1 Motivation

Streams have been the oldest part of the C++ standard library and their specification doesn’t take into account many things introduced since C++11. One of the oversights is that there is no non-copying access to the internal buffer of a basic_stringbuf which makes at least the obtaining of the output results from an ostringstream inefficient, because a copy is always made. I personally speculate that this was also the reason why basic_strbuf took so long to get deprecated with its char * access.

With move semantics and basic_string_view there is no longer a reason to keep this pessimisation alive on basic_stringbuf. I also believe we should remove basic_strbuf from the standard’s appendix [depr.str.strstreams].

2 Introduction

This paper proposes to adjust the API of basic_stringbuf and the corresponding stream class templates to allow accessing the underlying string more efficiently.

C++17 and library TS have basic_string_view allowing an efficient read-only access to a contiguous sequence of characters which I believe basic_stringbuf has to guarantee about its internal buffer, even if it is not implemented using basic_string obtaining a basic_string_view on the internal buffer should work sidestepping the copy overhead of calling str().

On the other hand, there is no means to construct a basic_string and move from it into a basic_stringbuf via a constructor or a move-enabled overload of str(basic_string & &).
2.1 History

Discussed in LEWG Issaquah. Answering some questions and raising more. Reflected in this paper.

2.1.1 Changes from r0

- Added more context to synopsis sections to see all overloads (Thanks Alisdair).

- rename str_view() to just view(). There was discussion on including an explicit conversion operator as well, but I didn’t add it yet (my implementation has it).

- renamed r-value-ref qualified str() to pilfer() and removed the reference qualification from it and remaining str() member.

- Added allocator parameter for the basic_string parameter/result to member functions (see p0407 for allocator support for stringstreams in general)

3 Acknowledgements

- Daniel Krügler encouraged me to pursue this track.

- Alisdair Meredith for telling me to include context in the synopsis showing all overloads. That is the only change in this version, no semantic changes!

4 Impact on the Standard

This is an extension to the API of basic_stringbuf, basic_stringstream, basic_istringstream, and basic_ostringstream class templates.

This paper addresses both Library Fundamentals TS 3 and C++Next (2020?). When added to the standard draft section [depr.str.strstreams] should be removed from it.

5 Design Decisions

After experimentation I decided that substituting the (basic_string<charT,traits,Allocator const &>) constructors in favor of passing a basic_string_view would lead to ambiguities with the new move-from-string constructors.
5.1 Open Issues discussed by LEWG in Issquah

- Is the name of the `str_view()` member function ok? No. Renamed to `view()`
- Should the `str()&&` overload be provided for move-out? No. give it another name (pilfer) and remove rvalue-ref-qualification.
- Should `str()&&` empty the character sequence or leave it in an unspecified but valid state? Empty it, and specify.
- Provide guidance on validity lifetime of of the obtained `string_view` object.

6 Technical Specifications

The following is relative to n4604.

Remove section on char* streams [depr.str.strstreams] and all its subsections from appendix D.

6.1 27.8.2 Adjust synopsis of basic_stringbuf [stringbuf]

Add a new constructor overload:

```cpp
// ??, constructors:
explicit basic_stringbuf(
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
explicit basic_stringbuf(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);

explicit basic_stringbuf(
    basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);

basic_stringbuf(const basic_stringbuf& rhs) = delete;
basic_stringbuf(basic_stringbuf&& rhs);
```

Change the getting `str()` overload to take an Allocator for the returned string. Change the `str()` overload copying into the string buffer to take an allocator template parameter that could differ from the buffer’s own Allocator. Add a `str()` overload that moves from its string rvalue-reference argument into the internal buffer. Add the `pilfer()` member function obtaining a string from the internal buffer by moving from it. Add the `view()` member function obtaining a `string_view` to the underlying internal buffer.
6.1.1 27.8.2.1 basic_stringbuf constructors [stringbuf.cons]

Modify the following constructor specification:

```cpp
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
explicit basic_stringbuf(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);
```

**Effects:** Constructs an object of class basic_stringbuf, initializing the base class with basic_streambuf() (27.6.3.1), and initializing mode with which. Then calls str(s).

Add the following constructor specification:

```cpp
explicit basic_stringbuf(
    basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);
```

**Effects:** Constructs an object of class basic_stringbuf, initializing the base class with basic_streambuf() (27.6.3.1), and initializing mode with which. Then calls str(std::move(s)).

Note to editors: if p0407 is accepted the changes there for allocators apply here as well. However, different allocators for s and the basic_stringbuf will result in a copy instead of a move.

6.1.2 27.8.2.3 Member functions [stringbuf.members]

Add an allocator parameter for the copied from string to allow having a different allocator than the underlying stream.

```cpp
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
basic_string<charT,traits,SAlloc> str(const SAlloc& sa=SAlloc()) const;
```

Change p1 to use plural for "str(basic_string) member functions" and refer to the allocator:
Returns: A `basic_string` object with allocator `sa` whose content is equal to the `basic_stringbuf` underlying character sequence. If the `basic_stringbuf` was created only in input mode, the resultant `basic_string` contains the character sequence in the range `[eback(), egptr())`. If the `basic_stringbuf` was created with `which & ios_base::out` being true then the resultant `basic_string` contains the character sequence in the range `[pbase(), high_mark)`, where `high_mark` represents the position one past the highest initialized character in the buffer. Characters can be initialized by writing to the stream, by constructing the `basic_stringbuf` with a `basic_string`, or by calling one of the `str(basic_string)` member functions. In the case of calling one of the `str(basic_string)` member functions, all characters initialized prior to the call are now considered uninitialized (except for those characters re-initialized by the new `basic_string`). Otherwise the `basic_stringbuf` has been created in neither input nor output mode and a zero length `basic_string` is returned.

Add the following specifications and adjust the wording of `str() const` according to the wording given for `view() const` member function:

```cpp
void str(basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s);
```

Effects: Moves the content of `s` into the `basic_stringbuf` underlying character sequence and initializes the input and output sequences according to `mode`.

Postconditions: Let `size` denote the original value of `s.size()` before the move. If `mode & ios_base::out` is true, `pbase()` points to the first underlying character and `eptr() >= pbase() + size` holds; in addition, if `mode & ios_base::ate` is true, `pptr() == pbase() + size` holds, otherwise `pptr() == pbase()` is true. If `mode & ios_base::in` is true, `eback()` points to the first underlying character, and both `gptr() == eback()` and `egptr() == eback() + size` hold.

```
basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator> pilfer();
```

Returns: A `basic_string` object moved from the `basic_stringbuf` underlying character sequence. If the `basic_stringbuf` was created only in input mode, `basic_string(eback(), egptr()-eback())`. If the `basic_stringbuf` was created with `which & ios_base::out` being true then `basic_string(pbase(), high_mark-pbase())`, where `high_mark` represents the position one past the highest initialized character in the buffer. Characters can be initialized by writing to the stream, by constructing the `basic_stringbuf` with a `basic_string`, or by calling one of the `str(basic_string)` member functions. In the case of calling one of the `str(basic_string)` member functions, all characters initialized prior to the call are now considered uninitialized (except for those characters re-initialized by the new `basic_string`). Otherwise the `basic_stringbuf` has been created in neither input nor output mode and an empty `basic_string` is returned.

Postcondition: The underlying character sequence is empty.
basic_string_view<


6.2.1 27.8.3.1 basic_istringstream constructors [istringstream.cons]
Change the constructor specification to allow a string copy with a different allocator.

```
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
explicit basic_istringstream(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in);
```

Effects: Constructs an object of class `basic_istringstream<charT, traits>`, initializing the base class with `basic_istream(&sb)` and initializing `sb` with `basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>(str, which | ios_base::in)` (27.8.2.1).

Add the following constructor specification:

```
explicit basic_istringstream(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in);
```

Effects: Constructs an object of class `basic_istringstream<charT, traits>`, initializing the base class with `basic_istream(&sb)` and initializing `sb` with `basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>(std::move(str), which | ios_base::in)` (27.8.2.1).

6.2.2 27.8.3.3 Member functions [istringstream.members]
Add the allocator parameter to the following str() overloads:

```
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
basic_string<charT,traits,SAllocator> str(const SAlloc& sa=SAlloc()) const;
```

1 Returns: `rdbuf()->str(sa)`.

```
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
void str(const basic_string<charT, traits, SAllocator>& s);
```

1
2 Effects: Calls rdbuf()->str(s).

Add the following specifications:

```cpp
void str(basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s);
```

Effects: rdbuf()->str(std::move(s)).

```cpp
basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator> pilfer();
```

Returns: rdbuf()->pilfer().

```cpp
basic_string_view<charT, traits> view() const;
```

Returns: rdbuf()->view().

### 6.3 27.8.4 Adjust synopsis of basic_ostringstream

[ostringstream]

Add a new constructor overload and change the one taking the string by copy to allow a different allocator for the copied from string:

```cpp
// ??, constructors:
explicit basic_ostringstream(
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out);
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
explicit basic_ostringstream(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out);
explicit basic_ostringstream(
    basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out);

basic_ostringstream(const basic_ostringstream& rhs) = delete;
basic_ostringstream(basic_ostringstream&& rhs);
```

Change the `str()` member function to allow different allocator argument for the new string to be used or the obtained string copy. Add an overload of the `str(s)` member function that moves from a string and add `pilfer()` and `view()` member function:

```cpp
// ??, members:
basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>* rdbuf() const;

template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>SAlloc> str(const SAlloc& sa=SAlloc()) const;
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
void str(const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& s);
```
void str(basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s);

basic_string<charT,traits,Allocator> pilfer();
basic_string_view<charT, traits> view() const;

6.3.1 27.8.4.1 basic_ostringstream constructors [ostringstream.cons]

Change the constructor specification to allow a string copy with a different allocator.

\[
\text{template<class SAlloc=Allocator>}
\text{explicit basic_ostringstream(}
\text{const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& str,}
\text{ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out);}
\]

*Effects:* Constructs an object of class basic_ostringstream<charT, traits>, initializing the base class with basic_ostream(&sb) and initializing sb with basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>(str, which | ios_base::out)) (27.8.2.1).

Add the following constructor specification:

\[
\text{explicit basic_ostringstream(}
\text{const basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& str,}
\text{ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out);}
\]

*Effects:* Constructs an object of class basic_ostringstream<charT, traits>, initializing the base class with basic_ostream(&sb) and initializing sb with basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>(std::move(str), which | ios_base::out)) (27.8.2.1).

6.3.2 27.8.4.3 Member functions [ostringstream.members]

Add the allocator parameter to the following str() overloads:

\[
\text{template<class SAlloc=Allocator>}
\text{basic_string<charT,traits,SAlloc>& str(const SAlloc& sa=SAlloc()) const;}
\]

*Returns:* rdbuf()->str(sa).

\[
\text{template<class SAlloc=Allocator>}
\text{void str(const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& s);}\]

*Effects:* Calls rdbuf()->str(s).

Add the following specifications:

\[
\text{void str(basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s);}
\]
Effects: rdbuf()->str(std::move(s)).

basic_string<charT,traits,Allocator> pilfer();

Returns: rdbuf()->pilfer().

basic_string_view<charT, traits> view() const;

Returns: rdbuf()->view().

6.4 27.8.5 Adjust synopsis of basic_stringstream
[stringstream]

Add a new constructor overload and change the one taking the string by copy to allow
a different allocator for the copied from string:

```cpp
// ??, constructors:
explicit basic_stringstream(
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out | ios_base::in);
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
explicit basic_stringstream(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out | ios_base::in);

explicit basic_stringstream(
    basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);

basic_stringstream(const basic_stringstream& rhs) = delete;
basic_stringstream(basic_stringstream&& rhs);
```

Change the str() member function to allow different allocator argument for the new
string to be used or the obtained string copy. Add an overload of the str(s) member
function that moves from a string and add pilfer() and view() member function:

```cpp
// ??, members:
basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>* rdbuf() const;

template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
basic_string<charT,traits,AllocatorSAlloc>
str(const SAlloc& sa=SAlloc()) const;
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
void str(const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& s);

void str(basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s);
basic_string<charT,traits,Allocator> pilfer();
basic_string_view<charT, traits> view() const;
```
6.4.1 27.8.4.1 basic_stringstream constructors [stringstream.cons]

Change the constructor specification to allow a string copy with a different allocator.

**template<class SAlloc=Allocator>**

```cpp
explicit basic_stringstream(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::out | ios_base::in);
```

**Effects:** Constructs an object of class `basic_stringstream<charT, traits>`, initializing the base class with `basic_iostream(&sb)` and initializing `sb` with `basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>(str, which)`.

Add the following constructor specification:

```cpp
explicit basic_stringstream(
    const basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& str,
    ios_base::openmode which = ios_base::in | ios_base::out);
```

**Effects:** Constructs an object of class `basic_stringstream<charT, traits>`, initializing the base class with `basic_stream(&sb)` and initializing `sb` with `basic_stringbuf<charT, traits, Allocator>(std::move(str), which)` (27.8.2.1).

6.4.2 27.8.4.3 Member functions [stringstream.members]

Add the allocator parameter to the following `str()` overloads:

```cpp
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc> str(const SAlloc& sa=SAlloc()) const;
```

**Returns:** `rdbuf()->str(sa)`.

```cpp
template<class SAlloc=Allocator>
void str(const basic_string<charT, traits, SAlloc>& s);
```

**Effects:** Calls `rdbuf()->str(s)`.

Add the following specifications:

```cpp
void str(basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator>&& s);
```

**Effects:** `rdbuf() -> str(std::move(s))`.

```cpp
basic_string<charT, traits, Allocator> pilfer();
```

**Returns:** `rdbuf() -> pilfer()`.
8.7 Appendix: Example Implementations

The given specification has been implemented within a recent version of the sstream header of gcc6. Modified version of the headers and some tests are available at https://github.com/PeterSommerlad/SC22WG21_Papers/tree/master/workspace/Test-basic_stringbuf_efficient/src.