

RECORDED INTERVIEW OF JEAN RODECK

CONDUCTED BY KAREN BREWSTER

IN WOODLAND PARK, COLORADO

MAY 7, 2019

ORAL HISTORY 2017-01-103

KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIBED BY RUTH SENSENIG

[00:00:01]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, this is Karen Brewster. Today is May 7, I think, 2019, and I'm here with Jean Rodeck, known as Jean Swearingen when she lived in Alaska. And I'm here visiting her at her lovely home near Woodland Park, Colorado. And this is for the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park Oral History Project. And Jean, I know you've had a very long career with the Park Service, um, and a lot of that, I think, was covered when Eileen Devinney interviewed you. So (phone rings), oop.

(break)

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, we're back after the phone ringing. Um, so I know Eileen Devinney and you talked a lot about your personal background and your Park Service career, but maybe you -- a little summary of that you were born and raised here in Colorado, right?

JEAN RODECK: Partially. I was kind of raised all over the country.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: During World War II.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Uh, yeah, your father worked for the Air Force, right?

JEAN RODECK: Well, he joined the Air Corps.

KAREN BREWSTER: Air Corps, ok.

JEAN RODECK: When -- in World War II, and uh -- just 'cause he thought he should be patriotic. And he was really too old to -- to be in the service, but he volunteered so they took him.

KAREN BREWSTER: And were you born in --

JEAN RODECK: Boulder.

KAREN BREWSTER: In Boulder.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

[00:01:33]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. And then your education, where did you go to college?

JEAN RODECK: I went my first two years at Mills College in Oakland, California, and then I went my last two years at the University of Arizona, um, in Tucson. And I took art and anthropology and completed an anthropology degree my last two years, because I took every course. And I did ok.

[00:02:07]KAREN BREWSTER: And then when did you start working for the Park Service?

JEAN RODECK: Um, 1955, I was a seasonal for the first time. I had just turned twenty-one, and I was a seasonal for the first time at Rocky Mountain National Park.

JEAN RODECK

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KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: For two summers. And I finished college in '56 and immediately went to work for the Florida State Parks. And uh, worked for them just for a small -- a short, well, not a -- ten-month contract. And then was hired by the National Park Service in San Francisco, Western Museum Laboratory.

[00:02:58]KAREN BREWSTER: So how did you end up getting involved in the -- sort of the museum curatorial side of things?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, I grew up in a museum. My dad was director of the University of Colorado Museum, and um, I was fascinated by that place. Mom said I was just a baby the first time I went to the museum, but by the time I was three, I just, oh, I just loved that museum. And my mom told me when I was about eight that I said I was going to work for National Park Service in musuems.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

JEAN RODECK: And that's what I did, plus a bunch of other things. So I just -- I just was a pest at that museum. Ah, the poor staff, they had to put up with me. They told me later that it was ok, but, oh god, little kid. "What is this? What are you doing? How do you do that? Um, can I do that?" Oh, they just -- they finally asked my dad if they could put me to work. And I swept floors and cleaned snake boxes and learned how to do study skins and carpentry. Between them and my dad, I'm a pretty good -- was a pretty good carpenter. And um, just -- I just -- by the time I was through high school and definitely through college -- I kind of worked my way through college working at the university museum.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: University of Colorado Museum, um (clears throat), for my dad every time I was home. And oh, I made little habitat groups. I did an under -- Permian undersea diorama and, oh, I had a ball. I just loved it. So I just pursued that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Always.

[00:04:53]KAREN BREWSTER: And then, so San Francisco, and then you did projects all around the country based out of that lab in San Francisco?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. We did -- Let's see, I worked on the first exhibits in the new visitor center at Dinosaur National Monument and worked on -- at Cowpens National Historic something. I don't remember whether it was a park or --

KAREN BREWSTER: Where is it? I've never heard of it.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, uh, I could look it up, but I don't remember.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

JEAN RODECK: And I was -- I've been there. I just don't remember state lines.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And, oh gosh, I worked on Bryce and Zion and -- I worked on maybe about ten, ten parks. I can't even remember 'em. That's why I wanted my journals.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And it was all, um, exhibit design at that point?

JEAN RODECK: It -- yeah, mainly exhibit fabrication.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Because um, we had to hit the ground running. The Western Museum Lab was part of Mission 66, and I -- I was hired in 1958, and they were just putting it

together. And they had until, um, 1966 to do exhibits for a bucketful of National Park Service areas. And they had a lab in Washington, DC, temporary buildings on the Mall.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

JEAN RODECK: And then they set up this one in San Francisco in the basement of the old Mint building.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

JEAN RODECK: And um, so we just really had to hustle. They were just -- it was just like factory.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: I -- I would spray paint panels. Um, you'd just look at the design that the designers and planners had done, and you'd just measure it out and go psshh, psshh (sound of paint spraying) as approximate to those colors as you could, and hand it on to somebody else and they'd do something. Dick Morishige was one of the letterers, and he ended up being the Chief of Graphics for the Denver Service Center. And oh, we just -- we just turned 'em out like crazy. I got to mount photographs on a piece of Masonite, and then paint so that it looked like they were wrapped around there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

[00:07:34]JEAN RODECK: And -- and then put 'em on the exhibits and do illustrations for the exhibits. Bill Berry did many of them. He did Bryce and Zion, and they are -- I hope that they kept those because they're beautiful wildlife illustrations, just fabulous.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, he's -- he was an Alaskan artist.

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Eventually.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, he came, um, yeah, Liz and Bill had their first baby and -- so he was hired, I think, before I was, so that he was hired, like in 1950 --

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

JEAN RODECK: -- seven, maybe, when they started hiring.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, ok. And then --

JEAN RODECK: But they'd already been in Alaska.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, right.

JEAN RODECK: Because they were there with Celia (Hunter) and Ginny (Wood) to start the place they helped --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Started by Woody (Morton Wood).

KAREN BREWSTER: When they helped start Camp Denali.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that was 1952.

JEAN RODECK: Yes, '52.

KAREN BREWSTER: I believe.

JEAN RODECK: Was -- that was the date.

[00:08:44]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Um, so then, you -- you worked in other parks. You worked -- didn't you work in Yellowstone?

JEAN RODECK: I did. I was married in Yellowstone and lived there shortly, and um, and then we moved to Omaha, where my husband was in personnel. And then we moved to Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, and my husband quit his job and quit the Park

Service, and I quit him. And -- and then I got a job, um, back in Yellowstone. The Chief of Interpretation had -- I had gotten acquainted with he and his family, and so he hired me as a term employee to do everything. I -- in the spring, I would open up the visitor centers in the -- out in the park and clean 'em and wash 'em and wash the windows and sweep and do that all, and then go to the next one. [00:09:57]And I ended up marking bison for the -- for Mary Mar -- who was doing a bison study (this would have been Margaret Mary Meagher), and I just -- you know, somebody, some other division, rangers in that case, needed somebody to do a quick job. They'd say, "Oh, John, can we borrow Jean?" (this was probably John Good, Chief Park Naturalist) He said, "Sure." And so, I got to just do everything and go all over the park. Help the boys -- the boys. Um, the Black Bear Boys, we called 'em, doing a study on black bears (might be referring to John and Frank Craighead, well known for their grizzly bear research at Yellowstone in the 1960s). And I got to go and monitor dens in the winter time. I'd drive out into the park and put on my -- my cross-country skis or snowshoes and go and look at the outside of a den to see if a bear had come out of it, and --

KAREN BREWSTER: How exciting.

JEAN RODECK: And I'd check where the -- where the dens were. One of them was in a culvert at Old Faithful.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, my.

JEAN RODECK: And so I'd look in the culvert, and I could see him at the other end. And one time, I looked in the culvert, and I couldn't see him. I couldn't see anything. And he was about this far from me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Like a foot away. Moved up the culvert.

JEAN RODECK: He had come to the other end.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: That was -- it was fun. I got to do all sorts of stuff up there.

[00:11:21]KAREN BREWSTER: And then you came to Alaska when?

JEAN RODECK: I came to Alaska, um -- I was chosen as the first regional curator for Alaska in

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KAREN BREWSTER: '95? Is that what --

JEAN RODECK: In 1984.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, 1984, ok.

JEAN RODECK: And I left in '95.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Came down here.

KAREN BREWSTER: I knew there was something about '95.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: So did you apply for that position?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Oh, yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And why?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, because I had done interpretive planning for -- for the National Park Service in Alaska at, uh, Sitka, Glacier Bay, uh, a little bit in Denali. I did work for -- interpretive planning for the Forest Service and for BLM up on the Dalton Highway, and I just got all -- do all sorts of things for all sorts of people. It was great.

[00:12:36]KAREN BREWSTER: And that interpretive planning, where were you -- ?

JEAN RODECK: In Denver. At the Denver Service Center.
KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, so you --
JEAN RODECK: Yeah.
KAREN BREWSTER: When did you work for the Denver Service Center?
JEAN RODECK: Mm, hm-hm-hm?
KAREN BREWSTER: Or approximately?
JEAN RODECK: Um, oh, that was my -- no. My first job out of college was Florida and then -- Oh, I should've written all this down beforehand.
KAREN BREWSTER: That's ok. I know -- I'm pretty sure it's in the interview with um, Eileen.
JEAN RODECK: I'm pretty sure it is, too, with the dates.
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.
JEAN RODECK: But it was, um, where was -- did I move there?
KAREN BREWSTER: Well, but the -- so the interpretive planning in Alaska was based out of the Denver Service Center?
JEAN RODECK: Yes.
KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.
JEAN RODECK: And then I was chosen to be the interpretive planner for the Western Region, and um, that included Alaska and Hawaii.
KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.
JEAN RODECK: When they -- when they decided that we shouldn't be just hopping all over the country, which was so much fun. It was really good for all of us.
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.
JEAN RODECK: We had so much variety.
KAREN BREWSTER: 'Cause yeah, you said in San -- from San Francisco, you went to do something in Virginia, didn't you? Or --
JEAN RODECK: Oh, all over the country.
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.
JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Just all over the country.
[00:13:53]KAREN BREWSTER: So for people who don't know, can you explain what interpretive planning is?
JEAN RODECK: Interpretive planning is assessing the resources, be they natural history or cultural resources. Old buildings, ruins, uh, pottery, and -- and the natural resources were just all the natural -- natural history.
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.
JEAN RODECK: And um -- What were we saying?
KAREN BREWSTER: So you were assessing the resources in the park? Oh, you were --
JEAN RODECK: Oh. You assessed the resources in the park. So you've got -- you've got geology, and you've got some history, and you've got some prehistory, and you've got some paleontology over here, and um -- I'll quit pounding the table.
KAREN BREWSTER: No, no. It's fine.
JEAN RODECK: And -- and then you figure out -- You know kind of what visitors do. Visitors like films, so you want to capture them with something. A film is a great way to, uh, tell a complicated story in a short amount of time.
KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Because telling somebody something and seeing it visually is easier for 'em to learn than just telling 'em about it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:15:11]JEAN RODECK: And so, um, so it was picking how to use wayside exhibits along the trails or visitor center exhibits or a book or a film or whatever. And figuring out what's the best way. You need to catch people coming into a visitor center, but you gotta catch 'em after they've gone to the bathroom. And -- and just doing that kind of -- doing that kind of planning.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And just as though you were walking into a visitor center. And um, it was -- and then you'd write it up and do diagrams and plans and stuff. And then the park could give that to, say, Harpers Ferry or a contractor or something, and -- or they could just look at it and say, "Oh, well, we can do this trail and --" So we would even go along a trail and say, "You need to talk about the rock formation here, and then you need to talk about the history there." But you need to connect how the history -- something historic always happened in a place with water or along a well-used trail or something.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And that's why it was at that particular place. Or that the rocks were full of gold, so they --

[00:16:45]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. So you didn't design the exhibits. You did the conceptual, like the --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. We did what they needed to -- what the exhibits and other media needed to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: What they needed to present to the public.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And then they'd get Harpers Ferry, um, what's the full -- Harpers Ferry's like the Park Service Center --

JEAN RODECK: Design Center.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. And -- or something. And they would take your information and make an exhibit?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Or -- but they would. You know, it'd always change. It was -- somebody'd come up with a better idea and stuff. But, boy, they -- they took our -- we did -- had to do a plan for Andersonville Prison in Georgia, and um, that was the hardest job any of us ever did. I always had teams of people from Harpers Ferry representing what we knew -- pretty well what we knew was going to be used within the park for catching visitors. And Andersonville was so hard 'cause it was -- the story was just horrible. And so, somebody on the team, and I wish I knew who it had -- who it was, came up with the idea of having Andersonville be a memorial to all wars and all sides, um, that Americans had fought, whether it was against each other or whatever. And we did tell about Andersonville Prison, and they -- they've got waysides out at the prison so you know where the deadline was and all this stuff. And um, but in the visitor center, when I -- Two years ago, I went to Andersonville. I just wanted to know what they had done to do this memorial to all wars for enemies and, you know, the good guys and the bad guys.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And um, when I drove up to the visitor center, there were four US Army buses there, and I found out that it was, um, OCS, the Officer -- whatever, I can't remember.

KAREN BREWSTER: Corps, no.

JEAN RODECK: School of Training. Anyway, it was the training officers. And they -- there was a guy with a clipboard, so I said, "What are all these guys doing here?" They were all in khaki pants and black shirts with "US Army" on their shirts. And he said that it was required for them to come to Andersonville and really in depth look at the exhibits and the films and -- and everything as part of their officer training.

KAREN BREWSTER: Good.

JEAN RODECK: And it was awesome. I just -- I'm not a really overly emotional person, but I just cried the whole time I was in there. It was just -- oh, I can feel it right now in my chest. It just -- um, they did a really magnificent job of going through the wars and -- but not really specifically about each war. They would have -- they had a cage from Vietnam, one the -- like the one McCain (John McCain) was in.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And, hm. And um, and then they had some other examples of incarceration, you know, chains and stuff like this. So they kind of mixed all the objects up by subject.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And, oh my god, it was just incredible. Unbelievable. And you'd see these -- these women and men who were going to be officers, tears. They were going like this.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wiping the tears away.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah. And it -- it was -- anyway, that's what they did with our interpretive plan. They just really took it to heart and said, let's do it and make it effective.

[00:21:01]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Well, and it seems like when you were doing all that, you'd have to learn a lot about a particular park very quickly.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yes. Um, they would send us a packet of things to read before we got there, and -- and so, sometimes just before I'd go into the park, I'd be reading the last of the -- of the things they had given me because we were -- we often were doing several jobs at once.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Which I didn't particularly like. I wanted to just do this job and have that end. But you couldn't do that. We had too many.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was thinking, like Sitka, the story of Sitka is so very multi-faceted.

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: It'd be a lot to learn to help with the planning.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, it was something. We took a -- I decided to take a cruise ship up to Sitka because this is how most visitors arrive. So my daughter and a friend and I got on a cruise ship, and um, we -- I had a -- a big basket of books, or a big bag of books, um, that -- for Sitka, and we also were going to Glacier Bay and Denali. So um, so we were -- this friend, who was a historian, and Lynn, who was about thirteen, we were just up in the empty bar in this cruise ship, just reading and reading and reading. And um, we went to

the talk, uh, that was given that night, and this lady did not know what she was talking about. And Lynnne raised her hand and asked a question, and this lady said, "Oh, I don't know." So a little while -- I guess the next night, we -- I went up to her and I said, "Well, we found the answer to that question." And so, the third day, she came up to where we were, and she just started writing down these books. By the time we got to Sitka, she had those books in hand.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

JEAN RODECK: And was doing a lot better. And when she got a question, and she'd say, "Lynn." She said, "Can you answer that question?" And Lynnne would go, "Yes." Oh, we had a good time. Anyway, that's, yeah. Sitka was just fascinating to all of us. And then going to Glacier Bay was just so much fun. I mean, these were places we had to go.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Yeah. What a great job. You get to go to these places.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, darn.

[00:23:45]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, so why did you apply to become the regional curator then?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, because I had done so much interpretive planning up there. And one of the things that -- that I looked at -- because of my curatorial background was one of the reasons I was chosen as one of the interpretive planners. Because then we had a biologist and a geologist and a historian and an archeologist and a curator and sociologist, and we would help each other with these aspects. They'd bring the curatorial part and have me look at it, and um, so the one thing that I noticed in the parks we went to, and I went to some other parks in Alaska, that we weren't -- I wasn't working on, I just wanted to see 'em, and um, and the one thing that I realized was that they badly needed a curator because they had records and archeological collections, and -- and um, some of them didn't even have a, um, herbarium.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: And -- and I just realized that what they needed the most -- they had superintendent, administration, interpretation, law enforcement, but they did not have anybody taking care of the collections, which is usually an ancillary job anyway, which -- unfortunately. But by the time I left there eleven years later, we had curators in several parks.

[00:25:23]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that's what I was wondering, was why a regional curator instead of each park having their own curator?

JEAN RODECK: Well, because nobody had that much money.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: And in some parks, there wasn't that much to do, and so that's why they were ancillary, because we have hiring -- hiring ceilings, where a park can only -- like Florissant Fossil Beds up here can only have eight permanent employees.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: And um, so uh, so, uh, so a regional curator, I was very mobile, and I'd just go out and solve this problem, and catalog those things, and order 'em a cabinet and put 'em in there, and do their records for 'em. And then when I got Eileen --

KAREN BREWSTER: Eileen Devinney.

JEAN RODECK: And -- oh, Eileen Devinney, yes, and Connie Estep and oh, I got -- I ended up with about five or six really well-trained curators that I stole from other regional curators who had trained 'em. 'Cause they already had all those --

[00:26:35]KAREN BREWSTER: Did you say somebody last night, Patrick? Pat? Was there a --
JEAN RODECK: Pat McKnight.

KAREN BREWSTER: Was that one of them also?

JEAN RODECK: The curators, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: And um, oh gosh. Sean was up at the University of Alaska for a long time. He just moved up there and -- and um, we made sense out of the archeological collections that they had from what were now parks. We didn't work the collections, but we wanted them to know that should they have to get rid of them, that they needed to because they were actually property of the government.

KAREN BREWSTER: So yeah, the -- the UA museum was the federal repository.

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: For -- for --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. I think so.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- federal collections from public -- federal public lands?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And so, you were making sure they followed --

JEAN RODECK: Well, yeah, we tried to help 'em do things, get cabinets for 'em and we sent Sean up there so he could do the cataloging of just thousands.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: I don't know, like a hundred thousand objects or something that we had finally in the park records and in -- because the university already had those records, but Sean went up there and made it -- fixed it so that the park knew what they had there. And we did that, even with collections in Denmark.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh. And what was Sean's last name? Do you remember? Ok. I'm sure it's in the records someplace.

JEAN RODECK: It's in -- it's in all my books that are missing.

[00:28:08]KAREN BREWSTER: Your great notebooks that you kept at the archives here at Colorado State University in Colorado Springs, is that what it's called?

JEAN RODECK: No. Fort Collins.

KAREN BREWSTER: Your collection's in Fort Collins?

JEAN RODECK: Uh-huh.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, I thought it was --

JEAN RODECK: Colorado State University is in Fort Collins.

KAREN BREWSTER: In Fort Collins? Oh, ok.

JEAN RODECK: That's the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: A branch of.

KAREN BREWSTER: But so, your personal collection's at Colorado State University's archives.

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: In Fort Collins, Colorado.

[00:28:44]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Um, so that regional curator position, did you create that, or -- 'cause you said you -- you felt like the Alaska parks needed that.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Um, the woman who was in charge of cultural resources took it to heart that we needed a curator. She had done curatorial work at Yosemite, and um, she -- she knew what primary resources were, which is what collections are, is primary resources. As much as, um, say the stumps are at Fossil --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Florissant Fossil Beds or the mountains or the Rocky Mountain sheep at Rocky Mountain. But these are just pieces of things that can't be left outside 'cause they're going to go away. People will take 'em. They'll disintegrate. They will -- they can't be studied if they're out where we would prefer them, but -- so that's what collections are all primary resources. There's nothing else in the collections except primary resources.

[00:30:02]KAREN BREWSTER: And that can include, um, historic photographs?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: Diaries, uh, an artifact excavated in an archeological excavation or part of a historic building?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or flower samples?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or old bones?

JEAN RODECK: A herbarium. Uh-huh.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, it can cover everything?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. It covers absolutely everything from under the ground up. Because every park's got geology. There's 419 parks now, and, of course, they're all on the ground, and so every park has geology. So far, every Colorado park has paleontology resources. And most parks -- most parks do. And they -- you know, they all have plants of some kind. Whether it's a historic park or a manipulated landscape or whatever. So you got to know what those are. And you've got to be able to use 'em for exhibits and for training and for researchers and all sorts of things. Collections are just used for multitudinous reasons.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, and depending on what the collection is.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

[00:31:37]KAREN BREWSTER: Do you remember the name of that person who kind of got the Alaska position going?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, Leslie Starr Hart.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Two "r's" in Starr. And she's the one that hired me. And, oh, I'm just so grateful for her, because I just knew that -- that I should be the regional curator that I was recommending, and uh, and so did she, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you remember what your first project was when you got to Alaska?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Um, it was Frank Deckert, the Chief of Interpretation, had been assigned to keep the records for the regional curator. And he had boxes that were all in

chronological order, and he had -- he had done all the reports that were required for Washington, and he had those in there. So I just had to turn the boxes upside down and start -- and just reading through, I think there were two boxes full of papers. And by the time I read through those, I was pretty up on what he had done and what the, um, what the Washington office directives were. And so it was -- that was my first task, and that took me a couple weeks. But um, what I did was, um, I made a notebook for each of the fifteen parks. And um, I -- if I called a park, say, if I called somebody at Denali to find out, you know, what their situation was or when I could go up there, and so I'd write in that notebook. I used these secretarial notebooks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: You know, with the -- and I just had a file in my drawer to put everything down in there that -- that I talked to them about. And that's also a lot of what was in my journals, so.

[00:34:04]KAREN BREWSTER: Now, did the regional office have its own collections and archives?

JEAN RODECK: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or was it all -- in all of the parks?

JEAN RODECK: It was all in the parks or under people's desks. Archeologist are -- they are just not prone to giving up their research and stuff. Um, but what we did -- what -- the big thing that I did there was establish a central repository so that some of the things that the parks were not equipped to preserve, like Yukon-Charley Rivers. I mean, they were in a log cabin, and -- and they just were not in a position to keep, uh, or to care for properly, some of the objects in their collections. And so, we -- I established this repository, which was in the middle of where offices were all the way around. And so, it was in the middle, very well buffered from changes in temperature and that kind of thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that was in the Park Service's offices in Anchorage?

JEAN RODECK: In Anchorage, yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, and that was when -- not their current location?

JEAN RODECK: No. No, this was out on Fireweed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And so anyway, we brought a lot of things in there and -- and protected them. And then, when -- when they moved to the other building, Stephanie Stephens, um, just -- she established a huge repository. It was wonderful. Oh, I was just so proud of them.

[00:35:46]KAREN BREWSTER: And how did you keep track of the objects in terms of cataloging? Did each park have its own system?

JEAN RODECK: Each park has its own catalog, um, call -- call letters, you know, like the first two letters of a two -- like Yukon-Charley was Y-U-C-H.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right, and Klondike is K-L-G-O.

JEAN RODECK: And, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: For Klondike Gold Rush.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. But it's just the first two letters of the words in the title.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And Denali is --

JEAN RODECK: D-E-N-A 'cause it's just one word.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ah.

JEAN RODECK: And so -- so each, uh, you oughtta be interviewing Eileen for this.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I know.

JEAN RODECK: Um, but um.

KAREN BREWSTER: I'm just getting a general sense.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: For people who've never done that. I know the concepts, thanks to you.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: The training you gave me.

JEAN RODECK: Well. Yeah, Eileen had -- she had a box, a little box like this, and each -- each park had a card. And she would note down on that card when they got collections, just a few words. And then, she would make sure they were all cataloged, and the catalog books were -- each park had their own big blue book.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. That was -- my basic -- my question, yeah, was it cataloged by park, or the whole big, this is all Park Service stuff?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, no. No, each -- each catalog number, each object had, like, KLG0-1.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Or 500 or 7000 or however many they got with the Rapuzzi Collection.

[00:37:30]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Um, so do you remember how you got involved with projects in Skagway?

JEAN RODECK: Well, it was one of the parks that I was regional curator of, so I went down there. I tried to make that -- the first six months, I tried to go to every park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: Um, and uh.

KAREN BREWSTER: Did you succeed?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, I did. I think so. At least, I remember I did.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. There's, like you said --

JEAN RODECK: Well, like with Aniakchak, that -- I didn't make it --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: -- there for a while until I could get flown in, but um -- And some of the parks, like Aniakchak, did not have any collections, but as research was done, I said, "Now look, I am offering you immortality by having this consolidated storage. And if you will give me your research in a package so that we can have this package of the work that you did at Aniakchak or wherever, um, that will be preserved forever. And it will be accessible forever, but it will be protected, so it's not going to go anywhere. And so, I am offering you immortality." I -- there're probably some archeological collections that have been moved to this other place that are still under people's desks and in their personal files, where they should not be, but.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Well, and researchers oft --

JEAN RODECK: You can only do so much.

[00:39:16]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And researchers, whether it's archeology or something else, they want to keep their data with them until they've written their reports.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yes. Yes. But most of those had -- the reports had been written and distributed, and they were all covered in dust. And I said, "You know, any that has been -- that you're not using." I didn't want to take things that they were using. But I said, "We could."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And that would be easier for you to access some of this material if it got archived.

[00:39:50]KAREN BREWSTER: And so, what was the response? Did people in the Park Service --

JEAN RODECK: I think maybe a couple of people gave us collections. I don't remember, because then Eileen was the registrar, and so if they were going to give something, I'd say, just go see Eileen. I didn't need to know that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. I just didn't know, yeah, how receptive people were to this idea.

JEAN RODECK: They were not receptive at all.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: But a few people were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: But -- and -- and a few people would say, "Well, we'll give you this little thing." And I said, "It's the whole package that is your contribution to whatever park."

[00:40:28]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Um, well, in the Skagway with the Klondike park, um, Karl Gurcke was sort of the first collections ancillary person?

JEAN RODECK: No, it was Betsy Duncan-Clark.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, she was the official person, right? Wasn't --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, no. You're right. Betsy was before Karl.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. And -- and Betsy was -- Betsy was a very wonderful, wonderful, generous, kind, enthusiastic person. As a histori -- or historic interpretation, she trained really good interpreters.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And apparently, she gave a good talk. But she would -- you know, tour around.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: But she would always assign that to somebody else when I came, so I never got to hear her.

[00:41:38]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and being in the museum curatorial field, or archives, you have to be very organized and keep track of everything.

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And um, that may not have been her training?

JEAN RODECK: That was not her strong point at all. She was a dear person, but she was not very good.

KAREN BREWSTER: Not everybody has the brain that organizes things, or if you don't -- if you're not trained in it --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- you don't understand the importance of it, that may not be what you do.

JEAN RODECK: I tried. It was --

KAREN BREWSTER: So at that point --

JEAN RODECK: So --

KAREN BREWSTER: -- were the collections in Skagway fairly numerous? Or was still pretty small?

JEAN RODECK: No, they were pretty small because they didn't take anything off the Chilkoot Trail. Most of it was too big, and the smaller stuff had just disappeared with people --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: -- hiking over the trail. They always seemed to take something home. And so, we came up with this idea that we would map the trail, and we would -- we would document where the stove part was, and where the, you know, the bellows were, and -- and then we'd go up there again and went, wait a minute. The stove top isn't there anymore. And we'd find it either down the trail a ways or up the trail a ways as far as anybody could carry it, and then they got tired and dumped it. And so, those objects moved around a lot, those big heavy ones. But the smaller stuff was -- From the time that, um, I think the first Park Service people went up, they'd just -- every time, they'd go up over the trail, they'd see that more and more had been taken. So some of those things were brought in and cataloged, and they -- we -- I got 'em cabinets and helped -- tried to help Betsy with the cataloging. [00:43:52] And then, see, when I got all these curators, um, I got one guy. Oh, god. Garry Davies was -- it's two-R Garry. Um, he was the natural -- he was a biologist, so he was the natural research person.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And oh man, was he a good cataloger. Like Pat McKnight, just -- those guys just whipped out those catalog records, and they were accurate and total and, oh, they were really, really good.

KAREN BREWSTER: And where was Garry?

JEAN RODECK: He was in Anchorage.

KAREN BREWSTER: He was in Anchorage.

JEAN RODECK: With us, with Pat.

KAREN BREWSTER: Uh-huh.

JEAN RODECK: And Connie and Eileen and some others that didn't -- didn't stay very long, but I couldn't offer permanent jobs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: So they were -- some of 'em were term, and some of 'em were just seasonal.

[00:44:50] KAREN BREWSTER: And then, in Skagway, those items out on the trail that were left out there, are they considered part of the Park's collections?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Yeah, because they wanted to keep track of 'em.

KAREN BREWSTER: So they --

JEAN RODECK: So I don't know if those are -- if those things are cataloged or just -- they were just mapped.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. They're not necessarily have a number written on them if they're still out there on the trail?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, I don't really know.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: I don't remember. I don't think so, because there just wasn't the manpower to do that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: I don't think so, but --

[00:45:27] KAREN BREWSTER: So '84 was about when you first made contact with Klondike park?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: And Betsy was the curator at the time?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um.

JEAN RODECK: Ancillary again.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: 'Cause she was interpretation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, right. Ok. And then Karl became permanent in 1987.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, and I was still there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And he said that you helped give him training. I think --

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Yes. Oh, I --

KAREN BREWSTER: He was the cultural resource specialist. Again --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- museum stuff kinda was ancillary.

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Yeah. Cultural resources -- and natural resource people got ancillary for say, like, Denali. And for Klondike and some of those other historic sites and Sitka, it was the cultural resource division.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: I guess, that got the ancillary duties. I'd forgotten about that, yes.

[00:46:32]KAREN BREWSTER: And Karl said he used to contact you with questions about what was happening.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah. And it was wonderful to have somebody who actually did something.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And so, was it normal to send -- 'cause he said you sent him to Harpers Ferry for training.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yes. Oh, gosh yes. I sent everybody that -- that the park was willing to let me have for a while. Um, I took them with me to Harpers Ferry to the curatorial training and to curatorial meetings, and I -- and we had training in Anchorage, and I trained people in the parks. And uh, and Eileen and particularly Becky Saleeby and Garry Davies did training in the parks when a new ancillary person was coming, and then we'd finally get 'em into Anchorage. And so, I just -- I just really believe in training. And I think that's interesting, that Karl said that that was the only training he'd gotten.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: But it was -- he was -- you know, it was just great to have somebody who was really able to do the work.

[00:47:45]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Well, and the fact, though, that it was sort of ancillary duties, that you still felt they would benefit from training.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. And I would -- I took the -- I think he was just -- I think he was a law enforcement ranger from Yukon-Charley, and I talked him into -- 'cause he said, "Oh yeah, I'd do that." So we'd fly off to Harpers Ferry, and I got the, um, Chief of Interpretation. No, was he law enforcement, too? At Kotzebue, for the -- for those three parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Western Arctic Region is what they're called now.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: WEAR, but it's --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Kobuk Valley, Noatak, and um --

JEAN RODECK: And -- and --

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, there's the villages of Kiana and Ambler, but what's the --

JEAN RODECK: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: I can't think.

JEAN RODECK: Well, the main one up there was Bering Land Bridge.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah, that's -- no, Gates of the Arctic kinda goes over there, too.

JEAN RODECK: Well, yeah, but that wasn't in the block when I was there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah.

JEAN RODECK: It was just those three.

KAREN BREWSTER: Bering Land Bridge is the other part of WEAR, yeah, maybe.

JEAN RODECK: Bering Land Bridge, Kobuk, and Noatak. And Cape Krusenstern.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, that's right. That's the one we were forgetting.

JEAN RODECK: And um, oh my gosh. And so, I took -- I took Bob Martin from the -- from their group office in Kotzebue, and um, took somebody else from Bering Land Bridge. I think they were separate. Anyway, at the time. It's all changed now.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: But, oh yeah, as soon as somebody was designated as the ancillary duty, I got 'em to training in a hurry.

[00:49:45]KAREN BREWSTER: That was good. Karl also talked about the, um, park's Museum Scope of Collection Statement.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. SOCS.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you remember?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yes, because everybody had to have one.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And Klondike didn't have one yet?

JEAN RODECK: No. Actually, it wasn't until after I got there that the Washington office kinda came up with the truism that we needed -- every park needed to have a document that said what they collected and what they did not collect, so that they could show this to the little lady that wanted to give her hundred doilies to, um, who was it to? Denali, or someplace like that. Um, and we'd say, "I'm sorry, you know, if it's not -- wasn't used in the park or part of the park resources, we can't accept it. And -- and here's a nice museum that would probably like those doilies."

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: So I'd call somebody. I called, oh, I never remember her name. Um, can't even remember where she was from. But anyway, I called her, and I said, "There's a lady gonna -- going to offer you a collection of doilies." It was somebody with a historic house up there. She said, "Can we use 'em in the house? Because this lady had doilies on everything." And I said, "Just put that in the -- you know, tell her that they -- they will be on exhibit and they will be probably be lightly used. And just put that in the -- in the gift agreement and have at it." Oh, they loved it.

(cat noises in the background)

JEAN RODECK: I guess it wasn't -- it wasn't somebody in -- in um --

KAREN BREWSTER: Jack the cat wants to participate.

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

[00:51:43]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, so do you remember helping with the scope of collections for Skagway?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, I helped with all of them. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And, uh, I don't know, I guess how did you help? What did you -- ?

JEAN RODECK: Well, we had a little training thing on what a scope of collections would do and what it wouldn't do, but it outlined pretty strictly what they had collected, what they should collect, and what they shouldn't ever collect. And um, it outlined how they would be taken care of, that -- with relative humidity and all that stuff. HVAC systems and cabinets and insulation and padding and, um, it was that they would -- that they would be properly taken care of in perpetuity.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And was Klondike limited just to Gold Rush material? Do you remember?

JEAN RODECK: No, I don't remember, but uh, for every one of the parks I recommended that they have samples of all the rocks they had there, and that they should have a herbarium. Even a historical area should have a herbarium and -- and um, study skins and, you know, know what their critters were and that kind of thing, because they all had 'em.

KAREN BREWSTER: Even though it was a historical park?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. It didn't matter. It didn't matter what, um, what the park was designated for originally. They needed -- every park needs to know everything that's in their boundaries, from geology to, I don't know, air samples.

[00:53:45]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, one of the things that about Skagway we were talking about before about were the exhibits, and that --

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: The -- the discussions about the park's first exhibits.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. The park's first exhibits. Um, Glenn Clarke, C-LA-R-K-E. Glenn Clarke was the regional Chief of Interpretation. And um, we were asked to come down and meet with the exhibit team because interpretation and the care of collections needed to be in on the initial planning for the -- for the -- this was after the depot buildings had been restored.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: And they were beautiful. Oh, they are just so beautiful. Anyway.

KAREN BREWSTER: So this was to design exhibits for the newly restored depot building?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Yeah. So they -- Harpers Ferry had done an exhibit plan, and we were to go down and review it. Well, we went down and reviewed it, and oh, my god, it was so awful. It totally ignored that incredibly, wonderfully restored interior of the depot. I mean, it was -- it was just flawless. And well, it still is, I hope.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yes.

JEAN RODECK: And so, Glenn and I got together later that day, and I said, "Glenn, this is terrible. They're ignoring the depot business, and this was -- this was one of the hubs of that --" You know, blah, blah, blah. And so, he said, "Yeah." He said, "I had the same feeling." With this full-sized train coming toward you, covering up practically a whole wall. I don't remember what it was.

KAREN BREWSTER: So it was a big photo kind of thing of a train?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, it was going to be a big photo thing, and it was just -- and they had -- I think they had an exhibit over the ticket office window. And no, you can't do that.

Anyway, so Glenn and I got together when we got back to Anchorage, and we wrote this scathing letter, um, just full of indignation, and it did get the plan stopped. And so the -- because the regional director, um, took to heart what we had said, and he called up Harpers Ferry, and he said, "No, the entire exhibit plan is not acceptable."

[00:56:34]KAREN BREWSTER: So you wrote that letter to the regional director?

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: It wasn't the park superintendent?

JEAN RODECK: No. No, it was the Chief of Interpretation and the -- the Regional Chief of Interpretation --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: -- and the Regional Curator.

KAREN BREWSTER: So you went regional?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Oh, yeah. We went to the top. We started at the top, and then we worked our way. No, because the -- Clay Alderson, I think was the superintendent.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right, the superintendent.

JEAN RODECK: And um, and he agreed with us because we'd presented this to him, um, before we went back home. We went, "These are not acceptable." And I told him, I said, "I don't even care if you think they're acceptable. They simply are not."

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[00:57:20]JEAN RODECK: You've got a stunning historic building, and you've gotta use that.

And so, anyway, yes. He agreed with us. And I think he may have written a letter himself. I don't remember that. That would be in the files. But anyway, um, so we got it - - And the next time they had an exhibit planning team there, Glenn and I were included in that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And then, I think they did a really good job because they finally -- well, they had got -- they had gotten a new planning team, and I don't remember -- I don't remember who was on the planning team. I've got just a, you know, a little picture in the back of my head. But it was a historian.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And they did know about railroads, and they did know about mining, and they did know about things that -- that we thought were important. That we knew were important to the park. So they came back, and they did a good job.

KAREN BREWSTER: So --

JEAN RODECK: And we had a lot of input, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: From who? You -- you --

JEAN RODECK: That Glenn and I gave them.

KAREN BREWSTER: You were given the chance -- ?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

[00:58:35]KAREN BREWSTER: And then, somebody from the Klondike park, were they on that team also?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Oh, we always had the -- the -- whatever the resource was, you know, cultural or natural resource person and interpretation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. And what about the curator? Were they on the -- like in that -- in Skagway's case, there was a local curator by that point, right? Would that have been Deb (Sanders or Boettcher)?

JEAN RODECK: Hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: Maybe she wasn't there yet?[00:59:30]

JEAN RODECK: I don't think so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: I don't think so, but I don't remember. Deb would know.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. But I guess in general, if there is a local curator, they are also part of the, um, planning team?

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Usually.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Yes. If there -- if there was one.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, definitely. But there weren't very many.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And so, the cultural resources or natural resources would probably -- probably do it, or interpretation.

[00:59:37]KAREN BREWSTER: And so, were all Park Service exhibits done by a team out of Harpers Ferry? They were never done just with the local park?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, they were done many different ways. Um, and I know that Harpers Ferry did the initial ones. I don't know -- and I'm pretty sure they did the next ones, but I don't know that for sure.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and I guess in some smaller parks, they don't have the staff or the expertise to do exhibit design?

JEAN RODECK: Oh no, they wouldn't. No, the parks never did exhibit design.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: No, we had professional exhibit designers. The parks, in the olden days, had done their own little homemade things that were fine at the time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: But no, it was always a professional exhibit outfit.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. But then they would work with the local people?

JEAN RODECK: Absolutely. Absolutely. And especially after our Klondike Gold Rush then. Um, the team got the message that they weren't to do this just out of their own heads. They had to have input from everybody because they had to know a lot more than that initial team knew about the area.

[01:00:52]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right. Um, before the park moved into the restored depot building, they were for a while in the Arctic Brotherhood Hall?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Now were they there when you first went?

JEAN RODECK: No, huh-uh.

KAREN BREWSTER: No.

JEAN RODECK: No. I was there after the buildings were -- Well, I guess they were under reconstruction.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: When I -- when I got there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Ok.

JEAN RODECK: That I don't know what stage they were in.

[01:01:20]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. So then, you did help with conservation of artifacts, as well?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm. Oh, yeah. Oh, yes! Oh, we had the most wonderful team of conservators come from Harpers Ferry Conservation Lab to work on all the metal in all the collections at Klondike.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: It was Bart Rogers, uh, oh, I just thought of the name, now I can't think of it. Um, oh gosh. Bart was the -- was the metals conservator. And --

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, maybe it'll come back to you.

JEAN RODECK: Yes. And anyway, we had a team of conservators came. I think maybe just two came, Bart and --

KAREN BREWSTER: And they did metal. And did they conserve other things?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Oh yeah, they conserved everything. Furniture, and they had done the same thing at Sitka, working on the furniture and the totem poles and in situ, and oh.

KAREN BREWSTER: And was it just conserving things to go on display, or was it --

JEAN RODECK: No. No, their collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: The whole collection.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Doing everything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok. Conserving metal artifacts in a gold rush-era collection, seems like that would take a long time.

JEAN RODECK: Well, yes. It took several trips. Yeah, it did. It took a long -- it took a very long time.

KAREN BREWSTER: 'Cause there would be a lot of old metal.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, and it just had to be -- have all the rust taken off of it and then a protective coat and all that good stuff. But also, some of the things were gonna go on exhibit, so. But they did stoves and little pieces and everything. And then -- Ron is his first name. Oh, isn't that terrible. I just saw them two years ago. Whuh. Um, what was I saying?

KAREN BREWSTER: They did something with the objects or the -- what got put on display.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, and then after they were done, they climbed the Chilkoot Trail. Bart's brothers came and met them, and they climbed the trail. And I've got their walking stick.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: One of their walking sticks that they all signed and sent it to me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, fun.

JEAN RODECK: Since I couldn't go with 'em.

[01:04:05]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And then, there are also -- now there are also exhibits in the Mascot Saloon and the Moore House.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, and those were not done. There were some exhibits in the Moore House, but I think those were just kind of temporary. I have just not been back to know that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Were you involved in any of those, Mascot or Moore House?

JEAN RODECK: No, huh-uh. No, I was not.

KAREN BREWSTER: You were just involved in that visitor center one?
JEAN RODECK: Yeah. And most of that, the Mascot, that was after I left.
[01:04:37]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. Um, how do decisions get made for what goes into an exhibit from an object standpoint?
JEAN RODECK: Well, um, that's a combination of the park and -- and the planner. The planner should know about what's in the collection, and either that, or they need to ask, "Have you got something that would be representative of the railroad that we could put in it?" And um, so they went over the collections. They should, anyway, and um -- and know what was -- what was eye-catching and what would add a visual something to whatever they wanted -- point whatever they wanted to make.
[01:05:35]KAREN BREWSTER: Uh, what about other exhibits in Skagway? Karl mentioned that maybe you were involved with some of the outside exhibits: the ferry terminal, the Klondike Highway wayside?
JEAN RODECK: Oh.
KAREN BREWSTER: Dyea and Chilkoot Trail?
JEAN RODECK: Dyea. Well, maybe Dyea and the Chilkoot Trail. Maybe we had some input there. But they didn't have a regular wayside plan yet when I was there.
KAREN BREWSTER: So wayside exhibit planning is different than yours?
JEAN RODECK: Wayside exhibits are those things that as you're walking along, they're along the wayside.
KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right.
JEAN RODECK: They're outside exhibits. In situ, so that they are -- they're exhibits that -- that is about that exact tree right there. And um, or whatever the scene is that you're seeing. Or other things like, up here at the Fossil Beds, um, out -- when you're out in the meadow and you're looking back at this -- one of the petrified stones, I insisted that they will have an exhibit that shows the height of the trees because those trees, judging from their stumps and from the trees at Redwood National Park, were up to 300 feet tall.
KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.
JEAN RODECK: And so, they've got one that shows this little hill, and then here was the stump. And then the tree was like way up here like that.
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.
JEAN RODECK: 'Cause that hill was maybe, oh, I don't know, a hundred feet. I doubt that it was a hundred feet tall. But um.
KAREN BREWSTER: Well, yeah, so a wayside exhibit is, usually it's a photo -- some text and a photo, or maybe a photo of an object or something?
JEAN RODECK: Yeah, or a diagram or whatever.
KAREN BREWSTER: Diagram. Right.
JEAN RODECK: Whatever it took to tell the story.
[01:07:30]KAREN BREWSTER: Now when you did your interpretive planning for all the places in Alaska, did that include wayside exhibits?
JEAN RODECK: Um-hm. Yeah.
KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.
JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Oh, absolutely. That's one of the media. Films, wayside exhibits, inside exhibits, publications. Um, there's others, but I can't think of them.
KAREN BREWSTER: Did you do interpretive planning for Sit -- for Skagway?

JEAN RODECK: No. Huh-uh. No.

KAREN BREWSTER: Was that already in place when you were there?

JEAN RODECK: I don't think that they had an interpretive plan.

[01:08:05]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Um, yeah. So you don't remember if you were involved in Dyea or Chilkoot Trail?

JEAN RODECK: Well, I think we did something with them, but I don't remember what it was. Maybe just saying that they needed -- they -- I knew that they needed a sign or a wayside exhibit that showed where it was they were going to be going.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: So that people who were just passing through and went there to see where the trail started would see that this thing went up.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. All the curlicue steep --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, and that wonderful photograph of the winter thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that line of people going up the mountain.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, god. I just -- that's just burned into my mind. I thought, my god. I never would've done that.

KAREN BREWSTER: No. Well, there's -- it does seem like the Klondike Gold Rush was a very well-photographed period.

JEAN RODECK: Yes, that was because they had people who were willing to -- to go to all the trouble of taking photographs. And those people knew that this was a historic happening there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And they were smart enough to just photograph the bejesus out of it. And the -- the White Pass trail.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: With all the dead horses.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Oh. Golly, I don't know. I never would've done any of that. I wouldn't have gotten past the Alleghenies.

[01:09:38]KAREN BREWSTER: Now, um, Deb Sanders was the curator at Klondike from '91 to 2010. So were you responsible for hiring her?

JEAN RODECK: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: As the regional curator?

JEAN RODECK: No. Huh-uh. Um, they -- they hired their own. They hired their own people. My recommendation was that they needed a full-time curator there, and I just kept hacking away at Clay Alderson and Betsy (Duncan Clark) and anybody who'd listen that they needed a curator badly because they had so much material. This was before the Rapuzzi thing. They had so much material, and it needed care, constant care, and it needed to be all cataloged. And it just -- they needed that. They needed one at Denali, too, but they got a dud. Um, and um, I can't remember where else we finally got curators. I don't remember.

KAREN BREWSTER: But then, so you -- did you work closely with Deb Sanders then when she was hired?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Yeah. By all means. Yeah. And besides, she's just a delightful person.

KAREN BREWSTER: So what kind of things would you guys collaborate on?

JEAN RODECK: I don't know. Whatever the problem was at the time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Did she call you for questions, like conservation questions, or organizational assistance or -- ?

JEAN RODECK: Probably. Sorry about that. I don't know. We just, you know, whenever I was down there, we went through stuff and I don't remember the day-to-day stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you -- do you feel like the organization and management of the collection improved?

JEAN RODECK: With Deb? Oh, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Over time?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, definitely.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

[01:11:49]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, mentioned the Rapuzzi Collection. That's the big question.

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm. Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: That their acquisition of the Rapuzzi Collection and your memories of your role in it.

JEAN RODECK: I like this thing of whose idea was that.

KAREN BREWSTER: To buy it.

JEAN RODECK: Well, yeah. For them. I think the park figured that out, Clay and, um, Karl and um, I don't know who else.

KAREN BREWSTER: Was the idea -- the idea that the problem with the park having this -- the collection? And so --

JEAN RODECK: We needed to cull it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And if you accept the whole collection, then the government is responsible for every single piece in there. And I said, "You can't do that, because there's a whole collection of vacuum cleaners, up to one just like the one I use in Anchorage." And I said, "You've gotta have some provision for those things that do not apply to that period." And you have to -- you have to decide on a period.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: You have to decide on beginning and end dates, and anything after that, you needed to be able to get rid of it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And so, somebody came up with that idea. [01:13:09]Well now, I got Kent Bush, who was the regional curator in -- in Seattle, uh, I guess he was -- was Pacific Northwest Region is what he was.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And -- and so, I asked if he would come up and look at this collection, and -- because he had worked at Hubble Trading Post with a lot of things that needed to be culled out of there. Not as much as Rapuzzi, but -- So I asked him if he would be willing to come up and help them set up a system to -- to take care of these things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Of all those, however many, seven buildings or something like that. And um, so he came up, and we worked on a plan that we'd have a staging area, and then objects would be brought in there and then sorted. This would go out, and this would go out, and this would be kept. But we had to have -- for the collection management plan and for the scope of collection statement, we had to have specifics on what was dumped and what absolutely the government could not spend one penny, um, preserving.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And then, just about that time, I left, and so I don't really know what happened to all that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well.

JEAN RODECK: I love that Karl mentioned that.

[01:14:47]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, so when you left, had the collection been acquired?

JEAN RODECK: I don't believe so. But Karl would know that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I don't -- I should know that, too, but I don't remember the exact date.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, I don't -- I don't remember when they -- I -- I don't believe so. I think they were still dealing with Phyllis. And I spent a lot of time with Phyllis over --

KAREN BREWSTER: This is Phyllis Brown?

JEAN RODECK: Brown, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Who was, at the time, the person who had ownership of the Rapuzzi Collection. Or possession of it. Or something.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, well, possession. Yeah, part of it was in her house. Oh, and one of the things -- Phyllis took me through all these buildings and showed me stuff. One of the things that we found was this green ledger book, like I did my journals in, you know, US Government thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And it was the -- it was the guest book for the opening of Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Of the park?

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: And it never should've been in her hands.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Whoever gave that to them or whoever took it was bad, bad pizza because it just -- it never should've gone anywhere except the park archives. Because it was just the first, maybe, year of people coming and, you know, from the regional offices and Washington and stuff. And I said, "Oh my gosh, Phyllis. This shouldn't be here." And then I went, "Oh, Jean, come on now. Watch your mouth." And -- and she just immediately realized that she was keeping it. And so, I'm hoping that that hasn't disappeared in the -- in the interim, and I kind of forgot about it. I should've gotten Karl to -- I should tell Karl that he needs to find that book, because it was -- it was a roster of historians and regional and Washington personnel who came up there. It was -- it was really neat.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I wonder if when the park first started, they didn't have an archive repository for those kinds of things, so maybe it somehow walked away because there wasn't an official place for it? I don't know.

JEAN RODECK: Well, yeah, but they should -- if they had a guest book, they should've kept it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, right.

JEAN RODECK: To record their guests. That's why you have it.

[01:17:28]KAREN BREWSTER: So tell me about Phyllis Brown, who she was, what she was like.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, she -- she -- we had -- we had a really good time. And Betsy had introduced me to her. And Phyllis had invited me over to the house, and then to see these things, and we -- we'd go out for lunch or we'd -- she'd make some lunch, and we'd sit there and drink tea and gab and just oh, she was just delightful. And I just wanted to -- I just wanted to gain her trust, for her to know that -- that the -- that the -- that the park was the place for a great deal of that collection. Not all of it, but a great deal of it. And I wanted her to know that there was, you know, somebody in the regional office that knew what -- what she was trying to do and what her interests were, 'cause she needed to make some money. And um, and she kind of -- she kind of liked the collection because it had been George's, so -- George Rapuzzi. Oh, is that his name?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Oh. That just came out without thinking. And um, so I wanted her to know that there was somebody who knew what her problems were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And so, when we'd go into another building, I would say, "Oh, my gosh. Look at that. Well, you know, that could be fixed up for, you know, to hold this or something." You know, I tried to -- I tried to give her some helpful suggestions, too, not just so she'd know that we knew what we were doing, but just that she would maybe trust us a little more. Because she said, "Well" -- one time she said something about the fact that "Well, they'd probably just dump everything." I said, "Oh no. Never happen." I said, "Some of it, yes." 'Cause I kind of threw that in every once in a while. But um, so I don't know what happened with her after, but -- but they -- and then whoever came up with this idea --

KAREN BREWSTER: Of the Rasmuson Foundation --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, that was fantastic.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- buying the collection and donating it to the park and the city?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, and that it was -- they could take care of the things that did not apply to them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: That was -- that was really, really wonderful.

[01:20:17]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was wondering, maybe because the collection was so big, that you couldn't go through before acquiring it and saying, we just want these things.

JEAN RODECK: Absolutely. It was just too big. I mean, at one place, there's a whole rafter that is hung with bentwood chairs, because he just decided to collect bentwood chairs and vacuum cleaners and I don't remember what all.

KAREN BREWSTER: Because often if a donor has material the museum might take possession, go through it and say, "Ok, we'll keep these things, but here, take these back. We don't want them."

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: But you just couldn't do that with the Rapuzzi?

JEAN RODECK: Well, that needed to be in the -- that needed to be in the polic -- or the, uh --

KAREN BREWSTER: The gift agreement?

JEAN RODECK: The note of gift, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um.

JEAN RODECK: Or the, yeah, the deed of gift.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: That had to be really specific in the deed of gift.

[01:21:18]KAREN BREWSTER: Do you remember what the time period was that they were going to limit it to?

JEAN RODECK: Uh --

KAREN BREWSTER: Or did you make a recommendation for a time period?

JEAN RODECK: Well, I think we all decided on one, and I -- it wasn't any particular person, but once the gold rush was really, really over, which of course, it still isn't, but --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Um.

KAREN BREWSTER: So it was sort of the gold rush plus some?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: When the use of the Chilkoot Trail went away and the train came in, and people quit going down the river in those --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: I don't know why more people were killed -- weren't killed going down the river. Um --

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was also wondering --

JEAN RODECK: But so I don't remember that. Karl --

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Knows that stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I know. I just thought if you remembered.

JEAN RODECK: No, I don't.

[01:22:11]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, but that does bring up the question of a donation versus the purchase of a collection.

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: And you said, Phyllis needed to make money.

JEAN RODECK: Well, yes. She needed to make some money.

KAREN BREWSTER: So she -- she was looking to sell the collection?

JEAN RODECK: Yes, she was.

KAREN BREWSTER: She did not want to just donate it?

JEAN RODECK: No. No. I think that -- it wasn't anything that she actually said, but I know that she was pushing to -- to -- to sell it, like, you know, for like a million dollars or something like that. 'Cause that would include all these buildings and the stuff in 'em and

JEAN RODECK

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that kind of thing, so. So I don't -- I think it was probably the -- Clay and Karl and those guys that figured out that they could do it that way. Or somebody, maybe, from the Foundation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or maybe somebody -- maybe somebody from the Rasmuson Foundation?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, from the foundation. Um, offered. But I think they had to present it to the foundation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Probably.

JEAN RODECK: And say, "We've got this problem. Can you help us?" And the city. Between the foundation and the city.

[01:23:26]KAREN BREWSTER: So did you have an interaction with the city museum and --

JEAN RODECK: Not really. I knew the people there, but I can't remember who they were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, Glenda Choate. Was she -- ?

JEAN RODECK: Oh yes, I knew Glenda Choate, because I was president of the Museums Alaska, the -- the Alaska branch of the American Association of Museums. I was president for six years. So I knew -- that's why I knew Terry Dickey and Wanda Chin and --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And, uh --

KAREN BREWSTER: Who were from the museum, UA museum.

JEAN RODECK: And the wonderful paleontologist up there at the university. And the wonderful geologist. Oh, this man was marvelous. And an archeologist or two.

KAREN BREWSTER: So when you knew Glenda, she was with the city museum?

JEAN RODECK: Um, I'm sure she was.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, yeah, she would've been museum director.

JEAN RODECK: Because I met her there. Betsy took me over there, and I met her before our first meeting, or the first meeting at AM or you know, Western Association of Museums, um, 'cause I went to all those meetings and Museums Alaska. And then I really got to know 'em when I was president for all those years.

[01:24:50]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. So did you do any sort of technical assistance consultation with the Skagway City Museum?

JEAN RODECK: I don't think so. I don't believe so. They were doing fine.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then -- ok. And then Judy Munns is the current director, but that's after you.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Oh yeah, 'cause I don't recognize that name even having heard it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. I think she did have involvement with the Rapuzzi Collection.

JEAN RODECK: Oh good, yeah. Well, she would if she was director and part of it was coming to the city, so.

[01:25:24]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Um, so you -- you weren't involved in helping them decide how to cull or how to catalog what they kept for the Park Service?

JEAN RODECK: Hm-mm. No, except they knew they had to catalog it. They knew that already.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, you said Kent Bush kind of came up with a system.

JEAN RODECK: Well, he came up with a system for -- for tackling these -- this massive collection. For, you know, getting a staging area and then an area for conservation and

then a catalog area and that kind of thing that they had done with -- with a couple collections.

KAREN BREWSTER: But that was kinda after -- that would happen after you decide what you're keeping and what you're culling?

JEAN RODECK: Well, that would -- that's how you would process.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: And you would say, this is the city, this gets thrown out.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: The city doesn't even want that. And um, so -- but you'd also be working with the city museum and the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: But no, I didn't have anything to do with that 'cause I -- I left. And besides, it was just not something that -- 'cause it would -- it would just take -- it would take a long time to do it, and a regional curator couldn't do that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Couldn't just say, "Oh, ok, you guys are on your own. I'll see you in a year."

[01:26:53]KAREN BREWSTER: But you -- you did walk through those buildings and got a sense -- ?

JEAN RODECK: I went through every single building and as far in as you can get, and Phyllis would tell me about stuff, and um, she'd say, "Oh yeah, I remember when George brought this in." 'Cause she had been there, I don't know whether -- I don't remember, um, if she was born in Skagway or elsewhere or what.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't remember if she was his niece or what the --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, I think he was her uncle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And -- Uncle George.

[01:27:35]KAREN BREWSTER: Any particular items you remember that stood out, besides that guest book?

JEAN RODECK: And the bentwood chairs and the vacuum cleaners. No, there -- there was not. Even some of the more, uh, more valuable things that she had in the house, I just -- it was too much.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: It was just too much for me to remember anything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. That's pretty overwhelming.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, my gosh. And I said, "Well, boy, you sure gotta have to have a curator for sure when you start on this collection."

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Because you've got to have several -- you've got to have some permanent employees who are doing nothing but that collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Not to be interrupted.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And -- and that you needed somebody with a big truck, and you needed a place to dump some things out of Phyllis' sight.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: You needed a big hole someplace to dump some things and then to mark it as "This is inconsequential stuff."

[01:28:49]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that must be challenging, sometimes, to work with a donor who doesn't -- who'd so attached to their things.

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: That to understand that a museum collection can't take everything.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Well, I think I finally talked her into that. And uh, that we couldn't take everything.

KAREN BREWSTER: And do donors become accepting of that or -- ?

JEAN RODECK: Most of them do, because they have to sign the -- they have to sign the deed of gift.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And so they've got to -- they've got to go along with it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or maybe they don't?

JEAN RODECK: Or not, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they say, "We're taking our collection someplace else." Does that happen?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Oh, yes, that's happened. Yeah. Unfortunately.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that must be --

JEAN RODECK: I think it was a historical park, someplace back east where the guy said, "You know, I'm taking my toys and going to the State Historical Society." Which was fine, because then all they did was, um, get the State Historical Society records once they had cataloged the collection, and so they knew where the stuff was that had been supposedly from the -- from the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. But, you know, somebody could take it to a private --

JEAN RODECK: Win some, lose some.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- private museum and may or may not get as well cared for.

JEAN RODECK: It could be, yeah. I don't -- I don't know of any collections that have been lost because of -- because of mismanagement, because anybody, even with a private collection, they would want to take care of their stuff. And usually, people with private collections go to the local museum to find out how to take care of them. I don't know. There are too many.

KAREN BREWSTER: Are there other things you remember about the Rapuzzi time and Phyllis? Or Glenda?

JEAN RODECK: I just remember Glenda as this kind of remarkable character. Um, hm. If I had those journals, it would sure jog my memory.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. I'm just trying to think, other --

JEAN RODECK: Oh, I -- this .

[01:31:20]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, what was the response from the local park to having somebody from regional coming in and doing things?

JEAN RODECK: Well, as far as I was concerned, um, I had -- I didn't have any trouble with anybody because all I was doing was coming to help 'em.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: I wasn't coming to tell 'em anything or to just look around or um, be a bigwig or officious. I just, um, I just said, "You've got a problem, and um, my curators and I will

come and solve it for you. Within a week, you'll be all set." And so, they -- people were -
- were accepting and they were, uh, nice.

KAREN BREWSTER: So would it be your idea to go and say, "We're going to come help
you."? Or would they call you and say, "Help!"?

JEAN RODECK: Well, well, see, when I went around to all the parks, then I kind of assessed
what -- what it was they needed, and I kind of -- I always did a report, a trip report, and
so I'd send them a copy. And -- and I made recommendations in there. But they were just
recommendations. I made sure that this -- that they knew that this isn't an order. Except
the order was that they had to catalog their objects.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: I mean, that was -- that was just the business they were in.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And because they were all primary resources, and so they had to know what it
was they had. Or where it was or all of the above.

[01:33:10]KAREN BREWSTER: Now did those parks have the funding to do that? Or they had
to get the money from regional? Or how did that work?

JEAN RODECK: For what?

KAREN BREWSTER: For cataloging and or --

JEAN RODECK: Oh, oh. Well, that -- right after I got there, shortly after I got there, Ann
Hitchcock, who is the -- was the chief curator for the Park Service, um -- I can't
remember what it was called. Oh, Pam would know. I don't know. But she got a --
millions of dollars for care of collections.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Because they were in serious shape, um, to be losing some of the -- their
primary resources. And so, the regional office -- the regional curators got buckets of
money.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And so, what I did with my money, instead of -- instead of getting a curator in
every park, which we just couldn't do. I mean --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: -- for many reasons. And so, I told the parks that I'm getting -- I'm getting a
fleet of curators, and the minute you get a problem, or the minute you get something in,
give me a call, and I'll send up -- somebody up there, and I will pay for them, per diem
and everything. I will pay for them to come and fix that for you, and then they'll go
away.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:34:47]JEAN RODECK: And -- and they will do some training with whoever's doing the
ancillary duty. And so they -- you know, like, let's see. One park, I can't remember if it
was Yukon-Charley, 'cause they had a lot of history.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And uh, somebody had given them something. No way I'll remember that.
Anyway, they called -- Kerry Brown called because I had taken him to the curatorial
training, and um, he was really -- became quite interested in it. They didn't get to do
much because they only had about five employees, and um, so uh, I don't remember --
remember who it was. One of the natural parks. Anyway, um, so I would just say, "Well,

I'll send up, you know, I'll send up these two curators, and they'll have that fixed up in a few days." Which, of course, they always did, because they were so good. Somebody else had trained them. It was wonderful. Diane sat down, "Please don't take Eileen Devinney." Well, she was the first one I took. Then she said, "Please don't take -- " um, oh, that other woman I mentioned. She was so good.

KAREN BREWSTER: Connie?

JEAN RODECK: Connie Estep. And she is at -- she's at Hanford now, so now she's working partially for the Park Service because that's part of Manhattan Project.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, right.

JEAN RODECK: National Historical, whatever it is. And um, "Please don't take Connie. Please don't take Sean." And I took 'em all! Because I could offer them GS-7's, and they had only been, like, -3's and -5's in the parks. And I offered them all -7's with a term employment, so they all -- well, besides, they all wanted to come to Alaska, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then, you kept renewing their term?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: So is that how Eileen came to Alaska? You hired her from Outside?

JEAN RODECK: From Yosemite, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: Well, she was, um, she was one of Diane Nicholson's -- um, well, one of Yosemite's seasonal curators to help with the collections. And she was -- she was a whiz.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Oh man, she was so good. So was Connie.

[01:37:22]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, you were lucky that you started at the regional curator level with a big pot of money.

JEAN RODECK: I was very, very fortunate because, um, it happened just, oh, within a couple years of my going up there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And I knew exactly what I could do with that money. I had that money spent before I could -- even got it.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then, like, for the Klondike position that you encouraged them to have, that funding had to come from the park to fund a new position?

JEAN RODECK: Well, they had to -- they had to establish a position, I'm pretty sure. I think that they had to request another FTE, another position.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Permanent position. Uh, because I'm pretty sure she was permanent.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And, um --

KAREN BREWSTER: But that money would've had to come from the local park's budget?

JEAN RODECK: Their -- their budget. Yeah. Yeah. Because if you get that FTE, you get some money with it, and so -- so they handled that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Creating a new -- you're saying parks have a certain number of people they can have, so creating a new position like that probably was difficult.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, they had to -- they had to apply to Washington for it and give the reasons, and for Klondike, it was good reasons, so they got the position for Deb.

[01:38:51]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And then the other thing you talked about you did as regional curator was helping the Native communities.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. ANILCA. You know what ANILCA is.

KAREN BREWSTER: Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

JEAN RODECK: Yes. And so, ANILCA says in there, and I used to remember what the section was, and I've got -- I've got it someplace in my mess downstairs. And um, ANILCA said that the National Park Service will provide -- now this isn't a direct quote.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Will provide assistance for the protection of any cultural resources, uh, for any Native village, any Native group.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Probably they said, or tribe, whatever.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And um, so when -- when a request would come in to the regional -- well. Oh, when I first got there, I am guilty of selling that little section of ANILCA to all the parks at the very first museum meeting I went to of Museums Alaska. I said, "Now, we are required by law to provide you with any assistance of any kind, cataloging, identification, preservation, conservation, storage, of any cultural resource." And they said that includes ethnography. And so, um, and I just kept saying, "Well now, if you need help." Oh, I just -- everybody would just start laughing at me after a while, after a few years. Now remember ANILCA. And everybody'd laugh. [01:40:54]But we got -- Oh gosh. I don't even remember. I do not remember the names of the places that I went. Um, Anaktuvuk Pass, Kotzebue. Oh, we got to -- great fun at Kotzebue. We got to help with their little local historical society which had a tremendous and valuable collection of um, of walrus tusk and -- and mammoth tusk carvings. And they -- they wanted help getting their museum open. So I took -- oh, I've got a picture downstairs of the group of us. David, and the one girl who tried to catalog six carvings by six different people of six different things under one catalog number. She was a -- she was a hard case. Anyway, and Eileen, and -- David, Eileen, I'd have to look at the picture downstairs. But anyway, we went up there. Four or five of us went up there, and we went into that museum, and um, Eileen started -- David and Kay started cataloging. And none of them were cataloged. So we had to have either a really good description or a photo. We got -- somebody up there had a Polaroid camera, so we could put those with 'em, 'cause we couldn't number 'em. And so, we just cleared everything out with their little labels, and cleaned the cases, and cleaned the glass, and put 'em back in, and by then Eileen had done these wonderful little labels, and, oh my gosh. When we left that museum, it just sparkled. We did the floors, the ceiling, the walls. We just cleaned everything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Was that the old NANA museum? Do you remember?

JEAN RODECK: Probably. And uh, and it hadn't been opened for a while.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: I don't remember what the name of it is. I don't think it was -- it was called NANA. I don't think it was --

KAREN BREWSTER: No.

JEAN RODECK: It wasn't NANA anyway. It was Kotzebue.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, NANA's the regional Native, um, corporation.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they did, back in the --

JEAN RODECK: Kotzebue?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, in the early '80's, somewhere in there, they did have a museum with, you know --

JEAN RODECK: At Kotzebue.

KAREN BREWSTER: With, you know, animals in it.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Diorama kind of things.

[01:43:46]JEAN RODECK: Um, anyway, when we left, it was beautiful. Oh my gosh, the -- the people -- people that lived there came in to see it, and they just thought it was wonderful, and oh, we're going to get more tourists. And it closed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. It didn't stay open very long.

JEAN RODECK: Hm-mm. All that work. Oh, we spent at least a week, if not a week and a half or two, doing that because it was just, ah, it was beautiful, beautiful stuff. They -- we wanted them to let us number the things so that they would know whose they were, but they wouldn't. They didn't want us to do that, so we didn't. But it was beautiful. But we got to do things like that, and I got to help clean the -- the Kotzebue museum in that triangular building where the offices were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that's the one I was thinking. Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, no. This was down the street.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

JEAN RODECK: And I can't remember the name of it because it was a tribal name.

KAREN BREWSTER: Mm.

JEAN RODECK: No, this was not that -- that one. But we did -- I did get to go and help clean that up. And Bill Berry had done the background of it and positioned the animals.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: He did a background just -- oh, he did a beautiful job of it. And um, that was -

[01:45:20]KAREN BREWSTER: And you say you went to Anaktuvuk Pass, the Simon Paneak Museum?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. And what's his name, the guy that was there for years?

KAREN BREWSTER: Grant Spearman.

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Oh gosh, yeah. And I don't remember what it -- what it was we did up there with them, but we did something.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then you and Eileen came up to Barrow, now Utqiagvik.

JEAN RODECK: To Barrow, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And helped with --

JEAN RODECK: Wasn't there somebody else there? I thought there were three of us.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't remember. I only remember --

JEAN RODECK: And even though we had been in Alaska for years, it was -- we were up there in the summer.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And um, and there were no -- since the school was closed, we got to stay in the dorm, and there were no curtains or shades on the walls because they were just there

in the winter. And -- and the sun would be shining in there, and we would -- oh, that was so funny. We just got to giggling about that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, you must have stayed at the dorms for the college.

JEAN RODECK: Yes, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: The Ilisagvik College. 'Cause that was right next to where the collection was in that warehouse building. And it was the Mound 44 collections that you were helping me figure out how to process and organize and just helping me catalog, I think.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, that was great.

KAREN BREWSTER: And I don't think we ever finished that collection.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, really?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Not while I was there. 'Cause it was so big.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Huge archeological -- like, years of archeological excavations.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: So. And I don't remember what year that was that you came.

JEAN RODECK: I don't either.

KAREN BREWSTER: Early '90's, I think, probably.

JEAN RODECK: That's why I had all those --

KAREN BREWSTER: That's why you wrote everything down so nicely.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, I had to, so I could go back and say, well, now I told Karen we'd do such-and-such. Did we do it?

[01:47:10]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, so other -- and then you left in '95, you said?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. I left in the fall of '95.

KAREN BREWSTER: And you became the superintendent of -- ?

JEAN RODECK: Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which is down here.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. It's over there. Oh, I wish -- I wish I could take you up there. You would just love it. Neat place.

KAREN BREWSTER: And -- and that was a new thing for you, being a superintendent?

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Oh, yeah. I just wanted to do one more thing before I retired that I had thought about doing, but I would rather -- you know, I had been curator.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: So I did all that. But um, I just -- well, I had mentioned to a friend up in Seattle, the regional office of Seattle, that I always wanted to be a paleontologist. But I said, it's too late for me to -- I was in my sixties, and I said it was too late for me to go and get a paleo degree or, you know, whatever. And he said, well, go be a paleontologist superintendent of a paleo area. Heck of a good idea. So I made this chart about this big of -- there were nine areas in the Park Service that were -- that were established because of their paleo resources. Every park's got paleo resources. And so, I -- and then my criteria above were that I couldn't ever worked on it or worked in it. Like Dinosaur, I lived there, and I did the first exhibits there. And -- well, not I, but we did it at Western Museum Lab. And it couldn't be too isolated, 'cause I didn't want to go to Nebraska. And I didn't want to be in Kemmerer, Wyoming, but I had visited that place too often. I wanted something that was new subject matter, new job, everything new.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

JEAN RODECK: In a place where I had -- I had never been there, even though I'm a native Coloradoan.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And uh, and I just wanted to do everything that I hadn't done before.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[01:49:37]JEAN RODECK: And so -- so I applied for it when the superintendent wrote me a postcard, and he said, "I'm leaving Florissant Fossil Beds." 'Cause I would write a little line on the bottom of my postcards, "Go away, so I can come be superintendent." You know, just kidding. But Florissant was the only thing that didn't have anything marked off in the -- all my criteria. And um, so -- so I applied for it, and I just turned in all my chits with John Cook and John Reynolds and told 'em that I wasn't looking for a free move to Colorado. I really wanted to -- wanted to do this, and I wanted to do this at that place. And so, they picked me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, big difference.

JEAN RODECK: And I'm so glad.

KAREN BREWSTER: A big difference from curatorial work.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I couldn't -- I just had to block off the curatorial. I checked out to see how they were doing, and they were doing very well. And -- but I couldn't -- I couldn't, you know, pick on curatorial to pamper.

[01:50:57]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Did you miss the curatorial parts after having done it for so long?

JEAN RODECK: Not really. Not really. I just decided that after all the stuff that we cataloged in Alaska and all the big collections I had cataloged over the years, from the Western Museum Laboratory to -- to there, and I just said, "I will never catalog another object." And so, when they asked me to be on the board of the Ute Pass Historical Society, um, I told 'em, I said, "I will help you with anything. Collection storage. I will help you with anything except cataloging." Because they've got a whole new automated system now.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: I mean, there are so many of them around, unfortunately.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: But the Park Service, I -- phoo. After those guys came up to Alaska, I just quit even looking at it because it was -- it had changed. It just changed from year to year to year. They added things and you know, made it easier to find. And I said, "No. No, no, no. I'm not leaving."

[01:52:14]KAREN BREWSTER: So they were trying to standardize the cataloging system within the Park Service?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, they did within the Park Service. Oh yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: By doing it electronically?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. When they did it electronically, they just -- well, they had already standardized. It was standardized with these blue forms.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And um, so those were very easy to take those and flip into the, you know, enter in the stuff with the -- with the ANCS thing, which we did just in droves. Volumes and volumes.

KAREN BREWSTER: So, yeah. So when you were in Alaska, you were involved in getting all that paper documentation into a computer system?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah. And I even did some of it at the very beginning, right after I had been to the training at Clemson. The training on the new ANCS project, A-N-C-S. It stood for some --

KAREN BREWSTER: And that's the catalog?

JEAN RODECK: Automated -- A-N- -- National Catalog System. And so, I actually did a bunch of those, and that's when I got these other guys. And then I got the money, and got this bunch, and I said, "No. I'm not doing that anymore."

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Because that -- the computer thing just befuddled me.

[01:53:37]KAREN BREWSTER: So when you left Alaska, did you still have this fleet of curators and a good budget, or had that changed?

JEAN RODECK: Well, I think we still had money coming in from Washington, but I wouldn't swear to it. My journals would mention that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I guess, do you remember -- do you remember if you had to fight for funding?

JEAN RODECK: No. I never did. Uh, when I was regional curator in Santa Fe, I was working -- my boss was the Chief of the Division of Interpretation, but I was paid by the Division of Maintenance. Don't ask me why. I never did find out. So whenever I wanted to do a project in one of the fifty-seven parks in the region, and we didn't have money in interpretation -- I didn't have a budget -- and so, Bob Barrel, who was the Chief of Interpretation, said, "Go talk to Gary." So I'd go in, and I'd have this all prepared, and I'd have diagrams, just everything I needed. And I would start out on this, and Gary would just -- his eyes would just glaze over, and then he'd say, "How much do you want?" And I'd say, "Well, ok. I'd like ten thousand dollars for this park, and" -- and he'd say, "You've got it, just go away." And that happened with the same -- then, for some reason or another, I was being paid by the rangers, by the ranger division, law enforcement.

KAREN BREWSTER: Huh.

JEAN RODECK: I don't know how that happened. And so, I'd go and do the same thing with those guys there, and they would just -- they'd just -- just "what do you want?" "I want five thousand dollars." "Here, it's yours."

[01:55:39]KAREN BREWSTER: But in Alaska you didn't have to do that?

JEAN RODECK: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: It was just --

JEAN RODECK: No, and I was working in -- I was working for cultural resources. That's what -- Leslie was the Regional Chief of Cultural Resources. And so, I must've had a budget to begin with other than my salary, but -- 'cause I would go to Leslie for -- 'cause I'd want to take a -- you know, I'd want to go to the local museum.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: Uh, association or the one in Seattle or the western region or AAM, and she'd just sign off on it. I want to AASLH, um, American Association for State and Local History, and AAM.

KAREN BREWSTER: American --

JEAN RODECK: Western --

KAREN BREWSTER: AAM is American Association of Museums.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. And I'd go to Western Association of Museums. And I'd go to Mountain Plains Association of Museums because -- because for some reason -- Well, my dad started that in the '50's.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: And I was just -- Oh I know, because when I went to Alaska I was still working with Mountain Plains, um, and they wanted me to give talks or do something, you know, help with the -- with the magazine or something. I don't know. I don't know what. But anyway, every time I wanted to go to a museum meeting, Leslie said, yeah, you can go.

[01:57:13]KAREN BREWSTER: I'd say, the benefit of working in a time period when the Park Service was perhaps well supported from Congress? I don't know.

JEAN RODECK: Not particularly.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

JEAN RODECK: No. But it has just steadily gone down.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Very steadily gone down.

KAREN BREWSTER: And -- and in some places, there's quite a bit of competition between funding for natural resources projects versus funding for cultural resources --

JEAN RODECK: Oh, really?

KAREN BREWSTER: -- projects. Yeah, I think it depends on -- like, within a park.

JEAN RODECK: Huh.

KAREN BREWSTER: You know, what the mission of the park is believed to be.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Well, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: You know, as you say, like Klondike --

JEAN RODECK: Well see, I got to work with collections, and so, that involved everybody.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: From the superintendent to maintenance, because I trained maintenance people, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And so, they -- it -- no matter what the resource was, I was it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: That's why I got to go out to all those villages and help because I was it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Unless it was structural. Then Steve Peterson would go, but he'd say, "Well, you gotta send Jean with me because this old building is full of stuff, so -- "

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And he was the historical architect at the time.

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Yeah.

[01:58:26]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Um, well and then, the other thing in Skagway was, as I say, the Mascot Saloon exhibit. Karl was saying that the visitor center original exhibits had included a saloon scene. Do you remember that?

JEAN RODECK: Hm-mm.

KAREN BREWSTER: No. And it didn't fit, so they decided to put it into the Mascot.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Oh, good. Oh, good. Yeah, I do remember that because there were so many saloons there. Yeah, I do kinda remember that.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that's sort of what sparked the idea of making the Mascot --

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- an exhibit area instead of a leaseback.

JEAN RODECK: That's great. I'd like to go see that.

[01:59:04]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, I -- were there -- within the park's collections, were there some that were particularly exciting? Like, is the Klondike collection particularly special and interesting, or it's sort of standard for -- ?

JEAN RODECK: No, I'd say it'd be kind of -- 'cause it was just the bits and pieces that were left over there, not very many -- unless there's some in the Rapuzzi Collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: Of nice things that aren't rusty metal.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And uh, weathered wood and um -- 'cause I know when Bart and Ron -- oh god, they're such good friends, I just -- oh, it's terrible. Um, because when they were up there working on stuff, they were just working on old stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: There just was -- I don't remember anything in there at all. I remember -- I remember the Sitka collection, which had just wonderful things in it, but Klondike, I just remember old stuff.

[02:00:21]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, and then, as you say, the Rapuzzi Collection is likely to have had more whole things, maybe.

JEAN RODECK: Could be, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: You don't remember.

JEAN RODECK: Furniture and stuff like that. I remember -- I don't remember anything. It was just -- it was just simply too overwhelming, and I didn't have anything to do with starting to cull it or anything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: I do remember going around with some people and saying, "Well, you gotta get rid of those, and you gotta get rid of those, and you gotta get rid of those. And you gotta keep those." Whatever they were, I don't know.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: I'm just a very little assistance with the Rapuzzi Collection.

[02:01:04]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, but you did -- you were involved with Skagway off and on for a number -- for those eleven years.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah, for eleven years. Yeah. Oh, yeah. I probably went down there once a year. Oh, and the -- oh, the cabin.

KAREN BREWSTER: The Moore Cabin?

JEAN RODECK: Near the Moore House.

KAREN BREWSTER: There's a Moore Cabin.

JEAN RODECK: Moore Cabin, ok.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And it had -- it had funnies, colored funnies as wallpaper.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, from old newspapers? Comics?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm, yeah. And it just blew me away. And I don't remember the dates on them now, but they were really early.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

JEAN RODECK: May have been turn of the century. Were in color. The comics were just like our Sunday comics now.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

JEAN RODECK: And so, they used a lot of that -- a lot of that paper for the -- for the basis for their -- you know, putting the cloth over the -- over the newspapers that were used for insulation. I don't think they did any good for insulation.

KAREN BREWSTER: No. But that stuff was left in situ in the cabin?

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm. Um-hm. And Betsy would call me every once in a while, and say, "What do we do with those newspapers?" And --

[02:02:22]KAREN BREWSTER: But, so those newspapers, some of -- they were preserved? You went down there and helped them decide how to keep the newspapers.

JEAN RODECK: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or cover them up or what to make authentic in the cabin?

JEAN RODECK: Right. Absolutely. Yeah. And what should really be -- some of those newspapers needed to be put in the collections just to preserve the dates.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

JEAN RODECK: And um, there were articles about stuff that had happened there. And I don't remember what newspapers were there. There were several communities.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, well.

JEAN RODECK: Whether they were Lower 48 or --

[02:03:00]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, well conserving newspaper is probably very challenging.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, it's just impossible because that's all pulp paper and it just turns.

KAREN BREWSTER: So conserving it out -- sort of outdoors in a cabin would seem very difficult.

JEAN RODECK: Yes. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Versus in a controlled climate storage.

JEAN RODECK: So that's why I said that they had to do that pretty soon.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: And um.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, and I haven't been in that --

JEAN RODECK: Didn't connect.

KAREN BREWSTER: I haven't been in that cabin to tell you whether -- what's there or not.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, but you know that --

JEAN RODECK: I'm going to have to talk to Karl and see what some of these things --

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that's what --

JEAN RODECK: -- happened to them.

[02:03:42]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, the thing about the people who were kind of given curatorial --

JEAN RODECK: Ron Sheetz.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ron Sheetz.

JEAN RODECK: S-H-E-E-T -- I don't know whether it's S or Z because I know two Sheetz, and they're -- one's S and one's Z.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. No, but I was thinking that some of the challenges, maybe, were these people with this curatorial work as ancillary. That was not their background.

JEAN RODECK: Right, right.

KAREN BREWSTER: That was not their training.

JEAN RODECK: Exactly.

KAREN BREWSTER: Even though you gave them training, they may or may not have --

JEAN RODECK: Those specific things were, we -- we would try and get an expert in there.

'Cause I told her, I said, "What you guys need is a paper conservator, and um, to come up here and just conserve some of this and say, leave that there and -- "

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. But that never happened?

JEAN RODECK: I -- I don't know that it did.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: It certainly didn't when I was there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Betsy would call again the next month and the next month.

[02:04:42]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, and again, bringing in an outside expert, somebody has to pay for it.

JEAN RODECK: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: So, it was -- like the metal --

JEAN RODECK: Well --

KAREN BREWSTER: -- guys you paid for?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, anything having to do with the collections, I had money to pay for.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

JEAN RODECK: And besides, those guys loved coming to Alaska.

[02:05:05]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Um, anything else that you can kind of remember about your visits to Skagway and work you did there or people you worked with?

JEAN RODECK: That's what I was trying to think of last night, and I just -- I remember Karl and Clay and Betsy and Deb.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you remember whether it felt like good experience or did you feel like you were making progress with them, or was it just all frustrating?

JEAN RODECK: Well, it was a little frustrating with -- with --

KAREN BREWSTER: At the beginning?

JEAN RODECK: Yeah, at the beginning. But no, mostly I felt that we -- we contributed to what they were doing. And they'd have -- they'd have us come down there any time they were doing any planning or -- or any -- just in research or anything on some of the buildings and so forth.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

JEAN RODECK: They'd have us come down.

[02:06:22]KAREN BREWSTER: So when they got those big archeological collections from some of the excavations under the buildings, is that what you mean?

JEAN RODECK: Oh, well just, yeah, whatever they were doing, they would have the curator come down because it always involved objects. Always.

KAREN BREWSTER: Always.

JEAN RODECK: Primary resources.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, Jean, this has been great fun, at least for me. I hope it's been fun for you.

JEAN RODECK: Oh, yeah. Oh, gosh, it sure -- it sure has stretched my mind. And all these people that you're dealing with, it's so nice to know where they are and what they're doing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I appreciate you wracking your brain and your memory for Skagway.

JEAN RODECK: My head aches.

KAREN BREWSTER: So unless you have anything else you want to say.

JEAN RODECK: I can't think of anything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. We will turn it off. Thank you.

JEAN RODECK: And if I think of anything in the future, I'll give you a call.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

JEAN RODECK: Oh gosh, yeah, we did -- No, I -- Unless I see those journals, I'm not gonna remember any more.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Great, thanks.