the first pair.

21 And for Christmas one year, I remember
22 getting edges on my skis. You know? And then offset
23 edges.

24 Unbelieve -- you know.

25 Q. Explain the offset edge to the -- to the

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1 casual viewer.

2 A. Oh, man. I'm -- you know. They were just a
3 little bit wider than the ski. So you could get a
4 better edge. In the ice back east. You know, that's
5 why they were there.

6 And they were inter-locked, and, I mean,
7 they -- they -- you hit a rock, they'd pull off --
8 they'd break off.

9 Q. And then contrast that to not necessarily --

10 A. The bear traps. Minings too.

11 Q. Talk a little bit about the bear traps.

12 A. Yeah. Well, a strap over the top. You put
13 your boot in, and then you clamp the -- the heel --
14 heel down -- or -- or, actually, your heel came up a
15 little bit.

16 Kind of like today. Some of your cross
17 country skis today. But your heel wasn't down until
18 they got the -- the release bindings. Then your heel
19 was down.

20 Q. And then, when you came out here, what kind
21 of skis were you on?

22 A. Oh, boy. I was on a pair of -- of -- oh,
23 boy. A fellow made them in Lake Placid. What the heck
24 were they called? But they were stiff wooden skis.

25 And the first day I was here, there were a

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1 couple of young ladies who were waitresses, and they
2 said, Oh, come on new boy. Come with us.

3 And -- and they had thongs, you know,
4 wrapped around the marker toe. And I made two turns at
5 the top of Germania and fell, and, of course, came out
6 of the bindings, and the two girls turned around you
7 know, and said, We'll see you new boy. And I went
8 right down to the powder house and bought -- had -- had
9 standards. So I had soft skis. Because you couldn't
10 turn in those heav -- hard wooden skis.

11 Q. And then there's that famous picture of you
12 jumping over -- was that your '62 Corvair?

13 A. '64 Corvair.

14 Q. '64 Corvair?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. I guess that's kind of a iconic picture.

17 And there's you jumping over the road, and
18 there's also a picture of Alf Engen jumping over the
19 road.

20 A. Right.

21 Q. Talk a little bit about, you know, I guess
22 the story that you told me as how you were taught
23 different.

24 A. Well, we got snowed in. We had 15 or ten
25 some inches of snow in less than a week. And

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1 everything was going to slide, so we evacuated the
2 canyon. The first time that I know we -- they did it.

3 But when they shot Superior, all of Superior
4 came down.

5 And Ed LaChapelle, who was the snow ranger,
6 turned white.

7 I mean, he never saw this thing come down
8 that. And we still had the snow up behind the lodges.

9 So we evacuated everyone out. And we got
10 snowed in, and we didn't have anything to do, so Alf
11 and I built a little lip on the other side, and packed
12 it down on the -- on the landing side, and decided to
13 jump.

14 And Ted Johnson saw us. He was living at
15 the Peruvian, and a photographer. Kind of an amateur
16 photographer, but a good one.

17 And he came up and started taking some
18 pictures. And that's how that kind of all came about.
19 But we probably jumped a dozen times.

20 And, I don't know. It just happened. But
21 it's a spectacular shot, with Superior in the
22 background, my little Corvair --

23 Because I'd had to move it from the lower
24 parking lot, after they cleaned that, and then back up
25 to the other lot, so they could, you know, clean the

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1 road up.

2 It took them a week to open the road. A
3 whole week to open the road.

4 Q. When you think about that, too, and I guess
5 that you said that the -- the way that you can tell the
6 difference between you jumping and the way --
7 difference between Alf jumping --

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. -- in the picture.

10 A. My skis aren't together. Alf's skis are
11 together. His were always together.

12 And his butt was a little bigger than mine.
13 Because he was muscular. He had -- his legs were huge.
14 Yeah.

15 Q. I guess what's -- when you think about now,
16 I mean the snowplowing equipment, and maybe the
17 aggressiveness with which they control the road, do you
18 think there's more at stake now to keep that road open?

19 A. Oh, big time.

20 Q. Talk a little bit about the road itself.

21 A. Well, I still can't believe they don't have
22 snow sheds.

23 You know? I mean, they do in Europe. And
24 it would have been -- it would be a lot easier to keep
25 it open with that. But, of course, they put the bypass

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1 road in years ago. That helped. Because Superior was
2 probably the one that slid the most.

3 But, yeah. I mean, we get snowed in, and
4 the road would be closed for a couple of days, and we
5 would -- you know, we'd have to -- food -- you know, we
6 had food that had to come up and down.

7 They had to -- we had -- the -- we didn't
8 have the sewer, so we had tanks that we held the sewage
9 in. If they were going to get -- if they got full, we
10 were in trouble.

11 There were a lot of things that we depended
12 on the road being open.

13 And today. I mean, I guess the road was
14 closed this year, quite a bit, which was unusual.

15 But -- and for the safety reasons too. I
16 mean, there -- I mean, I don't think anyone has been
17 killed by the road, avalanches. Now, that -- they've
18 hit some things, and the cars, and been knocked off the
19 road and stuff, but that -- to have that record of
20 keeping -- not having anybody killed on that road, from
21 avalanches, unbelievable.

22 Q. Well, it is a -- I think -- isn't it like a
23 14 slide pass?

24 A. Probably.

25 Q. I think it's about 14 major slide pass --

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1 A. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

2 Q. -- across that road.

3 A. And they're major. Yeah.

4 Q. And it is -- I guess it does have the
5 dubious distinction of being the most avalanche prone
6 highway in -- in the United States.

7 A. Yeah. Probably.

8 And the pressure from the resorts to keep it
9 open. You know? I mean --

10 And the count -- I mean, to keep it open for
11 tax --

12 I mean, the city and the county and the
13 state, everybody makes money off of it from the taxes,
14 so there's a lot of pressure to keep it open.

15 And make the decision to close it. You
16 know? I'm sure you get -- I'm sure whoever's in
17 charge -- Liam today, but Bing Sandall, the Forest
18 Service -- you know, Ed LaChapelle before. I mean
19 there -- there was pressure, I'm sure, not to close it.

20 Q. Well, they don't close the road anymore.
21 The travel is temporarily --

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. -- restricted.

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Because if they close the road, people will

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1 go up Big Cottonwood or they'll go up --

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. So they just say that the travel is
4 temporarily --

5 A. Yeah. Exactly.

6 Q. The road is closed.

7 A. Exactly.

8 Q. When you -- over the years, I guess, what is
9 it about skiing there you really, really liked?

10 A. Oh, boy. I mean, just powder skiing is
11 just, you know, the ultimate thrill, and feel to get
12 that -- get a face shot. I mean, that's what I try to
13 find today.

14 If I can get a couple of face shots in
15 today, I'm a happy camper.

16 But making your own tracks. Being able to
17 look back and see some tracks that you've made.

18 It's a thrill today.

19 I mean, I've been doing it for a long time.
20 It's still great.

21 Or to help -- to have somebody else, who
22 hasn't done it, to have them see it or do it.

23 Fortunate to ski with a little ten-year-old,
24 or -- with three weeks ago, with that 16 inches of snow
25 we had.

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1 And just to see him, you know, do his little
2 snowplow down through it, and make the turns.

3 And this kid -- I mean, you know, he was in
4 heavens so. Made me feel good.

5 Q. Does it bring back --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Oh, I'm sure. There are a lot of people.

8 I mean, it's just a -- it's -- yeah. It --
9 you're not worried about anything else. You're just
10 skiing -- you're just skiing powder. You're there.
11 It's you. If you're lucky, you're making some first
12 tracks. If you're not, you're crossing somebody
13 else's. But you're still up there, having a good time.

14 And, today, usually you're doing it in a
15 storm. Because that's -- you know, there aren't as
16 many people there, being able to do it. Knowing where
17 to go. You know, know -- having your own little --
18 little shots that you call them. You know.

19 I try not to show too many people my shots.

20 Q. Yeah. I guess that's --

21 A. I -- like fishing. You don't show anybody,
22 you know, where your fishing hole is.

23 Q. Well, it's really -- I'm lucky that there's
24 a lot of --

25 A. Yeah. A little bit of tech -- you know,

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1 technique and stuff.

2 Q. Yeah, it's amazing. I mean, if you look
3 at --

4 A. It's the equipment that's done a lot of it.

5 Q. Yeah. For sure.

6 A. Yeah.

7 But I -- I just had a thought about that.

8 Q. Okay. We're --

9 So when you think about some of the changes
10 that have occurred over the years, either in equipment,
11 or technique, or both, talk a little bit about what
12 you --

13 A. Well, the -- what I've seen happen. I mean,
14 I'm talking skiing with Eddie Morris, and Bill Tishman,
15 who were, you know, trying -- perfect the powder
16 technique, I guess is what they were trying to do,
17 along with Ted Johnson, and a few of the other great
18 powder skiers.

19 And it was -- to be able to ski, in control,
20 and slow, and make short -- not necessarily short
21 turns, but small turns, and -- and be -- be in control,
22 today, with the new equipment.

23 They're skiing so fast, and just making
24 three or four turns down a big hill.

25 We would try to make 50 turns, where today

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1 they're making three turns. Big -- you know, GS turns.

2 But -- but that's one of the major changes
3 I've probably seen lately, is that their -- they're
4 skiing so fast, because the skis are wider. They stay
5 up on top, and they can really cruise.

6 Where back then, we were trying to make
7 30 -- we were trying to count how many turns we could
8 make. And today, they -- they don't care.

9 I mean, I'm not saying they don't care, but
10 they're just -- the equipment is allowing them to go
11 faster, not make as many turns, and just go fast.

12 And you -- you see that in those extreme
13 movies. Where they'll come down out of a shoot and
14 make three turns. And they're stable. I don't know --
15 I mean, we couldn't do that then, because our skis were
16 narrower. We were deeper in the snow.

17 And -- and that's -- that's a big difference
18 in -- in --

19 Q. I think it's amazing --

20 A. -- in 40 years.

21 Q. When you think about someone like Eddie
22 Morris?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Talk about him, as -- I mean --

25 Eddie's High Nowhere.

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1 A. Yeah. I mean, he'd go up there --

2 Go ahead.

3 Q. And, you know, I talked to this guy --

4 Do you know Walkers? Like Neff and

5 Shirley?

6 A. Oh, yeah.

7 Q. Their sons Andy --

8 A. Yeah. And Tom.

9 Q. And Tom.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And --

12 A. Well, they've got a lot of kids. Neff and

13 Shirley did.

14 Q. Do you --

15 A. They all lived in the Watson shelter, too.

16 Q. Yeah. And --

17 But what's really funny is is that, talking
18 to Neff the other day, and he said, you know, Andy just
19 found out where Eddie's High Nowhere was.

20 A. Oh, wow.

21 Q. And it's kind of like --

22 A. No, Eddie used to go there all the time,
23 because he would hike there, and take Tishman, or
24 take -- you know, a -- a student who he was teaching or
25 whatever. But that's why it's called that.

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1 I mean, it was way up high, just above
2 Gunsight. I forget on which side, but. Yeah. I mean,
3 he -- he -- he was the best instructor in powder, and
4 very, very smooth.

5 I mean, Gene Huber, Tishman -- well, Tishman
6 wasn't as smooth as they were, but Huber was very
7 smooth. You know, graceful. Like a ballerina, if I
8 can use that.

9 And but Mul was -- Eddie Mullis -- Morris
10 was --

11 And he had little tricks. You know? He
12 didn't -- he didn't lace the top of his boots so he
13 could get his knees forward. And he had soft boots.
14 And --

15 They had all of these tricks. They tried --
16 he and Tishman would sit up there and talk for hours,
17 to try new things. And then they'd go, and Tishman
18 would want to ski in breakable crust the same way he
19 skied powder. And -- I remembered going out with him
20 days -- because Eddie would be busy teaching somebody
21 else, and Tishman was always looking for somebody to
22 pick on. So I'd go. And, Whew, man. He put you
23 through the paces.

24 But I learned how to do it.

25 Q. I guess that's my -- my lucky fortune is

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1 that when I started skiing, there was a group of
2 Norwegian kids that were going to the U at the same
3 time, and these guys, you know, their -- they would
4 say, You know it, Joey, it's a lot of fun to ski with
5 you. You're not very good, but you seem to always keep
6 up.

7 You know?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. You know, that's -- I guess that's how you
10 learn and progress.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And talk a little bit about how it is to --
13 you know, when you -- you ski at one level, but then
14 you get behind someone who's either really good, or
15 someone you want to emulate. Talk a bit about, you
16 know, about following someone, really down the hill,
17 and how that kind of helps you figure out, you know,
18 kind of how to ski, or --

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. -- see what they're doing?

21 A. Well, and you'd watch them.

22 I mean, Ted Johnson was teaching Wilma how
23 to ski powder. They were up at the Rustler Lodge. And
24 I would hide off in the background, behind a tree -- I
25 didn't hide, but I'd stand over there, and I'd listen

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1 to him tell her what to do.

2 And then she would try it, you know, and do
3 it or not do it, and -- and then --

4 So then I'd try it, and -- and, you know, I
5 just had to keep trying and trying to learn that powder
6 technique. I mean, it took a long time. And there
7 were, you know, some instructors and people that I just
8 happened to catch onto it.

9 You know, at one point I -- I got a rhythm.
10 And once you got that rhythm, and you can make five or
11 six, or 30 turns, and you -- then you've got it. But
12 it takes a while to get it.

13 And -- and seeing all -- and having -- all
14 of these different people were trying different things.
15 And I just happened to be there when they were trying
16 those. And that's kind of how I got my own style, I
17 guess, but.

18 Q. Could you tell -- you know, could you tell
19 whose turns those were?

20 You know, if you were riding a lift or going
21 by a place, could you know -- were -- did people kind
22 of almost have a signature style that you could say,
23 like, Oh, those are Eddie's turns, or those are --

24 A. I'm not sure you could see the turns, but if
25 you saw them skiing, you'd know who -- you know, they

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1 were far enough away you couldn't recognize them, you'd
2 know who they were.

3 And I can still do that with a few people
4 today, that I ski with. And if I see them, I'll know
5 who they were.

6 But the turns were -- were pretty
7 symmetrical, so you -- they were -- you wouldn't maybe
8 not know who they were.

9 You could tell Eddie Morris's, Lyle
10 Waldren's, Danny Cameron's, I mean, because they were
11 tight, and -- and really small turns. You know, short
12 turns.

13 So, yeah, there were people you could tell.

14 Or if you knew where they were going, you
15 could say, Oh, there's, you know, so and so's. Yeah.

16 And it was always fun to try and make figure
17 eights. And that was kind of fun.

18 Q. When -- kind of explain like the figure
19 eight.

20 Would you do it with someone else, and --

21 A. Yeah.

22 If you could, yeah. And -- and some people
23 were better making the front ones, and I happened to be
24 a little bit better making the second ones, because I
25 could -- you know, I felt better, more comfortable

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1 going second on making figure eights.

2 Lyle Waldren and I made a set on the
3 shoulder again, a couple of times. And they were there
4 for a while. And it was kind of fun. That night
5 Tishman and Mull were talking about those figure
6 eights, and we were standing there. Well, we made
7 them.

8 So we felt good that they were talking about
9 them. That we -- you know. We felt good about that.

10 Q. When you talk about the shoulder, there's
11 that big cliff band in the middle. Did you ever jump
12 any of those --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- for Nooses, or Bad News, or any of those?

15 A. No.

16 McConkie's Rocker --

17 Q. Yeah.

18 A. -- whatever, no.

19 No. I jumped in the Golundy contest.

20 Q. Let's talk about it.

21 A. I did do that.

22 Q. Talk to us a little about that.

23 A. That was fun. That was a promotion to try
24 and stay open late in the season, and have some
25 activity.

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1 So they started the Golundy contest.

2 I think it was Jim Gaddis's idea. And Peppi
3 Stiegler came down. Some people from Bogus Basin were
4 really good. They came down to jump.

5 I'm trying to remember their names, but.

6 That was fun. I -- I jumped in college, but
7 I -- of course on jumping skis and stuff. But just
8 committing -- once you start down the shoot, that was
9 always kind of fun. That made your heart -- that got
10 your heart going.

11 And then to get up there and land, and walk
12 away from it. It was fun.

13 Q. When you think about that, we talked to Russ
14 Harmer a bit, and he told us, you know, how they built
15 that jump.

16 A. Mm-hmm.

17 Q. And Alf, you know, wanted to build it a
18 certain way.

19 Talk a little bit about, you know, if you
20 can go back there, you're standing at the top, you
21 know, the in run, and you're about to -- you're about
22 to go, and the big lip, and then you're way the hell up
23 in the air, and talk a little bit about that.

24 A. Wow. It's just -- it's a thrill. It gets
25 your heart going.

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1 And once you commit, you gotta to go.

2 And if you're not aggressive -- I mean, you
3 have to know you want to hit it, you want to go as far
4 as you can go. You're going to be good. If you
5 tentatively go off, then you're in trouble.

6 And, I mean, I -- one day I -- you have to
7 hit -- in jumping, you try to hit the lip just right.

8 And one day I did, and I went further than I
9 ever went, and it just scared the bejesus out of me.

10 And -- but I couldn't wait to go back up and
11 do it again.

12 And that's kind of the way it is. I mean,
13 you just can't wait to get back up and do it again, and
14 do it better.

15 And -- and all of a sudden, not Allen, but
16 Johnny. Oh.

17 (Whereupon, a discussion was
18 held off the record.)

19 Q. Let's go back and --

20 A. The Golundy just finished up, but Johnny
21 Engen was about 14 years old. He -- he was beautiful,
22 in the air. No movement whatsoever. Just pop up.

23 Junior Benoose, the same way.

24 Keith Lange, same way. Just got in the air.

25 I mean, I know I was -- I mean, I know my

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1 arms were going. I never got -- got that stillness.

2 But it was just fun going off.

3 Q. Rolling up the windows, kind of?

4 A. Yeah. Exactly. Sheww.

5 But there were some really great, you know,
6 guys.

7 Gaddis was another one who was -- didn't
8 move once he got in the air. Boom. Just sat there.

9 Q. What's amazing too is that, when you think
10 about, you know, the difference between like jumping
11 skis, and doing the Golundy, in your Alpine equipment,
12 you know, was there different technique that -- you
13 know, to make it work?

14 Did some of the jumping technique --

15 A. It's all timing. Hitting that lip just
16 right, I think. I mean, that was my -- my feeling
17 anyway. I'm sure there's other things.

18 But if you hit the lip right, you were gonna
19 have a nice jump, and.

20 You know, I -- I didn't hit it right very
21 often. I think I jumped too soon, usually.

22 If you jump too late, you were usually in
23 trouble. But if you jumped too soon, you could -- you
24 could correct some of it -- some of the mistakes.

25 Q. What do you think is -- I guess what makes

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1 Alta, Alta?

2 A. That -- it has to be the snow. And the
3 people.

4 I think I mentioned that earlier.

5 It's -- it's just up that canyon. It's a
6 dead-end canyon.

7 The history. I mean, one of the first ski
8 resorts.

9 Yeah. I -- yeah. I'm not sure. There's a
10 lot of reasons.

11 You know, it's -- the snow and the people.
12 And a lot of the people are still there, and you see
13 them, and you talk --

14 Just this reminiscing, and reunions that
15 some people have, and stuff about -- about it. Makes
16 it special.

17 The people I met there, I still -- I still
18 have people that were guests at the lodge that I still
19 communicate with. And some of them still come out
20 here, but they're in their 80s. But I still
21 communicate with them, still talk to them.

22 Good connection. I mean, a good -- good
23 memories. Great memories. Never forget them.

24 Q. Perfect.

25 Is there anything that I haven't -- any

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1 subject that you want to cover that I haven't asked you
2 any questions about?

3 A. I can't think of it. You had -- you had
4 some good questions. I mean, there's more stories, but
5 they're just stories that, you know, wouldn't interest
6 a lot of people. But there's just -- there's --
7 there's so many stories about Alta.

8 I mean, romantic Alta. That was one of
9 their first, I think, advertising, or whatever deals.
10 And there's -- I know there's a lot of people that met
11 and got married up there. And -- and, you know,
12 it's -- it's cool.

13 If you didn't, you have memories of -- you
14 always have memories of Alta. Somebody -- there's so
15 many stories.

16 I think that -- one thing that I would
17 really be interested in is how many people, like
18 yourself, that came out here, from the east, not
19 necessarily New York, but -- and stayed.

20 I mean, there has to be thousands of people
21 that came out, for one reason or another, weren't --
22 were not going to stay, going back and go to school, or
23 do whatever, that stayed here.

24 And I know a lot of them. That are still
25 here. Mainly because of Alta. And that. That's why

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1 I'm here.

2 Where else can you live and be 25 minutes
3 away from, I think the best.

4 I mean, there's other place -- I love to go
5 to Sun Valley. I love to ski Warm Springs at Sun
6 Valley. Nonstop. I'm dead. I can't do anything the
7 rest of the day, but it's still not like Alta.

8 To me. To me.

9 Q. Do you think about -- I mean, I've had chair
10 rides where, you know, on German, you know, it's
11 three -- all three of us were from Connecticut. The
12 three guys behind us were all from Connecticut, or New
13 York --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- or Rhode Island.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You know? I mean, that is kind of an
18 amazing thing.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. And one thing that always strikes me is that
21 you go up there, and it's a lot of locals that are from
22 somewhere else. But you don't know -- I'd hard -- I
23 don't know hardly any people that are from Utah, that
24 are skiers.

25 A. Yeah. Yeah. A lot of them didn't take

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1 advantage of it. You know?

2 But I think there's more today, but I still
3 think there's a lot of people that have come here, just
4 to --

5 And they've been able to find employment,
6 and get -- you know, have a nice job. But I think it
7 was secondary. That the employment --

8 Q. Well, you know trainer? He's the manager
9 of the --

10 (Whereupon, the recording
11 was concluded.)

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