

Interview by Jo Anne Byrd from the JH Historical Society with Frank Galey at the White Grass Ranch on June 22, 1983.

Four children in the Galey family:

Helen (Hennie) Scattergood

Nora (married Ted Elliott)

Marian (married Ingersoll)

Frank

Parents: Frank Galey

Marian Chandler

(After Frank's death, Marian married

Harold Hammond in 1936)

My father passed away two months before I was born. My mother was a friend of Struthers Burt and Tucker Bispham, Harold Hammond's partner at the White Grass. She came out here for a vacation in 1919. I was two years old at that time and we came to the Bar BC dude ranch in September and stayed for Christmas that year. My mother met Harold Hammond at that time and I believe she may have fallen in love with him as early as that.

The Bar BC and the White Grass were very closely connected in those days. There was an organization called the White Grass Ranches where they all got their guests together and then they started the Junior Outfit Ranch, down at the Bar BC. These people had mostly been friends in college, the Coulter Hylers, Spicer, Prentice Grasy, Paul Coburn, Larry Larom. They were all friends at Princeton. We are talking about the years around 1910. Struthers Burt was first at the JY Ranch and then moved down and purchased the Bar BC. This is written up in "The Diary of a Dude Wrangler." Joy remained at the JY and Struthers began operating the Bar BC just about the same time.

Harold Hammond, who later became my step father, was from Boise, Idaho. He came in here to manage the horses during the time they were building Jackson Lake dam. He was in charge of about 600 horses. He was a real cowboy -a westerner. His partner, Tucker Bispham, was a poet and they were an excellent team. Hammond and Bispham homesteaded this place (White Grass Ranch) in 1913. Each one of them had 160 acres. They were just couple of single young men interested in the beauty of this country. They moved right onto the place. Some of our buildings date back to 1913 when they would have been building them -- to prove up on the homestead. The main cabin is one of them That has been enlarged three times, but it was one of the original cabins. The homestead cabin burned down.

They got some horses and raised some hay, bought cattle and operated as a working ranch until 1919. Friends started coming out and they were soon in the dude business. In those days, of course, they had kerosene lamps for lighting, outdoor privies and a big tin tub for bathing. Our hot water system was a 50-gallon drum with a fire under it.

They dug out the ditches with the horses and those ditches we still have today. Harold Hammond was with the American Army in France in World War I.

My mother brought her family, the four of us children, out here in 1919. We were the first guests at the White Grass Ranch.

I cut the ligaments in my wrist rather seriously, and Dr. Huff came up from town and sewed that wrist up by the light of the kerosene lantern. My mother was out hunting with Cissy Patterson at the time. My mother was a very unusual lady. There were not too many women who hunted elk in those days! The doctor took good care of me, but my arm later became infected and my mother took us down to Castle Hot Springs. Then we took the old stage over the pass and got the train from Victor to go east.

We didn't come out often for a number of years during which time Harold Hammond married Marie Ireland. She died in 1935. While I was up in Canada on a canoe trip the following summer, my mother came out with my sister who was working for Charlie Moore in Dubois. Mother came on over to White Grass and stayed for some time. Harold came to Philadelphia that winter and he and my mother were married.

At about that same time Harold bought Bispham out and he and my mother operated the ranch. They continued to run about 50 head of cattle and we had a grazing permit from the park. In the old days our stock could wander down to the old Bar BC, and often did so. They had a lot of space but, of course, that is very changed now. We are now supposed to build drift fences and keep our stock between here and the JY. This sounds easy except the moose break down the fence and the horses still wander. They especially like to go to the Park Superintendent's Lawn!

At the time Harold and my mother were married, they had three cabins and a tent which they rented out to people. At that time, they charged \$10.00 a day. The good wranglers were paid \$1.00 a day. I think they would have had about fifteen to twenty, maximum, people here in those days.

I went to Princeton until 1938 when my stepfather died. Then I came right out here and took over the ranch. I was 21 at that time. The crew was all a lot older, but I had worked for my stepfather so I kind of understood what needed to be done.

We lived in North Carolina when I was a kid and I had a pony from the time I was four years old and I went all through the horse show business and the fox hunting, so I knew a bit about horses. Westerners think they don't know anything about riding in the east, but I think fox hunting takes considerable skill and knowledge.

My mother was quite distraught over Harold's death, naturally, and she didn't come back out here for at least a couple of years. I came and stayed winter and summer.

I went into the Air Force in August of 1941 and got out in November 1945. The ranch was pretty well closed down during that time. Some of the ranchers got taxis to bring the people up from Rock Springs but my mother was pretty sold of sticking to the proper gas

rationing. She thought doing otherwise was unpatriotic. Some of the long-time guests returned those years and helped out.

When I returned there were only about ten horses left. We had Ollie Van Winkle as a caretaker those years and after that we had Shad Hobbs. Erwin Lesher was here for awhile, helping while we raised silver fox. My mother kept her place in Bryn Mawr so she went back there during winters.

In those early days we had Filipinos for cooks. They often ended up bankers and lawyers in their own country but over here they were cooks. They were great people. The whole valley had Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos on the dude ranches. The Chinese worked on the railroads and we would get our help out of Salt Lake. They were rather superstitious. They would always keep their kerosene lanterns on at night. My mother worried about the cost of the kerosene, but Harold told her they were afraid of demons. They cooked on an old wood stove with the drum hot water system. They would get up at 5:00 in the morning and work until 10:00 at night. We usually had about three employees for the cooking, cleaning and all that. Mother would take them back to Bryn Mawr during the winter months.

One time when I got suspended from School and mother and Harold were in Mexico, I was headed down to Bermuda. I went to Sexto, one of our Filipinos, and said "I'll give you five bucks if you'll burn the letter from Princeton when it comes." My mother never knew, until shortly before her death, that I had been suspended.

I learned poker very early at White Grass Ranch. Eventually I made enough money playing poker and bridge, mostly bridge, to buy mother out. I guess I learned gambling much earlier than that. When I was about six we were up at my uncle's house and I did very well. I was making 25 cents a week mowing lawns but in a backgammon game I won \$3.75 from my mother which was a lot of money. About that time a bolt of lightning came and hit the lamp right next to us and she said: "see the evils of gambling." I had three sisters older than I was and we lived in France for quite a time and they always wanted a fourth in bridge, so I was it. I grew up on it.

I later gambled in Jackson and there was a great guy named Ivar who was a coal miner from Rock Springs. He would give me a little sign with his eye to tell me if there were shills in the place. Many years later I went down to Rock Springs for the purpose of borrowing some money. I was in line to see the president of the bank down there when Ivar walked in and said, 'Oh, Frank'. He threw his arms around me and said "I just got paid and we're going on a three-day drunk." The president of the bank walked out for that scene and I didn't get the money.

In college we only played people with a lot of money. We usually played for 2 cents a point which added up. Now I play for a tenth percent a point. The ranch sold for \$15,000 at that time. Mother had a \$22,000 mortgage on this, so I took over the mortgage and paid her \$15,000 that I made in college and in the army.

Norm Mellor bought in with me at that time and a couple of years later I bought him out. I think this was about 1949 when I had the place on my own. My mother retained 5 acres with the homestead cabin which she gave to my sisters and I later bought from them.

Gambling was an interesting part of the early valley days. Everybody was gambling, even though it was illegal. I remember poker, slot machines, roulette in Jackson from the time I was about fifteen. I think they just brought it in for an attraction for the dudes and tourists. Gambling was going in a big way in Jackson even before Las Vegas. The people that owned the bars started the gambling. Any time you have a bar and the people want to gamble, you provide the gambling. A lot of people here wanted it legalized but if we had done that the mafia would have moved in and the local boys would have been out.

I think the whole thing ended when Jack Francis punched a photographer who was taking pictures. If he'd just said: "Have a glass of champagne," or done anything but punch him, I think we'd still have it.

Nels Smith was Governor at that time. The press was all against Jackson and the gambling so they sent a telegram from the governor to sheriff Olin Emery to shut up the gambling. Olin wired back "What gambling?" The prosecuting attorney was then called to Washington and they really had to close down. It went underground for a while. The Work had the snake pit downstairs. The newspapers were just into something for news. It was illegal, of course. It was not taxable, but it did pay off for the community. When we needed a music school at the high school or whatever in the community we'd go to the gamblers and say, "we need \$50,000" and we'd have it the next day.

Back to the ranch. When I came back from the war in 1946 every one of the cabins was leaking and you still couldn't get supplies, so we just patched up one best we could. At this time we had only three less cabins than now. I had some carpentry experience because from the time I was six my mother had let me charge things from the hardware store, as long as I was building something constructive. I built shelves and a lot of things around the house. That went on until the crash in 1929.

In 1946 people stayed as long as two months We had about thirty guests then. We have only about fifty-five total now. We have never wanted to become too large. Some of our guests have been with us all these years. Mrs. Matthews has come every summer and stays for two months. She is the granddame of the ranch. She calls the ranch her home away from home.

We take the guests out riding and fishing. We had our own float trips for several years but now if they choose to go on a float trip they go on one of the commercial trips.

We used to go back and forth to other ranches with our guests a lot, but we've all gotten too

big to do that now.

We have hunting trips for anyone who enjoys that and a pack trip to Yellowstone in the fall. We have gymkhanas once a week and that's a lot of fun for everyone.

I sold to the Park Service in 1955, but I have life tenure, so I plan to continue operating during the summer and fall months indefinitely.

JAN 6 NOV 1985

Fire culminates tragic year

In the past few months, life had dealt Nona Galey a series of hard blows, starting in July with the death of her husband Frank, continuing through the liquidation of her ranch, the White Grass, and culminating in last Saturday's fire which destroyed her home there.

In an interview Tuesday with the *News*, Galey frequently fought back the tears. "I have nothing," she said. "Nothing. I've lost my address book. Can you imagine? I don't even have my friends' addresses. I don't even have a picture of my husband."

In the face of such overwhelming loss, the most immediate for Galey is the disappearance of her favorite pet. Tigger the cat has not been seen since the day of the fire. Galey is unsure of the cat's fate—possibly the fire, possibly coyotes, possibly she is hiding and will return. "She was such a comfort when my husband died. I miss her so much."

The loss to Galey in material goods is substantial. The house and its contents were destroyed in the blaze. According to Galey, "We moved all the things we treasured into the house before the sale." Beside the photos and address books, there were Navajo rugs, paintings and irreplaceable first edition books, some of which were about to be donated to Princeton University. Her husband had frequently given his wife jewelry over the years. She managed to save just what she was wearing at the time of the fire. "I'm wearing borrowed clothes. I haven't had the energy to shop," she said.

Galey was taken to St. John's Hospital on Saturday suffering from smoke inhalation. She is now living in one of the smaller ranch cabins, but is unsure of her future. She holds a lease on one acre of land at the ranch from Grand Teton National Park. "I can rebuild my house if I want, but right now I'm not sure what I'll do." She was going to go to London at Christmas, but now is worried that she won't be able to locate her friends there, having lost their addresses.

As every victim of tragedy in Jackson Hole discovers, the outpouring of support from the community is tremendous. "Everyone has been wonderful, the park people, my neighbors, everyone," says Galey. "If I could find Tigger, I'd be alright. That's what is holding me together."

—Mary Gerty

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