

RECORDED INTERVIEW OF TED BIRKEDAL

CONDUCTED BY KAREN BREWSTER

IN LAGUNA WOODS, CALIFORNIA

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

[00:00:00]KAREN BREWSTER: This is Karen Brewster, and today is January 3, 2020. And I'm here with Ted Birkedal at his home in Laguna Woods, California. And this is an interview for the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park Oral History Project. Ted, thank you for having time today to talk to me.

TED BIRKEDAL: Thank you for coming and talking to me.

KAREN BREWSTER: And uh, I'm just going to say for sake of the recording that you were interviewed previously for the National Park Service before you retired, and that was a good overview of your life and career. And so, we're not gonna start from birth.

TED BIRKEDAL: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: We're gonna focus most of this interview on your connections working for the Park Service related to Klondike and some of your regional responsibilities. We'll kind of go back and forth.

TED BIRKEDAL: Ok.

[00:00:57]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, but just to get us started, a bit of the overview. We've just been talking, I know you were born in Norway.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And you came to this country at age five?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then where did you grow up in the --

TED BIRKEDAL: Colorado.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: My -- my mother's sister lived in Colorado and had emigrated much earlier. So I grew up in Colorado Springs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Which was a great place for a kid back then.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And when is back then? What time?

TED BIRKEDAL: That's the -- I came to the US in 1950.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: In December of 1950. And we came on the "Queen Elizabeth" on second class. So we got to be with the sister ship of the "Queen Mary."

KAREN BREWSTER: Uh-huh.

TED BIRKEDAL: And uh, then we came to New York, and then we moved to California briefly 'cause I had grandparents there who had emigrated in 1910.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: But we didn't stay in California. We went from Sonoma to Colorado Springs, Colorado, where my mother's sister lived, and I grew up there as an employ -- well, an employee's kid with -- my mother worked for the Broadmoor.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which was a --

TED BIRKEDAL: Hotel.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hotel. Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. And so, I grew up in that town, and it was great for kids because you were close to the mountains and could bike there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, cool.

TED BIRKEDAL: You could -- back then, the town was only sixty thousand, and you could bike downtown and do whatever you wanted. So you had nature and city life combined.

[00:02:38]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And then you studied archeology in college?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. I got enraptured by archeology at the age of eight when I read "The Golden Book of Archeology," which was a kids' book.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. I remember those Golden Books.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, they were wonderful.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that one, I said, "You can make money doing this?" And then I was -- my family didn't have college education, but uh, I was going to go to University of Colorado. And I thought they would have an archeology program, which I learned they did. And that's what I wanted to be. It never wavered.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I was really lucky in Colorado, because Colorado had a very good program for undergraduates, super good. We had graduate student mentors. And also, they had a -- they didn't have field schools. You got hired.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: So you had to compete for the jobs as an undergraduate, and I started when I was nineteen at Dinosaur National Monument doing archeology with the University of Colorado, uh, which was contracted for the Park Service back then. And that was a super experience. Um, I found out I loved it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I was somewhat good at it, and I got published as a sophomore.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: With Brian Hayden, who is now a major figure in Canadian archeology and worldwide. Hunter-gatherer studies.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[00:04:10]TED BIRKEDAL: So then I got NSF grant then to help carry you over, plus you get paid at Colorado. You could also get fired.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: So.

KAREN BREWSTER: Sounds like perhaps you got fired?

TED BIRKEDAL: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: Didn't, but I got a nickname of Leroy, because I spilled, uh, alcohol in a -- in a first aid kit and didn't say anything. The guy, my mentor, Dave Breternitz, who is one of the major professors there, he found out and nicknamed me Leroy after that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Why Leroy?

TED BIRKEDAL: Just because it was teasing me. You know, like, Leroy is not a very, you know, classy name.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, I see.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

[00:05:00]KAREN BREWSTER: And then, you went on to graduate school?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, Colorado. Because I got into the Colorado Scholars Program. I wasn't wealthy. I'd caddied since I was thirteen to make money to go to school. I had a tuition scholarship from the Broadmoor El Pomar Foundation, and that covered me. Because my mother was not wealthy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So, and -- and I was totally ignorant of the wider picture of academics. I just wanted to be an archeologist. And Colorado at that time was ninth in the country in their programs in anthropology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I was -- went -- I got really good experience, because I worked every summer with University of Colorado. I then went to Mesa Verde, and I wrote my dissertation on the Mesa Verde district. Uh, because I got an NSF for my, uh, PhD, so I stayed at Colorado rather than moving on. I looked at -- I looked at Penn -- the University of Pennsylvania, but I didn't get any money. A friend of mine had gone there, Payson Sheets, who is now a professor emeritus at Colorado, because they took him back. Um, my goal was to be a professor. Uh, then I got a -- after -- well I was ABD, all but dissertation, and I got a job offer for Guam. And one thing Colorado taught you was to be adaptable. I had worked on the Plains, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Mm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I had Plains, Northwest Colorado, Southwest Colorado. I was not, like, a southwestern archeologist, and I thought, that'd be great.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[00:06:58]TED BIRKEDAL: So I went to Guam and was there four years and was involved in -- in salvage archeology on weekends, things like that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Weren't you teaching there?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. I was an instructor. And I was there four years. And I left because -- I loved the place. It taught me a lot. I was -- got into historic preservation, then was involved in historic preservation planning in the territory with the government. And I was on their historic preservation board as the archeologist. I was the only archeologist on the island.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Um, but I turned from doing weekend archeology to -- in kind of a futile attempt. I had a work there called GASP. Guam Archeological Salvage Program. And GASP is a good -- 'cause I would do it for free when I could, but it took me away from writing my dissertation. So finally -- which was on the basket makers in Mesa Verde.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: Anyhow, then I -- my wife convinced me, wisely, said, "You've got to get out of here or you're never going to get it done." 'Cause I was working -- I was teaching five and a half classes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: And uh, it was a very small department. I had a great boss who was very tolerant. A great ethnologist, Scott Wilson. But uh, I wasn't making good progress, 'cause I was studying and doing all this stuff and involved in everything. And uh, there just wasn't time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: If -- if -- I had to teach the full range of anthropology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Everything from behavioral science with other scholars who were sociologists and things like that to teaching advanced classes in archeology for graduate students. We had a master's program.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: So it was the only college in Guam. I mean --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It was mainly -- well, anyway. I'm diverting. But the -- the -- then I went back to Colorado and lived in Colorado Springs for a while to write my dissertation on the savings we'd had.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. [00:09:26]So, then how did you get to Anchorage? Or how did you get to Alaska, I guess we should --

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, there's a circuitous route.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, rather quickly, a friend of mine, Bruce Anderson, who was a colleague, said they were looking for people for the National Park Service Indian Assistance Program who were archeologists. And that was -- at that time, the headquarters of the Park Service in the Southwest was in Santa Fe.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I got that job as a temporary, and then that turned into a permanent job. And then I became head of the program when my boss died. Um, then I shifted from that because the BIA took that over. We assisted the Hopi and the Navajo with their archeological programs. It taught me a lot because I was involved in really big contracts.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, up to \$400,000.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: Which was a lot back then.

KAREN BREWSTER: And what year would this have been, time period?

TED BIRKEDAL: I would have been -- that would have been '76 through '82.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that was a great learning experience 'cause I was all over the place and I had big -- fairly -- fair amount of responsibility. Uh, as that program phased out, we did a phase-out with the BIA.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:10:51]TED BIRKEDAL: Um, I got transferred to being the chief of the branch of archeological compliance in Southwest Region. And that was about 1982. And I -- that actually

is a preface to what happened there. Those years, to 1985 when I came to Alaska, that was December of '85 that I moved to Alaska. And I can explain that. But quickly, we had a problem, and this is still true. The former -- one of my employees then, became the regional archeologist for Southwest Region. And everyone there experienced accumulating loads of writing and responsibility in writing that they couldn't fulfill.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I didn't know how to stop that, because I didn't have the ability to keep -- slow down the demand. We had to deal with compliance archeology, Section 106 responsibilities, but we didn't have the time to write it up. And that was really bothersome. And I got myself into a big debt. So did others. And the, uh, Bruce Anderson himself who'd originally recruited me, he accumulated a lot at El Morro, where he had done work. So this was a pattern. And I tried to push against it, but I couldn't win.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I had good bosses and stuff, it was just the demands were so high, and we didn't have enough people.

[00:12:49]KAREN BREWSTER: And the compliance archeology has a deadline, probably.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: You have to do it before it's going to get destroyed or some project's going to happen?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. So you've got to get it out of the ground.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: If -- if you've got salvage or what then became data recovery. At first it was salvage archeology. And then they --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- transformed it under 106 to data recovery, if you had something that was actually significant in the path of the construction.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I sent myself to New Orleans, where I accumulated a big debt working on both Indian things and the Battle of New Orleans. Um, later on I was able to discharge that debt. I had a thousand-page report. 'Cause I had to redo the geography of the battlefield 'cause it was off by six hundred feet.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: So that took -- I had to do it in the context of compliance.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[00:13:47]TED BIRKEDAL: Uh. So anyway, I was in that program, and we did work in the National Park Service in Southwest Region, which then extended to Louisiana and Arkansas. So we were -- everything from the northeast Arizona to -- to Louisiana.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. Big region.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. And I assigned myself Louisiana because nobody else wanted to go. It's --

KAREN BREWSTER: It was too humid?

TED BIRKEDAL: It was terrible weather at times. It was either too hot or too cold.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: When I went down for an extended excavation -- 'cause I -- we worked for the Corps of Engineers. I was recruited because I'd found a battlefield landmark that shouldn't

have been there and got in trouble with the planners because I ruined a two-year plan for the park. They told me, "You gotta go down and find this house." And I found the house. It was just where I said it was. And then -- then I was recruited by the Corps of Engineers through a cooperative agreement to do their levy work in the park. And to see if there was anything in the path. Luckily there wasn't anything major, but it required me to rebuild the battlefield.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: And to make sure that was the case.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause the stuff they had was completely goofy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, and you have to make sure the boundaries are where they say they are, probably?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. I had to reground-truth the whole thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: And anyway, I got the report out, and I used historians, by the way. Jerry Green, who was a great historian with the Denver Service Center. And he bare -- he wrote part of that report on his own time. He had to take leave because it was --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Anyway, that's -- but I loved it there. I didn't have any problem. But that was a problem that was always in my head.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And my bosses did everything they could to make that not happen. But that's the preface to coming to Alaska, and it has a direct bearing on how I thought about Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: That's why I wanted to blabber a little bit.

[00:16:10]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, so you came to Alaska in December of '85, and you were the regional archeologist for the Park Service?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. It was arranged that I would go up there, and I think that's in my exit interview, by regional directors because they were concerned about someone else getting the position.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that person was still there. And they re-arranged my job. My immediate boss -- what's her name? Hart? I'm having a --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. It's in the other interview. I think you say her name.

TED BIRKEDAL: Leslie Hart.

KAREN BREWSTER: Leslie Hart. Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Well anyway, she didn't like me being arranged because she hadn't been told. They told her I was coming, and so she gave part of my job to Ken Schoenberg and put him head of research, so I had no money, I just had the position. And I had compliance left when I got there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that was not the agreement. So --

[00:17:15]KAREN BREWSTER: So the people who set you up to hire you, those -- was it a regional level?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And Leslie was sort of the supervisory person?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. So they'd gone around her, basically.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And uh -- 'cause she was very close to that person, and she -- he had convinced her he was wonderful. So -- taken her to dinner and stuff like that.

KAREN BREWSTER: So what was that like, showing up --

TED BIRKEDAL: Hard.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- to work in Anchorage under those conditions?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, I looked forward to Alaska because I was fairly eclectic. I -- oh, I also worked in Norway for um, three months.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: At Ullandhaug, which was a major Iron Age site. So anyway, I had no -- I wasn't wedded to the Southwest, and I -- my goal was to become a regional archeologist. That was my -- and here was an opportunity.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I didn't know it was going to be the way it was. I was not informed about --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- the resistance of my future boss. Uh, Doug Scovill, the chief archeologist of the National Park Service, orchestrated it. Uh, I was picked because I was considered a good manager, even though I had failed to do everything to get us doing reports.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Or having time to do it. It's just -- but I was a good supervisor, and I had up to nine people working for me. Um --

[00:18:50]KAREN BREWSTER: Was there any reason in particular you wanted to come to Alaska?

TED BIRKEDAL: I wanted to be a regional archeologist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: And it was an opportunity. I thought it was exciting. I thought, "Ooh boy, yeah." I was a little bit with trepidation. I said, "Hm." I was thinking, "God, I wonder if they have much to find?" Because, you know, it's -- I'd studied a little bit of arctic and sub-arctic archeology in Colorado, but it was just an overview. But I was a little concerned, what -- what are we going to really find here? Uh, I didn't know enough to know better.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I was excited to come because I thought it was a fresh territory. And I would have a new job. So I arrived there, and then it had been re-arranged on me, so I only had compliance and the title. And I had two employees, one of which I didn't even know I had because Bob Spude, who is Cathy Spude's husband today, --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- didn't tell me. He told me I'm the technical supervisor, but he was the real supervisor.

KAREN BREWSTER: And he was regional historian at that time?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

[00:20:07]TED BIRKEDAL: And so, I came into that and Ken Schoenberg was in charge of research and had all the money, and I had just compliance money at that time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I had no real budget other than myself. And Paul Gleeson was my main employee. Sixth months later, I learned that Susan Morton, who worked with the public archeology programs, uh, that -- that she worked for me. And the way I found that out is Bob Spude handed me the phone and said, "There's somebody you gotta talk to." And it was an angry pilot. Because Susan Morton had not shown up for the flight to Kayak Island.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I forget why. There was a reason. And it had been canceled, but he --

KAREN BREWSTER: He didn't get the message?

TED BIRKEDAL: There was some --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And he was yelling and screaming. And that's when I found out that Susan Morton worked for me.

[00:21:08]KAREN BREWSTER: And then, your predecessor was Craig Davis?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: So was he still there when you came?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. He had gone on a hardship to Washington. It was -- back then, FTE was very, very -- it was precious. Reagan had instituted that FTE would be the way to control the budget.

KAREN BREWSTER: So FTE, full time employment positions?

TED BIRKEDAL: Those positions were impossible. So my FTE was traded to Washington so Craig Davis could get a position there under a hardship. His two children were sick, and he needed better medical care than was offered in Anchorage at that time. I -- anyway, so that left the person who was gonna succeed him, or thought he was --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Was Ken.

KAREN BREWSTER: Schoenberg?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: But that didn't happen, and Leslie didn't have the power to do that.

KAREN BREWSTER: So did Craig leave you any information, or --

TED BIRKEDAL: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: Did you get any training or anything?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. I went cold.

KAREN BREWSTER: And you went cold into an environment where some people didn't really want you there?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: It sounds like.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. It sounds tough.

TED BIRKEDAL: So it was -- I could've -- if I'd been smarter, I could've protested, but it was like, I was told that she had made that decision. And the regional director, Boyd Evison, didn't make a change at that time. [00:22:43]So I got up there and made do the best I could. I was used to compliance, and then I would get rangers coming from Seward and saying, "When is my report going to be published?" And I actually didn't have any money for that project.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It was a project that Craig had initiated, and he'd promised a report. It was on a historic cabin down at Kenai Fjords National Park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I actually begged. I had a connection to Georgia, and I can't remember how I got it, but it's with a -- a guy -- a National Park Service publisher there for the Park Service. And I convinced him -- I had a little seed money somewhere. I forget where I got it. But I said, "We gotta publish this. Can you do it?" And he did it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: And he -- I got the report done. And it was published, you know, in a limited number.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But at least I got it done. Anyway, that was -- so I'm there -- [00:23:56]Phew, let's see, I'm there sometime just before Christmas in December, and then later on, I go to Klondike for reconnaissance.

KAREN BREWSTER: So that was the Mascot Saloon?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And that was a --

KAREN BREWSTER: Recon.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that was in --

KAREN BREWSTER: That was in when?

TED BIRKEDAL: That was in February.

KAREN BREWSTER: February. February of '86. Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, so you hadn't even been there very long.

TED BIRKEDAL: Nope. Uh, and Paul Gleeson, who was my compliance archeologist under me, --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- and I went down there to scout it out and meet with Cathy Blee, who then became Cathy Spude.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: And this is where the -- my blabbing connects up. Um, I was -- I was adamant that we didn't get accumulating debts in compliance.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Skagway was my first step to do that. And so, Paul and I met with Cathy, and one thing we were really concerned about is, Cathy Blee, we only got maybe two weeks of an excavation. Like, she worked at the depot.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: She got to dig a few test pits. Now she did marvelous work with that, and she really interpreted stuff. I mean, she did great interpretation with the material --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- she had to her -- what limited material she could accumulate. 'Cause they would -- Denver Service Center was doing the archeology, and they would say -- where she worked --

KAREN BREWSTER: The Denver Service Center?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: They would say, "You've got two weeks." Or you've got -- and it was just -- it's the same thing we were plagued with. But they would constrict the amount of work that could be done artificially. Just saying, you're going to limit it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Why? Because they needed to get the work done on the building?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Yes. They wanted her out of there so they could start doing the architectural rehabilitation.

[00:25:57]KAREN BREWSTER: I wonder if the seasonality in Alaska also --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- crunched the time?

TED BIRKEDAL: Not -- not --

KAREN BREWSTER: Maybe not in Skagway?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. You can work there even into the fall and -- Maybe winter is pretty doggone hard, but we were -- Paul went down there even in the winter. So we -- we met with Cathy and talked to her and said, "We'd like you to get your reports done 'cause you're getting behind." Even with the short field seasons that she was getting. She wasn't getting enough time to finish things. So we thought, this is not good. Paul was a similar thinker to me, and he was a great archeologist. He was one of the best field archeologists ever. He's still -- he's up in the Seattle area, Port Angeles, today. He worked for, uh, what's the peninsula?

KAREN BREWSTER: Olympic Peninsula?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Um, and um, so we were of like mind. And so, with the Skagway thing, what we did was, we wanted to do the -- with Cathy, we went and crawled underneath the Mascot Saloon through underneath the thing, and we went, "Oh my God." There were peanuts under here. Peanut shells. There was all kinds of debris and broken glass. We said, "Gee, this is like, you know, King Tut's tomb." For Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: We knew it hadn't been bothered, or we thought it -- we were under the assumption that it hadn't been altered. It was the direct, primary deposit material.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: As opposed to secondary. Uh, Cathy disagrees, by the way.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, we're going to talk about that.

TED BIRKEDAL: But --

KAREN BREWSTER: About the findings.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. And there's a report I did for the Park Service on that once I retired.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. You sent me a copy.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, good.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Anyway.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's why we'll talk about it.

[00:27:57]TED BIRKEDAL: But -- but so, we were crawling around under there. And this is February. It's cold.

KAREN BREWSTER: And the Mascot was the next building in line for --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- restoration?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: So that's why you guys went there?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And they had a tight timeline. And it, ironically, took the longest to get that report done. So anyhow, they put a timeline on us for getting it done before June. So that put the burden -- I had asked -- well, Paul was my single compliance archeologist, and he hired temporaries.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And he planned it out. He knew what he was gonna do. He did a good job. And we -- he spent, I think, at least a month down there with the crew. And Karl Gurcke was part of that crew.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Who became the cultural resource person for the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: At that time, he was hired as the historian, but not at that time of the Mascot. It was just after.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Yeah, Karl started doing archeology in the park.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes, he did.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then kind of --

TED BIRKEDAL: But he got hired as a historian and then did the archeology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And later, he became the archeologist. But Karl was part of the crew.

[00:29:13]And um, Paul did a great job. Invented a conveyor belt method of getting stuff out of the -- the crawl space under the present-day Mascot.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that's what I was thinking, like, how do you do archeology under the floorboards of a building?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, with great difficulty.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: If you look at the reports, you can see them squashed in.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's only like four feet.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And dark.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes, it is.

KAREN BREWSTER: I mean, you'd have to --

TED BIRKEDAL: They had lights.

KAREN BREWSTER: Lights. You'd have to bring lights in.

TED BIRKEDAL: So it's like cave archeology under there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they all look like troglodytes if you look at the picture. And in that -- so Paul got that out of the ground. Did a marvelous job. It was very tight archeology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Got that stuff done by the deadline. And we -- he had exhausted the -- every possible way, avenue to get that done, and done right.

[00:30:09]KAREN BREWSTER: And so, to get it done and done right, does that mean they took out every single artifact, or they just survey it and leave things there, or how does that work?

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, there was a -- if I recall correctly, they did a full data recovery. Which means you don't do everything, but you -- they did a large number of the grids. They laid out

grids underneath the building, and it was -- Paul was a good technician in terms of doing things, so -- and I think they dug almost half of it out. What they did is sampled it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause normally under data recovery, you don't dig everything unless you're exhaustive. You want to leave something behind.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Most of it was they -- there were some plots left. I think they're still underneath the -- No, they're gone because they put in the, uh -- the uh, utility works under there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I mean, I know from looking at the archeology reports, it says Area 1, Area 2.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. They had different areas, and then grids within them. And they sampled everything that was going to be affected. And it was more than a sample. It was a good effort to make the maximum use with -- of getting the data out.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, 'cause I was thinking, you don't pick up every wood chip and every fragment of glass.

TED BIRKEDAL: And you don't dig every grid. So, but they did a good number. And I don't have the map in my hand.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But uh, it was -- it was meant to be a full data recovery program that would not be shameful.

[00:31:54]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And now, did Cathy work on the excavation?

TED BIRKEDAL: She did not. She was working on our reports that she had backlogged.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: That was the whole idea. She -- when we met with her in Skagway in February, she cried because we said we're gonna put you to finishing this. We're not excluding you from working here. We're -- but we need you to finish that work because you don't want to be like Southwest Region.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And already you're accumulating stuff, and it's gonna become impossible for you to catch up. So we would like you to spend your time doing that for DSC, and Paul will take over in Skagway. So Paul became the main --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- guy at that time.

KAREN BREWSTER: And when you said she cried, she was happy, or she was --

TED BIRKEDAL: No. She was unhappy.

KAREN BREWSTER: She did not want to leave the field?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, she was very wedded to Klondike.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: She loved it. We had nothing against her.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: We -- we just thought that because of -- well, Paul's background was not the same as me, but as an archeologist, he knew things would sometimes not get done.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: If the money ran out. And um, 'cause he had just joined the Park Service in Alaska. So anyway, we -- we --

[00:33:11]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was also thinking, archeologists tend not to become field archeologists if they want -- you know, that maybe Cathy wanted to do the field work.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes, she did.

KAREN BREWSTER: She didn't want to sit in an office and write a report.

TED BIRKEDAL: No, she didn't mind that --

KAREN BREWSTER: That's not what -- that's not why archeologists become archeologists, I guess.

TED BIRKEDAL: But she loved doing the work there. And she was good at writing the reports, but she just didn't have the time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: DSC -- just like Jerome Greenly worked for me from DSC? I'd gotten him three thousand dollars to help me write the history of the Battle of New Orleans. Um, to help me orient -- 'cause I knew that I had to have historical help in New Orleans to do the archeology. I couldn't do it without a con --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- historical context.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And Klondike is very much like that.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. It is, exactly. So anyhow, it had nothing against Cathy. It was about getting the -- getting a better pace on write-ups after this compliance archeology and giving her a breather. So Paul was in a better position to do that. He hadn't accumulated a debt yet.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:34:28]TED BIRKEDAL: The irony was, they were promised to support the writing of the report. And Cathy Blee is the one who ended up writing that report, I think in the '90's.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because we -- Karl Gurcke was then the -- had become the -- the archeologist for the park. And he worked with Clay Alderson to get DSC to get the money, which they had promised years before. It's like a decade before.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: For the Mascot write-up. And Clay was persistent, and there's a funny story I can get back to about that because I would've never thought he would be the advocate. But he became the advocate for that and did a great job in getting DSC to cough up the dollars for Cathy Blee to complete a report. Log report that Paul Gleeson had done the field work.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then she ended up doing the write-up. That's the --

KAREN BREWSTER: That must be hard to do the write-up on somebody else's field work.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. But he had -- they had good notes and everything, and she did a great job.

[00:35:46]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. I know she -- there's like a ten-volume set or something of all the reports from Klondike, and I think they're all by her.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: So we never excluded her. We wanted her to shine, which she did. So she, um, there was a big fight for -- for that. We kept persisting because we said, you -- you -- you

betrayed us. We got that stuff out of there in time for you to do the rehabilitation, and you didn't -- you didn't fulfill the promise.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's bad faith. And Clay used that to finally shame them. He was the one who was brokering it, not me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: I was supporting him, and so was Karl. And Karl was very instrumental in convincing him how important this was 'cause we felt betrayed. 'Cause the very thing we were trying to avoid had happened.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Which was irritating.

KAREN BREWSTER: And we should say, Clay Alderson was superintendent at Klondike at the time.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. [00:36:53]Now what's the funny story?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh. Well, years before that report finally came out and got done, and um -- so Paul Gleeson was -- we would get the compliance money coming to Alaska. DSC would allocate us what we needed. Frank Willis was the main cultural resource distributor out of DSC, and Cathy worked for him. She also worked in other parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: When it was DSC involved. So she wasn't just exclusive to Klondike. She had other -- that was the other thing. She had other responsibilities and duties. Um, being the archeological compliance person for the -- for DSC. Uh, I think for the western parts of the -- like, for Western US including Alaska.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: So she never -- she was never -- I don't -- she was initially unhappy, but I think she be -- she was fine. And we were getting her opportunities to do stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:38:10]TED BIRKEDAL: So Paul was my compliance archeologist, and then we continued to press for adequate data recovery when it was necessary for rehabilitation. And I think it was one of the lots, and I can't tell you which one, but it didn't have any buildings on it, but they were going to do stuff there. And uh, Clay, if I remember correctly, didn't want to do anything. I -- there was some timeline problem.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, you can't -- again, this timeline thing with -- so he -- he was saying, "Oh, I don't want to do this. You guys are going to delay the project. The rehabilitation can't happen. Blah blah-blah blah-blah." It was some utilities and stuff. But it was a -- according to Karl, it was a very important area of Skagway history in there. So -- or arch -- historical archeology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So we -- we -- it was initially Paul Gleeson dealt with it. And then it got raised, and I ended up dealing with it. And I forget if I was then the chief of cultural resources. I think I was by that time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Um, but the funny -- I guess the funny thing is that Clay became a big advocate for archeology, but at that time he was not.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: He saw it as an imposition. You know, superintendent wants to do what they want to do. Which is a common Park Service thing. They -- they have trouble with 106.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's like why are you -- why are you making it so hard for me? [00:39:53] So anyway, Paul Haertel was my boss. He was the associate director for -- regional director for planning and cultural -- uh, resources.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So he had natural and cultural. And he had been the one who hired me as, yeah -- I was the -- by that time, Leslie Hart had gone on to other things. Eventually went to Lyndon Johnson -- Lyndon Johnson's park, and I forget what -- LBJ, whatever they call it.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't know.

TED BIRKEDAL: Anyway, she had gone, left for, first Washington, where she was congressional liaison for the Park Service. And I was acting. And then, I was picked by Paul Haertel to be the permanent.

KAREN BREWSTER: So that was the head of cultural resources for all of the Alaska region?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so, uh, Clay and I got into it, and it needed to be resolved at a higher level. And Paul Haertel -- in those days the region wasn't as nervous about telling superintendents what to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Kinda transformed a little after that. But Paul Haertel was -- the -- some of the superintendents found him a little dictatorial. But he was great to me. But he -- when they were screwing up, he would let 'em know. And he wouldn't tolerate it. And he had power as a -- And that power of the associates kind of dissipated over the years as the Park Service became a little less centralized, where the regional director didn't allocate power to the associates as much. He retained that himself, and they were not delegated the authority Paul had at that time. Paul could basically veto a superintendent.

[00:41:49] KAREN BREWSTER: Hm. And so, that's what he did with Clay?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, we met in his office, and I remember that. And uh, Clay kept saying, "You have to say yes." Meaning, we're not going to look at that piece of property. We -- we had to do tests in it. That's what the big thing was. We don't know what's there. Karl Gurcke said it was -- we've got to check it out. We can't just go, it's fine.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause --

KAREN BREWSTER: Isn't that the law?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: If it's federal purchased land, you have to check it?

TED BIRKEDAL: You are correct. If you're going to have a land modification project on there. And relative to what you're doing, are there significant historical properties or archeological properties? [00:42:38] And uh, yes, that's -- so one thing I learned in the Southwest Region is always stay with public policy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause I'd gotten in a big fight with -- there with a coal company that was working on Navajo land. And they tried to make a -- a survey had been done in the 1960's. We call a windshield survey where you drive through the territory. I knew the -- I knew the guy who did it. He was a good archeologist, Stew Peckham (Stewart L. Peckham). But it was nothing. It was just a recon, and it was raining. And I said,

"You can't have -- there's no way the BIA can approve, along with the tribe, this mine without you doing adequate survey." Well, that guy was very close to Reagan, and all hell broke out. And I just wanted that -- I -- we laid up a program that would for seventy thousand dollars, they could get the work done. Was maybe double what it is today. But it wasn't a big, horrible job.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So they had even recruited archeologists from outside the Park Service and outside the BIA, these contractors to counter that. So I stuck to my gun. [00:44:01]I had -- I had delegated -- this is really weird in the Park Service, but they had delegated me the power of the regional director.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: I didn't have to ask him.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. That seems not Park Service at all.

TED BIRKEDAL: No, it's not. But they didn't want to mess with the Indian Assistance Program. They didn't -- it was like, go do -- go do that. My boss, before he passed away, had the same authority. So we had a written authority of the regional director, so I could speak for the regional director. And only -- we would then alert them of problems. And when I got into the mainline Park Service, that wasn't the case.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, so. But I had that authority, so I went to the mattresses, so to speak, on this thing. 'Cause this guy didn't want to do it on a matter of principal. He didn't believe in regulations. The head of Sun Century. Was an energy company.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: But it was close to Reagan, kind of.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. [00:45:09]But with Clay it was more just the time frame?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, I'll just finish that story.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: The reason is, that the regional solicitor had to come into my defense. They wanted me fired. And that can happen.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I stayed with public policy, and he was able to defend me. Because everything I was saying was in public policy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: There was nothing weird.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It wasn't exaggerated. I wasn't asking for the moon.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. It wasn't your opinion. You were citing published policy.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And I had a good -- I had given them a really good price that would take the contractor to get that work done at an adequate level to allow us to get him -- get him in compliance.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I said to the company, I said, "You're never going to mine, because the Navajo tribe's going to kick up your royalties whenever you wanted to." They never mined 'cause the Navajo -- what I said. And they said, "You haven't done adequate work."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And by that time, we had gotten the Navajo archeological program, the indigenous one, going.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Along with Zuni. They had good programs. And we contracted with them. And um, on projects that I was involved on, and they did a good job. Dave Doyle built that program, but it got to be where now today, it's indigenous people running it.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's great.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, but it was the public policy thing that I wanted to get to.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:46:44]TED BIRKEDAL: So, I was adamant. And so, Paul Haertel listened to this argument. Clay says, "You gotta say yes." And I said, "I can't say yes." And uh, Haertel sided with me, and Clay went (hands smacking), ok. 'Cause he was told he had to do it. Kar -- uh, Paul and Karl were involved in that, and I forget the details. I'd have to look at Becky's book.

KAREN BREWSTER: I'm wondering, was it the property that they -- where they ended up building the maintenance building? That's the one I could think of that was a big, emp -- that was an empty lot.

TED BIRKEDAL: That could be. Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then, Doreen Cooper did a lot of the archeology.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. That was that lot.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that was going. [00:47:29]And we also had a fuss and fight about another building. Uh, it's the old department store there. I'm not that much of a Skagway expert.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, the Lynch & Kennedy building?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, that's correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And uh, that kinda broke the -- the camel's back in my memory of Clay just saying, "Yep. We'll get it done." And Karl did a good job kind of getting him into the fold. So he became -- the crazy thing is, the guy who was just -- I remember sitting in the office. He says, "You say yes, say yes." And I said, "I can't say yes." For the same reason that I have to stay within pol -- if you leave public policy, you are vulnerable. Now, at least two -- they can -- you take the fall.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Basically, if you do what they say, you take the fall. They don't take the fall.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that's -- that's where it comes. So they can't outright -- they gotta find something else to fire you for.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:48:38]TED BIRKEDAL: And my regional director at that time supported me, too. 'Cause it went up. That was big politics.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that was Boyd Evison at that time? Was he --

TED BIRKEDAL: No, that was not the -- I think it was Bob Kerr in Southwest Region.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, oh, oh. That -- your Southwest one. I was --  
TED BIRKEDAL: I was -- so, the regional director was -- I can't -- it may have been Boyd still.  
KAREN BREWSTER: When you were --  
TED BIRKEDAL: It was still oil spill, yes.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.  
TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Early 90's. And so, uh, I think the oil spill was '92. Um --  
KAREN BREWSTER: No, it was '89.  
TED BIRKEDAL: '89. Ok, I'm wrong.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. It was --  
TED BIRKEDAL: I'm losing my --  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. It was '89.  
TED BIRKEDAL: It was around in there.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Ok.  
TED BIRKEDAL: So it would've been Boyd still there, 'cause he got outed for the oil spill.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.  
TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause he responded promptly. And they trussed up -- they actually trumped up a -- to use that word.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.  
TED BIRKEDAL: Trumped up a deal on him for publishing his memoirs of the oil spill.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.  
TED BIRKEDAL: They said that was illegal. That was an obscure Interior rule that they had to prove controversial things. And they said, "Well, that was controversial, therefore you're going to Denver."  
KAREN BREWSTER: Hm. Well, they didn't just fire him, though. They at least transferred him.  
TED BIRKEDAL: That's what they do.  
KAREN BREWSTER: I know. But --  
TED BIRKEDAL: So Park Service moves everybody somewhere.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And that's what the government does today, too, if they want to get rid of you.  
KAREN BREWSTER: They move you.  
TED BIRKEDAL: To a place you don't want to go. [00:50:13]But uh, the -- the great thing -- things improved greatly. And I gotta -- I gotta say, Clay Alderson was a key part of that. I don't know what Karl thinks, but that was from my perspective, and Paul was the -- continued to be the main force to drive the archeology along with Karl.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And Skagway, then we got things published. Things started to happen. DSC started to listen, I think in part because Paul Haertel and Clay Alderson stayed true.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And stood with public policy on Section 106. And we were then very happy, because things were coming out one way or another in terms of reports. Where -- this is where I wanted to be. I made a big point in not getting involved in digging. Craig had loved to do work

in Denali. Coming from my background and already carrying a huge debt of backlogged reports from Southwest Region, I didn't want to accumulate anything more.

[00:51:26]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. So you chose not to do fieldwork?

TED BIRKEDAL: I did fieldwork, but only recon.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I would go to Skagway to do recon or make an argument or make a case, and every now and then, I'd go down with Paul.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And we'd look at the buildings and the ground. Starting with the Mascot. And -- but I didn't want to get involved in doing any digging, because that would mean I had responsibility, and that was not where I wanted to be. That was my experience as a regional archeologist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I don't want to accumulate debt. I have debt.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I have grinding debt. I don't need more. So what I would like to do is get things going and get 'em under control. And this was easier once I became the team manager for the -- they changed the name from division chief to team manager for cultural resources.

[00:52:26]And the other thing that I was very interested in, along with Cyd Martin, who was the cultural resources person for --

KAREN BREWSTER: Gates of the Arctic.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- Gates. Uh, and I -- she and I became collaborators on CRAC, the Cultural Resource Advisory Council, which was all the -- like, I had a big fight, and this relates to Skagway, in the sense it's one of the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because Karl gets funding after this. Uh, and he got -- the whole idea was, um, I got a regional archeologist called Gary Somers, who was -- I had hired from Hawaii of all places, but he'd been in the Indian Assistance Program in -- in California and Arizona, similar to my background. And he had a similar background, but his outlook was similar to mine. And he had done some work in Hawaii where he had gotten archeologists in the parks. This was seen as a great accomplishment, to get people at the park level who were archeologists and historians and things like that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Versus archeological assistance coming from regional?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. We wanted to have spokespeople there, people who could do things. And that was starting to happen in Western Region where Stephanie Toothman was, too, who also had a similar thing. Uh, uh, so yeah. Jim Thomson was her regional archeologist, and he was very open to that. [00:54:09]So this was happening and we'd communicate. We had a -- there was a cultural resource group that used to meet throughout the West who had -- they were curators and archeologists, and we would share solutions that we had or problems. And Cathy Blee was a big part of that, and Frank Willis, coming in from the Denver Service Center to meet with all of us. And we would talk about better -- best practices. And uh, this was happening.

[00:54:42]So anyway, Cyd Martin and I, because she was a park-level person, said, "Let's see if we can get this organized." Because there had been a resource management team that was built up of the resource managers in the parks who were largely natural. Almost none of them were cultural resource people. And they had tried to recruit me into being a member of that group.

And I -- I said, "No. I need my own. We need our own group of park representatives." And we were then working to populate the parks. We'd already started to populate the park with archeologists and historians where we could. Karl was one of the first.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And we liked that. 'Cause there you got a guy who can talk to Clay.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Or whoever the superintendent.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and they become an expert on the cultural resources in their area.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Versus regional, you're doing everything.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And I didn't -- I truly didn't want the power. I wanted it -- I'm weird that way. Um, and Cyd was of like mind.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:56:01]TED BIRKEDAL: So we wrote up the first kind of constitution or guidelines for the CRAC. And back to where I refused. I said, "No, I'm not gonna do that." And they said, "You've gotta come to the meeting." I said, "I'm not coming to the meeting." It's really weird. It's like I was the reluctant bridegroom. And I was sitting in an office, and Russ Galipeau, who's head of that resource group and became superintendent here of the Channel Islands, he comes in and he says, "You've gotta come." I said, "I'm not coming. We need our own group. You can't properly represent us." If I'm just sitting there by myself with a bunch of natural resource guys, do you follow it?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: I have almost no influence. They're going to override.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I'm getting short -- the short deal. [00:56:59]So anyway, on getting research money. At that time -- before that happened, this is probably around '92, uh, we disbursed the money. My branch chiefs, and like, it've been Gleeson and others. And was Bob -- Bob Spude had left by then? I can't -- but he would've been involved in the disbursement before he left. And along with my historical architect. And then I got an ethnologist, and they would say, "We get Washington money?" By that -- oh, I'll get back to that. But anyway, the whole -- the key point here is, this got money allocated to a group by me sitting there and refusing, I -- and I -- it may have been Paul Haertel who was there still. He was a great, open mind. But he -- what we got was this Cultural Resource Advisory Council made up of all the then park people plus resource management if they didn't have it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So we invited them to join. They could join in. Whoever the superintendent appointed could join in on that. And we -- now rather than our regional office allocating research money and deciding things, put that to the parks.

[00:58:32]KAREN BREWSTER: So did the CRAC committee allocate the money?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. We were advisory, and then it was rub -- not rubber-stamped. But generally, they did -- the superintendents, who had their own council, would then agree. We would -- I would be a spokesperson, or Cyd or park people, for the projects, and the allocation of that money among the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: So did the parks have ideas for projects and they proposed it to CRAC?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: For funding?

TED BIRKEDAL: That's how it worked.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then CRAC would decide --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- who got what?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Initially, we had a scoring system, but after a while, we decided, no, we have to work with the parks and their need level.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:59:18]TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, sometimes parks were not good advocates for their own future. Some of the cultural people. Like I had to defend Gene Griffin in Sitka. There was a big fight there between some of the park people and him because he had not made a good case for the survey of Sitka. And hadn't explained why it was going to be so costly. Rain forest.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's horribly hard archeology. It's elusive as heck.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And it costs -- you have to do a lot of testing. And the -- we -- we eventually we got the Denver -- excuse me, the Midwest Archeological Center to do the work because they had really good expertise and technology, which they applied. You know, the remote sensing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Initial --

[01:00:12]KAREN BREWSTER: So if the cultural resource person in a park wants to do a project, they have to get it approved by their superintendent?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Who then forwards it to CRAC?

TED BIRKEDAL: Forwards it -- correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: So the individual archeologist --

TED BIRKEDAL: Then -- then the superintendents as a council, with the regional directors and the associate directors, approve our recommendation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So that's why we're advisory.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: We could not effectively do this on our own, but we recommended. They rarely questioned.

KAREN BREWSTER: I was going to say, did they ever override any of your recommendations?

TED BIRKEDAL: I can't remember. No. It wasn't mine.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: By -- by the way, we set it up that I had the same vote as a park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. Even though you were regional?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Now my staff could come in and advise. Like Rachel Mason or Don Callaway, who's --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Or Tim Cochrane, who really started the program in ethnology in the region. He was great, um, 'cause he was a really good salesman of anthropology. And he started on Glacier Bay and did a great job on getting them to completely reverse themselves on the Tlingit.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I can't remember if he did work -- he did some work on Skagway, too, 'cause we wanted to have the tribe involved there, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Um, 'cause there is -- at Dyea, there is remains of their camps and stuff like that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:01:45]TED BIRKEDAL: Anyhow, but that gave Skagway a voice from the park level, and we also listened to them in terms of compliance. And began to allocate -- parks also got their compliance money. So they would have to come up with the program.

KAREN BREWSTER: So compliance money went directly to parks? It didn't go to regional and then you allocate --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, we moved it -- we moved it out, except where we had a job to do. And it basically, we would get the money from the park. Like, the most difficult job is historical architecture.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And after, um, uh, David Snow left, who did a good job, then -- then Steve Peterson became the really driving force. And then Grant Crosby.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Was allocate -- kind of asked by Steve to take over Skagway. And did a super job. And the park was really receptive, of course, to architect -- or historical architecture.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Getting the rehabilitation of the buildings. And Skagway did a super job. I mean, you look at those buildings, and they're wonderful.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh --

[01:03:06]KAREN BREWSTER: And it's amazing to look and think, how does anybody ever figure out that this is what they used to look like?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, Steve and Grant would do top research on paint.

KAREN BREWSTER: I know.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they did the same in Kennecott, which is another -- But they look at that whole thing. Now, that's the hardest thing for a park to have. So, they came to us for historical architecture, and they came to us for ethnology. But less and less for archeology. And they also came to us for history, and Sande (McDermott) will fill you in on that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And she did a magnificent job because she was also supportive of our concept. All my staff was.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But historical architects are really hard to find.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: That are good, and know what they're doing. And can do the work.

[01:04:00]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, well, I was wondering is, how a project is a park project versus a regional project?

TED BIRKEDAL: Generally, through CRAC, once we got that. It used to be, we just did -- said what happened, because there wasn't anybody out there. But once we started to get people in the parks, Cyd was one of the earlier ones. I think the earliest is Karl.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then there was -- and I would even move money. I can't remember with Karl if we -- I moved money sometimes that I had. I gave, like, Jeanne Schaaf's job at Katmai and Lake Clark.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: We negotiated. Gary Somers and I, my regional archeologist at the time, negotiated with Frank Pierce, the superintendent at that time of Lake Clark -- uh, Katmai. Here, we give you the money out of our own budget for that position. You hire -- if you hire an archeologist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: This is -- we're gonna take the body and give it to you.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So we went to that extreme, because we knew it was the good thing to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Jeanne became one of the best Alaskan archeologists ever.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: She was working for me, but we traded her to --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, I see.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, to -- to -- And that was when we were under pressure from -- the government again went into constriction, and regional offices were supposed to shed people.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that gave us an opportunity to do it. We didn't mind shedding. We just didn't want them to take -- there was nothing out there. But was -- the whole idea was to populate the parks of Alaska with archeologists.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Like Wayne Howell and others.

[01:05:54]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, but not every park --

TED BIRKEDAL: Needed --

KAREN BREWSTER: -- got an archeologist or a historian?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. They sometimes got something else. It's whatever they chose.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then, some were more delayed than others. But Skagway was an early cooperator, and I think Clay is to be commended. Mike Tranel did great, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Theresa Thibault eventually became the -- the lead person for cultural there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I think she did a good job. Uh, that's my perspective. We got along really well. And I liked -- the whole idea of hiring Gary Somers as regional archeologist was to do that. 'Cause he had successfully accomplished it in Hawaii.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: See, that -- you can't -- regions that tried to hold onto the power, that -- they lost with the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: It -- peop -- with Karl there and others like Theresa, we had spokespeople. Now, with historical architecture, they generally had no -- they liked it when it came.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So we didn't have to fight 'em as much on that. And there was no way to get expertise at that level, even in Skagway. Today, do they -- I think they have one.

KAREN BREWSTER: A historical architect? Well, the person who is head of resources --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- comes from a historical architectural background.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh. Well, that's perfect.

KAREN BREWSTER: But Grant is still at the regional office and assists.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because that's --

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't think she's really doing historical architecture because she's --

TED BIRKEDAL: Managing.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- head of resources. So I don't know if she has time.

[01:07:39]TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Well, that was the plan. So in terms of Skagway, and I let Steve -- the other thing I'm -- as a supervisor, my job is to make my people successful. And you have people like Steve Peterson who got along really well with the maintenance people.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And in fact, the money for architecture comes out of maintenance 'cause we allocate that money. And their council --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- is the one that allocates the money.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh. So historic archeology doesn't fall under cultural resources?

TED BIRKEDAL: No, it --

KAREN BREWSTER: I mean, historical architecture.

TED BIRKEDAL: It did. But we worked with the maintenance guys because we would put the money together. Steve was the concept behind that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And if you -- are you planning ever to interview him? He's in Prescott now.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, I -- I -- no, this is the last of the interviews, for now anyway.

TED BIRKEDAL: Anyway, he's got that in his head.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And he -- I was --

[01:08:42]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, as you say -- that was sort of one of my questions was, you had been regional archeologist, and then you moved into this regional --

TED BIRKEDAL: Team manager.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, head of cultural resources, and yeah, how did that shift your responsibilities?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, it -- it -- it made me in charge of ethnology, history, um, historical architecture, archeology. I had the whole ball of wax. And then I had to think big. I had to think - balance what was going on. But I wanted strong people like Sande, you know, who were -- she

was a great regional historian. She didn't do history either, much. She did the management of it and was the brains behind getting it done.

KAREN BREWSTER: And so, yeah, becoming head of cultural resources, yeah, you became much more, say, managerial.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And everybody else was out, sort of, doing the work.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Whereas when you started as regional archeologist, you were still kind of more hands on?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And then, ah, as regional archeologist, I did a lot of recon work, like up in Gates of the Arctic. And then I would try to get the work done.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But my job was not to -- mine was to be the advocate.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: To figure out what should be done. And then to advocate for it.

[01:10:13]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And so, head of cultural resources, you did the same, but for all those other, history, ethnology, and archeology?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: So when did you make the shift?

TED BIRKEDAL: '89 was -- I was acting, and by '91 I was finally hired permanently. And it was Paul Haertel. And I became -- so for two years, I acted. And then I got the job in '91, which I held to the end.

KAREN BREWSTER: So 2012 is when you retired?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

[01:10:44]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, was there a particular reason why you chose to make that shift?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, yeah. I remember why. I actually -- Leslie Hart had gone off first as a congressional liaison, so it was a temporary assignment.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: She -- by that time, I had gained her confidence. And in fact, Ken Schoenberg was caught in her office. He was caught in Gleeson's office, too. He'd spy on things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: He was awful.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: He was an awful supervisor. Well, after she caught him, and Bill Brown and I had gone and seen her and said, "You've gotta get -- this guy is not working out. He's --he's an autocrat to his employees. He doesn't work. He's lazy. Blah, blah, blah." 'Cause I didn't hire him.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Leslie had hired him. And -- and then given him that -- 'cause of a -- but finally, she -- she had had enough when he went up to Richard Stenmark and said, "Leslie looks a little stressed. I'm concerned about her." That was the deputy regional director. And Stenmark was a good guy. And he told Leslie. Then she caught him in her office. Because he was always paranoid, looking at her papers.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then she gave him to me. I think that was '88 or '89. And then I broke him from supervision. I couldn't get rid of him.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause it's the government. It's really hard.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I tried later, and it went all the way to the regional solicitor, and I lost.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I eventually took six months to break him of supervision through HR, and then I got him isolated, and he just became an archeologist who I had to deal with.

KAREN BREWSTER: You still had to manage, but it was less troublesome, perhaps?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, yeah. He wasn't causing chaos and messing around and not --

[01:12:58]Like, that's why Becky Saleeby comes -- well, she did a great piece of work on --

KAREN BREWSTER: The twenty years of his -- archeology in Skagway.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. That was -- she was a master of doing stuff like that. And Susan Bender and her did the plan for Denali, which Ken was supposed to do. The archeological survey plan. And he just diddled around and didn't do anything, and I had to dump it on them. And they did a great job of mapping out where the priorities should be. She was a great employee. She worked in the public -- she took over Susan Morton's public archeology role. But I pulled her into the park to help out, and then we got that wonderful project to summarize the --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: The archeology, and she did a magnificent job.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Um --

[01:13:53]KAREN BREWSTER: But so, you became the head of cultural resources, you -- You said you had a reason why you decided to take that position.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, I'm sorry. You gotta get me --

KAREN BREWSTER: I'm bringing us back.

TED BIRKEDAL: I -- at first I -- I had met my goal to be a regional archeologist. I had -- now I had authority over all the programs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: I had broken Ken from his control, and I had the research money in my hands. So -- and Leslie had -- had found confidence in me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: She knew that I was a straight shooter. And I was a good supervisor. I liked to empower my employees, unless they were idiots. And then I worried. I said, "I don't want to work for an idiot." Anybody could get in there 'cause it's a national competition.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I thought, "Hm. I'm going to apply for this." And I think Paul Haertel had encouraged me to apply. He was a very important boss to me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: In Alaska. And he credited for helping with the archeological programs and getting cultural programs going. He was a natural -- well, he was a rescue ranger.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: The highest ranking kind of ranger in the informal network.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Interpretive rangers have no status.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But law enforcement rangers, and then especially rescue rangers, that's what I call them. That's just my term for the guys who climb mountains and do, you know, really challenging things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Ralph Tingey was my boss after Haertel. And Ralph was a rescue ranger, too, and a great mountain climber and a noted guy. Um, he was wonderful, too. So I had some good bosses. And that support. [01:15:49]Um, anyhow, I didn't want to work for an idiot. And I said, "I'm going to apply." And Paul picked me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I liked -- the minute I got into it, I -- I'm a very -- I'm interes -- I minored in history, so history interested me. I liked that. Um, I found historical architecture -- I didn't know anything much about it, but I appreciated it a lot. And I liked it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: You know, it intrigued me. I loved ethnology 'cause I -- my Colorado training, up to your master's, you can't specialize.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: You've got to get linguistics.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Physical anthropology -- that's why I could teach on Guam. I taught all those things. Not linguistics, I'm bad at that. But I taught cultural anthropology. I taught physical anthropology and archeology of the Pacific and all that stuff. And I had Yapese students, and I had Guamanian students, and Chamorros. [01:16:58]Anyway, so I was pretty open to -- once -- once I said, I don't want to work for an idiot, and then I got the job, I found I naturally fit into it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: This is at least how I felt. Because I was fascinated by history. I liked -- I could -- I enjoyed, like, history of the Klondike --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- as much as I did ancient archeology. And I loved ethno -- I thought ethnology -- That was very important to me, and I fought to get Tim Cochrane hired. And I had my own money. I didn't get it allocated by Washington, which was the case in every other region.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Muriel Crespi, who was the chief anthropologist, tried to dictate who you'd hire. And I liked Tim. He was -- he was a good salesman of anthropology. She was not. I needed someone to sell it. And uh, I got him, and I found all that good. And then I found managing was fun, too, because my joy was to -- success.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Of other people. I'm -- sound like I'm bragging, but --

KAREN BREWSTER: No.

TED BIRKEDAL: I enjoyed seeing them succeed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Including the park succeed and people like Jeanne succeeding and Karl and others. [01:18:34]It -- we're doing stuff, and we're doing good work. And we were publishing.

We had a good publishing program. I was very proud of that. And that included the Skagway stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. All of Cathy's reports?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And she -- I have great admiration for her even though we have a disagreement about part of the archeology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. The Mascot.

TED BIRKEDAL: But that's a -- that's a -- well, it's a dispute among friends.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. That's what happens in academia-type things, too.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Archeologists fight like mad.

[01:19:11]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. So why don't we talk a little bit about that dispute. And it's the Mascot Saloon and what the findings tell us about the timing and the building?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. From -- from the beginning, Paul and I thought it was of primary deposit, whereas Cathy got the notion when she was writing the report that it was water-worked. That is that the various floods in Skagway, um, that are documented, had moved that material underneath the Mascot Saloon. Uh, Paul Gleeson and I, from the very beginning, we're of like mind about it, by the way.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: He was the excavator; she was the write-up person. So she was not present, but she had good material. It's not a dispute about material. It's an interpretation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Um, so for years, Paul and I talked about this, and we were kind of frustrated because it was, why she'd come up with that idea? We didn't quite agree with it, that water could deposit things. There seemed to be a pattern to it. And why were the peanut shells in certain locations only underneath the Mascot? Uh, why didn't they float away? And it -- I was always thinking about the nuts, the shells.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:20:37]TED BIRKEDAL: And then there was some bottles she found, uh, that were intact. And the whole thing looked like -- and the drinking patterns had shifted. They went from whiskey to beer and wine. And -- but still drinking whiskeys and stuff. But it was -- the Mascot had an earlier different pattern of drinking, which was largely whiskey. And that's a sign of early Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, so the early inhabitants of Skagway, somehow in other documentation were known to drink more whiskey?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. 'Cause it was easier to ship.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Beer and wine came later?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: In their drinking habits. Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because it took a while for the -- for them to develop sources.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And whiskey is easy to ship and put -- it takes up less space, and you can get drunker on it than lots of beer.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So later on, the Mascot became famous for its Rainier Beer and all of that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: But that's in the later days, you know, when stevedores and guys like that were there.

[01:21:41]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And so in that initial layer, you were finding more whiskey bottles?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And you have a drinking -- there was some beer, but there was primarily whiskey drinking. In fact, they even drank Manhattans, 'cause you'd find the cherry pits.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh. That seems like quite a sophisticated drink.

TED BIRKEDAL: It is. But it was the only drink back then that was sort of a mixed drink.

KAREN BREWSTER: Instead of a straight shot?

TED BIRKEDAL: It's an old -- it's an old -- it's one of the oldest cocktails.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm. I didn't know that.

TED BIRKEDAL: So uh, anyhow, we -- the -- the pattern seemed to me to be, as I've outlined in there (referring to paper he'd written and previously sent to Karen), one of primary deposit rather than the secondary deposit caused by flooding and different washings over. Because the arrangement of the artifacts just didn't make sense otherwise. And underneath that Mascot was -- was very different from what you found outside. So my -- Paul and I thought, we don't have a definitive answer, but there was an earlier Mascot that was either a tent or a building -- There was a small building sitting there right near where the Mascot is, early on, in the footprint. It could've been selling liquor. And so, what we hypothesize was that it's more a primary deposit from the earliest days of Skagway, that is like '97-'98.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Didn't last long. Lasted a few months.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then the real Mascot was built on top of it, thus sealing it in. We didn't think the nature of the floods were -- there was swirling water. It was more like raising water. So it doesn't tend to have a turbulence to it.

[01:23:40]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was wondering about the flooding. That the Mascot is, what, 3rd and Broadway?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: That is it in a location that would have flooded?

TED BIRKEDAL: It did flood.

KAREN BREWSTER: So the Pullen Creek flooded?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. There was, uh, large floods in Skagway, and they would -- you can see in the picture in Cathy's book where the flood waters are above the -- or just at the -- kind of the foot of the -- of the Mascot.

KAREN BREWSTER: I mean, I know that, like, the high tide could come up as far as the depot.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes, and I think it was a combination. I can't remember exactly how, but there was both freshwater and, I think at times, they would just come up. But the --

KAREN BREWSTER: Huh. Yeah, I'm just surprised it would flood. Because I know like it would flood to the depot, and I could see the Skagway River flooding, but that's pretty far on the other side of town. But I suppose Pullen Creek could've come -- and then, maybe the tide went all the way up to 3rd?

TED BIRKEDAL: It could be --

KAREN BREWSTER: Combination.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, but the pictures don't show a turbulence as of raised waters.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:24:54]TED BIRKEDAL: And then, so anyway, I then summarized it in the report, and you - I forget, sometimes what -- the detail.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I went through the whole thing, Cathy's report. And the great thing about Cathy's report is, from there I didn't have to do any more work. She had laid out enough detail, which is really amazing, that I could work with that material without supplement. That is, the data that she presented was all there and beautifully presented, so I just reinterpreted it.

KAREN BREWSTER: You didn't have to go back and look at the actual artifacts?

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. No.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And one reason I did that is I promised a curator in 2011 or '12. And I don't remember her name.

KAREN BREWSTER: It was -- was it Samantha Richert?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: I said, "If it's primary -- " And I told Thibault the same, 'cause we were talking. I said, "I'm going to revisit that when I get a chance after I retire. Are you interested?" And they said, "Yes." 'Cause, I said, "It transforms the artifacts, if I'm correct, from primary -- from secondary to primary."

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: It makes their value much more in significance because it's not a secondary deposit.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: From floodwaters or just mixed mu -- Things thrown under the Mascot.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, it shows more how that property was used through time.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Versus things floating in and out.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And it's one of the earliest deposits from -- from Skagway.

[01:26:39]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. I mean, I read your rep -- just happened to have read it this morning to refresh my memory on what you had written, and that, you talk about the nails being the square nails.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which would've represented the earlier time period.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: And the wood chips that didn't look like what would have necessarily come in through a flood.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: So all these details that -- it's very interesting, how you put it all together.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, I tried. I did a lot of historical archeology in -- in New Orleans.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: I -- so that started with a similar kind of thing, like sleuthing. I -- I think like a detective sometimes, and things bother me. Like, I -- I did compliance archeology initially in --

in the park and didn't expect to find anything 'cause the geography was off, and I didn't know any better. And then I got into historic material right away, and it was quite early, and I -- then people said to me, "Oh, there's trash all over New Orleans." I said, "It doesn't rain from the sky. There's a reason that it's here."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's -- this was concentrated. And that led to the finding of a house, uh, from the period of the battle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that's why I think that historic archeology is very interesting. And I've learned from this Skagway project by reading some of the reports that it's not just digging things out of the ground. You have to put it in context, and that means doing historical research.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And I used, for example, there, just like I used historical sources as best we could for thinking about Mascot and putting it in context, is why is this material different?

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And why is it in this particular spatial arrangement?

[01:28:43]KAREN BREWSTER: So what has happened in the final say? I mean, Cathy had her report and one interpretation, and you have a different interpretation.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: So now what?

TED BIRKEDAL: People can make up their mind. I didn't publish that. I gave it to the park and I shared it with the region, and that was what my purpose was.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: To have it there, and Karl could decide. At least it exists.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I promised I'd do it, and I did it. And so --

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I don't know if there's any way to come to a definitive answer?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. Yeah. Gleeson and I think we're right. And Cathy thinks maybe otherwise. Uh, I think I told her -- I think I sent her -- yeah, I sent her a copy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Probably.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, I'm friendly with her. I haven't seen her for a while, but I admire her. So this is not where I'm --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I'm doing the old archeo -- well, here's what I see going on. And I had that feeling from the minute that we crawled under there, and Gleeson and I went, "Why is the report doing this?"

[01:29:56]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, does that happen in archeology in general, that somebody comes along later and reinterprets?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, yeah. Well, see, that's what I did.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. That's a normal practice in archeology?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Oh, yeah. You can look at -- one person sees one thing, and another person sees another. So the archeologist prior to me didn't question anything. Uh, there was only two, uh, Rex Wilson, who'd done some work there. He was very interested in what I was doing because he had done initial work there, and he hadn't discovered what I did. But I had -- I was working on a -- the -- the -- there was a -- they were going to put a new interpretive center in. But there you get the puzzle. You go, why is this material here? And people say, "It's just there."

It just happens." No. you have -- and then I predicted that Battery 3 would be at this one location. It took me a while to find it. It took me two weeks.

KAREN BREWSTER: That was the New Orleans battlefield?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. So I did a historical house there, and then I found another one from the 18th century, which was the boyhood home of the pirate, Renato Beluche.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: In 18th century.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I had a dispute there with an archivist, a historical archivist, who said, no. Anyway, uh, it's -- I've been -- that report, and I followed up. Things fit, like we found on aerial photographs a historical British fort. It's now destroyed, but it was an earth fort.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: On the battle of New Orleans. And it was just on the -- I used Dael Devenport who's at the park -- excuse me, at the regional office, who is an expert in GPS.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And remote sensing. And we worked using the photograph, and we discovered that. So everything -- I've been able to lock in geographical areas. So that's just how my brain -- I get puzzled with things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I -- if they don't fit in my brain, I gotta puzzle them out because why is this here? And if that's the case, then something else is there. But that's where I got my background in -- in, kind of, puzzles.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Skagway remained a puzzle in my mind 'til my retirement. And I -- I gotta get this out. And they said, uh, Theresa and, what's her name, Samantha said, "Sure. Do it." But I didn't see it as a -- I haven't turned it into an article. I wanted -- it was commissioned, so to speak, by the park. I didn't get paid.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I'm working on Guam now.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

TED BIRKEDAL: I had some leftovers from there. Uh.

[01:33:02]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was wondering on the, um --

TED BIRKEDAL: And I have one more Skagway story.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Go ahead. Ok, go ahead.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that has got to do with history. And um, I forget -- maybe 2004, they were planning -- you may know the date, but the state was planning the road that was going to go into Skagway. Came from Juneau. They were planning a major road.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, right. I don't know when that planning started.

TED BIRKEDAL: Somewhere around then. Marcia Blaszak was the regional director, and that was in her era, so. I think if I remember right, 2004.

KAREN BREWSTER: They're still talking about it. There isn't a road yet, but they keep talking about it.

TED BIRKEDAL: No. But there was a big fight over Skagway, and it was probably my last big thing, relative to --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And uh, Frank Norris had rewritten the -- at the behest of Sande, had rewritten early on, a -- the um, historical context for the national landmark. 'Cause it's a -- Skagway dis -- that whole area, bigger than the park properties, is historical -- is historic landmark.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so, that came under our public Cultural Resources Assistance Program, which the Park Service has is -- where we advise. We look after the landmarks, report on their status, write a background and some context for them. And Frank had redone the one for Skagway and included the landscape. That we wanted to preserve its context in terms of the landscape of Skagway. And this road was going to come in and -- an elevated road coming into Skagway from the side of the mountain. And it was quite prominent and would really interfere with the whole historic scene that had been outlined by Frank and had been approved. This was not a -- it was part of the record.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Part of the significance of the landmark. [01:35:32]And so, we -- the state got really upset when we said, hey. And they said, "Well, we've been through this, and we had a contractor, and they say it's not -- it's fine. There is no landscape aspect to this park and the landmark designation."

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So, and Sande can fill you in more on that. I think she was there. It was before she left. I could be a little bit off, uh, if she remembers. But it may have been after she left. She left in 2004 for Southwest Region, where she was the cultural resource person. But Frank Norris and I were at least talking. And the state got really upset and called the regional director because we said, "You didn't -- your compliance is off. You don't -- you're -- you're affecting the thing that makes this landmark significant. And you're going to impair the historic scene, which is outlined in the landmark provision done by Frank Norris." So it's a brief story, but I got called on the carpet, and I think Frank was with me, and the state asked for the regional director, and Vic Knox, who was deputy director, to go and talk to their commissioner. And they were -- they had a big meeting with me. The regional -- Vic Knox got very worried. He says -- he wanted me to do the Clay Alderson thing. "Just say yes." I said, "We can't -- I can't say yes." 'Cause my program also covers that -- the external program.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:37:35]TED BIRKEDAL: And later on, I dealt with Nike Site Summit. And I was the lead on that, too. Actually, in that case, the SHPO was looking for my help.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But it was initially -- I seem to have a way of getting people riled up. Because then, the colonel got really mad at me because I said, "You're destroying the Nike Site Summit, this Cold War thing."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then I had to demonstrate that with help of staff. But I wrote the main thing. So I gave it history and architect. It's weird -- I'm --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I appreciate it all. You know.

KAREN BREWSTER: The Renaissance man.

TED BIRKEDAL: Not in real life. But I really like -- I'm kind of a cultural resource tourist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: So, um.

[01:38:31]KAREN BREWSTER: So this landmark thing and the road, you got --

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, the key to that thing. I got them and where the commissioner -- and I forget for -- what the official title is.

KAREN BREWSTER: Was it the DOT Commissioner?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: For the road? The Department of Transportation?

TED BIRKEDAL: That's correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: You're correct. And uh, the -- Vic Knox, the deputy director, got very upset and wanted -- "Find a way to say yes." I had to then go into the -- with the regional director, Marcia Blaszak, and I forget what other associates there were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And get grilled. And I said, "We can't change our minds on this. I can't tell you it's ok."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause it's not ok. It's gonna have a significant negative impact on the landmark as it's defined, and alter that historical field.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that's built in. And the state says, "Well, we don't know anything about that." And we had to point out, you had used the wrong landmark. Their contractor who they had hired had used the wrong -- the earlier landmark designation and documentation, and was not aware. Even though it wasn't hidden.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: They just -- so the state was under the impression everything was ok. That was probably my last big thing. You know, I stood my ground again, and it didn't get built yet.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:40:09]TED BIRKEDAL: Now they have to figure out how to mitigate that effect, either in their design or something, or there's going to be another fight. But at least it stalled it for a while.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Or different players in different administrations.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, like today. I have no idea.

KAREN BREWSTER: Somebody else might say, "Ok, yes. We're going to -- "

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: You don't know.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I was supported by -- I remember it was Frank. And you have to ask Sande if she was there. I can't remember her now. I remember Frank. So it may have been just after she left. So it was about toward the end of my -- mid -- mid-decade.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I'm not so good on memory. I don't have a photographic memory.

KAREN BREWSTER: No. I am terrible at remembering dates, and here I ask people all the time, and I can't remember dates. [01:40:58]Um, but we were talking about, um, some of the things you were proud of that you accomplished. Like the CRAC and the publishing program, and getting archeologists and historians out into the park.

TED BIRKEDAL: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, were there things that you wished you'd been able to accomplish and didn't? And frustrations you had with the job?

TED BIRKEDAL: I had a great staff, with one exception. Which was my cross.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But uh, I feel really good about, like, Becky's -- In terms of Skagway, Becky's report is like the -- the -- oh, the dessert.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's like, yeah, I'm very happy where I think the parks and -- that turned out really good. I was -- I thought that needed to be done for the public.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And we were very oriented in the program to get things out to the public.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:42:12]TED BIRKEDAL: We just -- just before I left, they published a bunch of brochures on Seward so that you can -- be used in a walking tour.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And you can have a sense of place there, and the park supported that because they're so integrated with the town.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so, those are like -- and that was my last archeological work, which was also historical.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause we were working on the lots there where this parking lot was, the Shea lots. And I got to do the -- I volunteered, actually. My wife was -- we were down there fishing with my son-in-laws, and I just -- the crew, who was -- included Becky. They just didn't have the oomph to get what was necessary to get done, 'cause -- and so I threw myself into it. Um, I was the dumpster archeologist, because they got a picture of me sitting by a dumpster, writing up stuff. And, but we were doing latrines.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: They were little time capsules that would -- they were super good.

[01:43:18]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that's what Cathy Spude did in Skagway, was the latrine --

TED BIRKEDAL: She did.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- archeology, which I'd never even heard of before.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, it's like little time capsules.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: If they've been capped. 'Cause generally, you only used them for a while, and then you top 'em over.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And you threw trash and crap in there. And so, they're -- they're wonderful.

KAREN BREWSTER: Sounds very unpleasant, but I suppose after --

TED BIRKEDAL: It's like compost.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's just -- no doo-doo.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's -- it's --

KAREN BREWSTER: They don't smell or anything?  
TED BIRKEDAL: No.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.  
TED BIRKEDAL: They smell like compost.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.  
TED BIRKEDAL: Except they're full of stuff.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.  
TED BIRKEDAL: I mean, uh, bones and --  
KAREN BREWSTER: Rightt. Well, in Cathy's --  
TED BIRKEDAL: Plates.  
KAREN BREWSTER: It was bottles in the priest's --  
TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Whatever it was, latrine.  
TED BIRKEDAL: She did a great job on that.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And --  
KAREN BREWSTER: I was amazed. Like, you can tell all that from looking at bottles?  
TED BIRKEDAL: She's very good at -- the only exception I've ever had with her is the Mascot, underneath the Mascot.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.  
TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, other than that, she's --  
[01:44:22]KAREN BREWSTER: And the Mascot was the only Klondike project you kinda got --  
TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. I was --  
KAREN BREWSTER: -- involved in?  
TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. Getting -- well, I was involved in getting the whole big picture of the archeology and the reports done.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And that's where I meant Becky's report is the dessert.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.  
TED BIRKEDAL: It's like, ah! And I had the Mascot done.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And despite my dispute with her about interpretation, that was a wonderful guide.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Right.  
TED BIRKEDAL: And I -- those are things that made my day.  
[01:44:56]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. Were there obstacles you faced in the Park Service?  
TED BIRKEDAL: All the time.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Such as? And how did you get around them?  
TED BIRKEDAL: Well, I -- uh, sim -- well, I told you about the -- the landmark thing.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.  
TED BIRKEDAL: It was my ability, I think, to argue. I don't -- I don't get -- I'm somewhat diplomatic, as best I can be.  
KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I hold my ground. So when it's right, it's -- when I feel that I have a position that needs defense, I will argue. My wife will tell you I like to argue. But I -- it's more from a passion for the -- doing the right thing. So where I've had -- I didn't get resistance for starting CRAC. I had to fight Russ Galipeau because I -- so it's a combination of me being both diplomatic but standing my ground.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So when I was the reluctant bridesmaid, that was -- but then Paul Haertel was stronger than the -- Russ was the resource manager for Wrangell-St. Elias then, I think. And -- but he had a high status. He was recognized as the premier resource manager for the region among the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I told him I had to stand my ground because I have to have representation for cultural resources. I can't do less. I just can't be the only token member.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So there, I was supported eventually by Paul Haertel. I won that round. Um, I -- most of the time -- the hardest -- let me just finish this thought. But I would say I had a good staff, and also, I was listened to. After a while, people would listen to me because I was generally not jacking 'em around. I tried to be not a cultural resource Nazi. Of which there are some, that are terrible people, 'cause they ruin our cultural resource world.

[01:47:32]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was also wondering, that National Park Service historically has not been known as a cultural resource-oriented organization.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: They're more natural resources and recreation and things.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: So what was it like being in cultural resources in a bureaucracy that was not used to that?

TED BIRKEDAL: You were a second-grade citizen.

KAREN BREWSTER: And how do you deal with that?

TED BIRKEDAL: Hoh. You -- you -- well, my solution was to get the parks to have their own people. And for them to have their own money and the responsibility through the CRAC advisory council, and then the superintendents getting to vote.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they could veto a project if they wanted it. Normally, they weren't comfortable. But that got us to where at least -- well, it's like Clay Alderson became an advocate for the archeology of the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Which he had started not being -- out not being. Um, so it's like, you gotta -- Sande can tell you more 'cause she dealt with it at the national level. [01:48:45]And what I was gonna say is, the hardest thing is selling 106.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's the compliance?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Because they see that as, like, "Ooh. Why do I have to comply with this? You know, what -- I don't want -- I -- I want this maintenance shed. I want this other thing. Why can't we have a road? You know, like, today."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: "Why do I have to send archeologists out?" Katmai has been terrible about that. Their maintenance people -- Jeanne Schaaf has dealt with a lot of problems there. So the most difficult thing is to convince them that 106 is good.

KAREN BREWSTER: So what were -- how did you sell it? You obviously succeeded in some ways at selling it. What was your spiel?

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, I don't know what I said. I -- I've gotta think about how I -- Marcia Blaszak start -- was good in listening to me. Bob Barbee even was -- would listen. But we were always -- we knew -- we needed -- we always needed to convince them. And by highlighting the resource and its importance to history or archeology. Uh, you have to explain why it's -- that's -- why is this important? Because your park, like Skagway, is about history.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And archeology. That's what -- and curation, too. [01:50:18]Um, I had some good curators. Jean Rodeck, and then Stephanie, uh, Stephens, who was very good selling curation. She did a marvelous job with our budget guy, who I was in disputes with often. He was always trying -- he was mad at me because I hired somebody once, and he didn't like it. And it was an impaired employee.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: They were -- we didn't have much of a record of hiring people who were disabled.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I had a chance, and I had a fit. And she -- he worked for Becky Saleeby. But the guy told me, he says, "I'm going to -- I'm going to take my pound of flesh from you." But Stephanie was able to win him over. So part of it was my staff. People like Sande who sold cultural resources. We were not -- we tried not to be Nazis, but we tried to stand our ground and tried to convince 'em, this is stuff that's really important to your park. Sande and Steve sold getting Kennecott in as part of the Wrangell-St. Elias.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: They couldn't care less about it at the beginning.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. Now it's like the huge attraction for the park.

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, we knew it was.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: That's what we were trying to tell them. You can't -- this is not something you want to cut out. You want to take it in.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's the heart of the park.

[01:51:55]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, were there times with 106 compliance or other things where you tried to convince and you failed?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, if the little story about Clay the first time, yeah. But that took my boss.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And if I had a boss that supported me, who was -- or a regional director like Marcia Blaszak. She's the one who -- who overrode the deputy director on that landmark issue.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. But it seems like in the Park Service, then, the way you're explaining it, a lot of it depends on the people in the various positions?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And their credibility with that group. So --

KAREN BREWSTER: That to accomplish things, you have to have people higher up support you, and if they don't --

TED BIRKEDAL: You're dead.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- you're stuck?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

[01:52:51]KAREN BREWSTER: Uh, well I -- that's interesting that's it's so -- because it is such a big bureaucracy, it's interesting to think that the individual personalities play such a part.

TED BIRKEDAL: I think they do. Sande was a good seller of cultural resources. Stephanie Stephens was a great salesman for -- for curation, and she has a very nice facil -- Well, now, she's gone on to be the chief curator of the National Park Service, but she -- she was able to be -- she's the only person I know who could make fun of the directorate in their face, and they would all laugh. She has a great personality. And she had an ability to be light-hearted about it, and -- and yet, she would, like, critique them. You could hear her voice sometime. Oh, and I would've been killed, but they accepted her. Sande was a good spokesperson and seller, and Steve Peterson was a -- a real good salesman for historical architecture. And when he gained the confidence of the maintenance guys, which he did in all the parks. I think they really like him because he's a hands-on guy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so is Grant.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they liked that. And so, they're part of my sales pitch. Uh, Tim Cochrane, who I told you about.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Was a great salesman for ethnography. Then I got Don Callaway, who was less of a salesman, but a real expert in subsistence.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And statistics. And he was also -- had a firm back -- backbone. But he could also explain things. You know, how this worked. [01:54:40]And Tim initially was sold cultural. And at that time, Muriel Crespi was hated in the Park Service by most regular people that had to deal with her. Because she was abrasive and irritating to them. And where Tim was soft-sell, and he did a good job with superintendents. Like he converted Glacier Bay from being --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- anti-Indian.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: They were really weird.

KAREN BREWSTER: Now they have a big, beautiful new --

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- cultural facility there.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Michele Jespersion is still there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Wayne Howell was there.

KAREN BREWSTER: I think he's retired.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. He's, like, old like me. Like Jim Bradford was regional archeologist in the Southwest after me. Or I was never regional, but he became the reg --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. After you left --

TED BIRKEDAL: But he worked for me. So I gotta credit good staff, especially when it -- we didn't call 'em branch anymore. I forgot what we called 'em, because they didn't -- the earlier bureaucratic language didn't work out. Units or something.

[01:55:51]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, yeah. I was -- actually it was one of my questions was just the whole concept of, as an archeologist moving into that Park Service structure and bureaucracy and power structure of all those different levels, how you fit into all that?

TED BIRKEDAL: I was always a second-grade citizen. So was Sande. Uh, what was good was, when we had bosses who were in the center of the Park Service, like Ralph Tingey and Paul Haertel. Then they would listen to us. So part of it was my relationship with my good bosses.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, because they would then speak out on our behalf.

[01:56:39]KAREN BREWSTER: Did you feel -- did you enjoy working in that infrastructure of the Park Service?

TED BIRKEDAL: Did I -- I -- I adapted to it. But it -- the what my abil -- it was really good when I had Ralph Tingey for years as a boss, who was a, you know, a ranger.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: In background, but highly respected. So when he spoke, he was not as powerful as Haertel was because they changed their standards a little bit and gave more power to the superintendents so he couldn't veto them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: He could advise against it. Well, the regional director could do that. But regional directors rarely interfere very much because the Park Service is like a medieval kingdom.

[01:57:29]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, that's what I was wondering, like working in that environment, how you get along?

TED BIRKEDAL: It's difficult at times.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's -- the most difficult thing, I think, is administration. I don't know if the Soviet Union has produced these people when it collapsed. But the administrators make life horrible. Uh, contracts take forever. Everything slows down. I remember that was one of the hardest things. We had the Indian Assistance Program. No, excuse me, the Rural Development Program out of UAF. It's now In -- it's called --

KAREN BREWSTER: Indigenous Studies?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. Native Alaska and Rural Development Program. It's headquartered now at UAF.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It used to have Gordon Puller as --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, yeah, I know what you're talking about. Yeah.

[01:58:28]TED BIRKEDAL: Well, for me to get a contract done, that generally took me nine months. Excuse me, coop --

KAREN BREWSTER: Cooperative agreements. Yep.

TED BIRKEDAL: It takes -- and I'd repeat it every year, and they would look at it and look at it. It's only a few pages long. And I would have to go up there and sit hand -- in hand. Basically, with the administrators, and go, "Huh. I've done this. I've done that. What haven't I done? Why is it not moving forward?" So it was just this constant keeping of relationship with them because the paperwork is so weird. And it -- it's -- the Park Service contracting is the most difficult thing. It's like -- it's often very little money, but they are so, uh. There's so many obstacles.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they just seem to get bigger. I -- I -- As I told you, the Indian Assistance Program, my early career in the Park Service, I was used to handling four hundred thousand dollars. Being the advisor, contracting office's representative.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And contracting in the BIA with the Navajo was easy. It was -- well, with the Hopi, too. It was easy. We'd get it done. And the things would happen. And they handled big money because they did some huge projects beyond archeology. 'Cause we were -- and then there was, um -- so I was used -- until I got into the Park Service. And then I was dealing with pennies. I was always like pushing -- it was like pushing pennies with your nose. And that was true in Southwest Region as well as Alaska.

KAREN BREWSTER: That was my question, is it just -- was it unique to Alaska?

TED BIRKEDAL: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, it's just the Park Service in general?

TED BIRKEDAL: It's petty. They don't have a good system that way. At least that's my -- in comparison to what I knew in the BIA.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Which is not known as the most efficient agency in the world.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: But they handle things pretty good. And the Corps of Engineers was pretty good. 'Cause I had a good relationship with them for -- in New Orleans.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they paid my money. I got -- basically, the work I did for the re-arranging the geography in the park was paid for by Corps of Engineers.

[02:01:06]KAREN BREWSTER: Hm. Well, we were talking about, you know, how important relationships and people and personalities and -- Um, you mentioned Theresa Thibault.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And I don't know if -- you're probably aware that she was not always the most --

TED BIRKEDAL: Diplomatic person.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or popular -- easiest to get along with.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: From the park perspective.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't know if you ever had any --

TED BIRKEDAL: I knew all that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Commentary on that particular scenario and what happened there?

TED BIRKEDAL: I didn't get involved in -- I -- I was supportive of her, but she could be a difficult person -- personality. And at times, she could be prickly. And so, I couldn't -- you can't

tell anyone to be anything. You just deal with what you can and try to convince them to do the best if -- by a situation. But we had our times, uh, where she didn't agree with me, particularly in CRAC. She could be -- she was often the bookkeeper for us, and she would be "ooh, ooh" (noises) and fussy, and -- but I respected her. But I knew that she wasn't the easiest person to get along with at the park level. But it was hard for us to get -- it was not for me to tell a park what to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you think --

TED BIRKEDAL: I could advise them what to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I dealt with a few things like that, but uh.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, she may not have been the only --

TED BIRKEDAL: She was not.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- difficult situation.

TED BIRKEDAL: There was others with other parks. And sometimes they would ask our opinion.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Sometimes they wouldn't and wouldn't listen. And we would give hints that -- there were worse people than Theresa.

[02:03:04]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and I was also wondering if having a person in that head of -- she was head of resources.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: In that position, um, who might be a difficult person to relate to, if that affected your ability or the park's ability to accomplish projects. Did you ever experience that? Was it an obstacle to getting your work done? Your, meaning, I guess, your department's.

TED BIRKEDAL: You mean the regional office?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, or were you aware of -- there were projects the park wanted that didn't get done because somebody wouldn't --

TED BIRKEDAL: In her case, no. Uh, did I -- I am aware of -- I just knew that she was difficult at times and people were not always happy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But they had hired her. I didn't.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that happened to me. You'd say, "Don't do that. And if you hire that person." And then they would come to me with the moans. I had that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: But it wasn't Skagway. It was another park, and they said they had buyer regrets. And I said, "You never asked us. You never -- you just went ahead and hired."

[02:04:25]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that leads to the question of the relationship between the individual parks and regional from the cultural resource side. What that relationship was and how you worked together or did not work together?

TED BIRKEDAL: One -- once -- at the beginning of my tenure as a cultural resource person and regional archeologist, 'cause there I had some -- I gained archeological money, then I was in charge of allocating money with my staff to the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: We brought in one -- one resource manager to help advise us when we sat down and parlayed the money out. So at that point, there -- there aren't people -- there's maybe one or two people in the parks to give it to. Uh, but basically, we're allocating to -- money, and we would do some of those projects. I mean, staff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right, because there was --

TED BIRKEDAL: We would hire temporaries or whatever it took, or terms, and do the work. Later on, then it was the park's doing the deciding, unless they were doing some special pro -- like administrative histories with Frank Norris.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: They didn't want to do those or hire people for it. That's something that we would do for them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:05:48]TED BIRKEDAL: So what our job was to be -- to supplement their -- what they didn't have strengths in, is to provide that. So what it did is shifted from us making decisions about research money and what should be done in a park and telling a sup -- advising a superintendent what you should do, is their staff was starting to do that. But the instrument by which monies were allocated was through the -- and they got their own compliance money, was the -- but for their research and their rehabilitation and stuff came through CRAC and then the -- the -- with, in the case of historical architecture was between Steve Peterson and the maintenance group.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So we became more helpers than we -- we could not tell parks what to do.

[02:06:47]KAREN BREWSTER: And did that -- what were the park responses to those changes?

TED BIRKEDAL: They were gen -- ah, some people could be difficult at times. And other times, we'd get along and everything was fine. But we didn't have a veto, so it was like the UN. There's people who -- so you have -- it's like getting down -- or maybe NATO.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Maybe NATO's better because we had common interest, you know, in the cultural resources.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But we didn't always agree on how to best accomplish things. So I'd be an advocate sometimes for a particular park. Like I said about Sitka for their survey because people didn't understand how difficult the job was, and it hadn't been sold well.

[02:07:47]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. I mean, from my outside perspective, I would think if I were in a park, I would prefer to have park making its own decisions versus being told from regional what to do.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct. And that's what we --

KAREN BREWSTER: Intuitively, that makes sense to me, but maybe it didn't to other people who were used to a different system.

TED BIRKEDAL: In the Park Service, a lot of regions, like the Western Region cultural resources, which Sande broke down, they -- that cultural center was dictatorial at times.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And it really irritated parks. And some of the parks when I was in Southwest Region were also grumpy. And uh, because they didn't have people in 'em.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so, just like, region's telling us what to do, and they don't like that anyway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. That's what I would assume.

TED BIRKEDAL: But for cultural resource people who were secondary citizens, that's even worse.

[02:08:43]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, ok. Were there times when Washington would tell a park or a region what to do?

TED BIRKEDAL: They would set parameters for us, and then we'd have to sell that we needed money. Like, Sande and I were going for money for the parks, and they said, at one point, um, Jerry Rogers, head of the cultural resources for the Park Service, said, "Oh, Alaska doesn't need money. You do so well with -- with so little." And we were going, "Oh. Give us -- No, we need money." We eventually got his deputy to allocate us a proper distribution in Alaska. So we had to then -- also, we had meetings where all the regional people would get together with the head of cultural, and they would allocate money that way. Eventually, it became -- we got a certain set sum, but it took Alaska -- and Sande is instrumental with me in getting a good allocation of money to Alaska, both in the public sector and our in-park work.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So that was where we'd get a set amount. And that would vary. The distribution was like a percentage.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Going to the different regions. But we -- under my time, I was able to get, with Sande's help, who was a good spokesperson, a better allocation to Alaska, which was then viewed as having not very much in cultural resources. That is, you don't need money. You don't have anything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:10:32]TED BIRKEDAL: And then we had to make the case, we have more archeological sites in our parks than the entire Park Service. We estimated -- the estimate is that there's probably -- I think we figured out there's at least four hundred thousand sites, archeological sites, in the parks in Alaska. It's the longest, um -- it's got such huge land area. People couldn't fathom how -- so even if you have people disbursed like the Nunamiut, in --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: -- in Gates of the Arctic. Over the years, in this huge, vast thing, there are tons of sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It isn't like some little park in the Southwest.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: You know.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they -- they -- yeah, they were nomadic, so there's lots of sites all over.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, and the Nunamiuts did their job -- I got to do a little of that, and then it's -- I found -- discovered an eight thousand year-old site there, a paleoarctic thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I was on one of my recons, and it got done by the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

KAREN BREWSTER: And what site was that?

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, Tingmiukpuk.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which is wh -- uh --

TED BIRKEDAL: In the Gates of the Arctic.

KAREN BREWSTER: In the Gates of the Arctic. Cool.

TED BIRKEDAL: And it -- it was -- yeah. We -- I think Robertson did work. And then Owen Mason did follow-up geomorphology of the site.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[02:12:08]TED BIRKEDAL: But Alaska has sites going back to 14,000.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and like Cape Espenberg.

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And Cape Krusenstern have --

TED BIRKEDAL: Unbelievable.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- huge, um, archeological --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, I was out there with Gleeson. We had -- we walked Cape Krusenstern just to kind of scout it out. 'Cause that -- we wanted to get work done there. And there was follow-up work, and has been continuing to this day.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: There's -- and there's -- and so one of my jobs was to sell Washington on all these things. So I used to write for -- they had a little Park Service cultural resource thing. A new -- bull -- a newsletter. And I would write little articles on how much archeology there was. Yes, there are cultural resources in Alaska.

[02:13:03]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. So in the position as head of cultural resources, you're a manager and a supervisor and an advocate?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And a funder.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. So you have to make the case that you need -- you need Washington's help.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. It's a lot of different hats you have to wear. And you interact with Washington, interact with the parks, interact with regional staff.

TED BIRKEDAL: Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: A lot to juggle.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, it was a tough job, but I liked it. But it -- it was -- well, the present one said -- um, Jennifer, um, Pederson Weinberger, I think is her name. Um, she told me, she said, "This is a really hard job" Because you're -- you're not in power. You're basically a line supervisor. You're not part of the directorate.

KAREN BREWSTER: Uh-huh.

TED BIRKEDAL: So you're -- you're -- and then you have to help your staff and manage all that. Then you deal with Washington.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: This way. 'Cause it isn't a regional director deals with it. That's you who has to advocate through the region. Now you try to get their support.

[02:14:20]KAREN BREWSTER: And you also have to advocate to the regional director as well, don't you?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then you're -- there's also a head of natural resources?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, and then there's --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And you work with them when the occasion --

KAREN BREWSTER: But are you -- you're fighting for the same pots of money?

TED BIRKEDAL: No. The money -- cultural money and natural money are separate.

KAREN BREWSTER: Is now separate?

TED BIRKEDAL: Except for the staff money.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But the -- the fun money, the research kind of money and the basic budget, you're -- you're -- you are -- you are looking for positions and operational funds.

[02:14:57]KAREN BREWSTER: But some -- don't some parks in Alaska just have one resources department? And there's one head of resources? There's not cultural and natural?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And that's more common than not. And then, for the resource person, generally the archeologist works under them. Thibault was both.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So she became a resource manager. Generally, the cultural person is under a natural resource person.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Who is called a resource manager.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, but she was the resource manager with a cultural background?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes, and I think she was a rarer one.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, the --

KAREN BREWSTER: Is there -- Do some parks have both a head of cultural and a head of natural?

TED BIRKEDAL: I'm not aware of that.

KAREN BREWSTER: It's just one resource manager?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Normally.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: I may have forgotten somebody. Jeff Rasic has a lot of status in Gates in the Arctic.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, but he comes from an archeology -- I don't know if he's head of resources?

TED BIRKEDAL: I don't think -- unless --

KAREN BREWSTER: I think he is. I can't remember.

TED BIRKEDAL: He may have been made that because he got along with the superintendent really well, and he's a really good manager.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. He may have moved into that -- I can't remember.

TED BIRKEDAL: I haven't kept up with his status.

[02:16:14]KAREN BREWSTER: But you were saying how --

TED BIRKEDAL: Most of the time, it's resource managers and then cultural people working for them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So you had to convince them, too, and they could come -- often they were at CRAC. Sometimes they brought -- they brought their staff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And they -- but they remained the -- the park could appoint the representative. So they could, if they felt like it, be there. And that was true of Jeff's boss.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because he worked for, uh, shoot. Tom (Liebscher). He called himself "Ted of the North." It was a joke.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. You were "Ted of the South?"

TED BIRKEDAL: I guess. And -- but he was a natural guy, and Jeff worked for him. And he liked to come to the meetings. So Jeff would be there as an advisor.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: He was not a member.

[02:17:07]KAREN BREWSTER: And CRAC met how often?

TED BIRKEDAL: Every year.

KAREN BREWSTER: Just once a year?

TED BIRKEDAL: Once a year to allocate funds and make other decisions, generally for about two to three days.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then we would meet on the phone. Uh, we would also -- yeah. So there was interaction as a CRAC member.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So if you weren't the park person, you were -- well, you were the park person, but you were interacting with them as a member of CRAC.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And -- and that worked pretty good, I think, on the whole. There were some disputes, but on the whole, we got pretty good at allocations, and they became more, this is what you deserve. Go do something with it. Correct.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: You know, and then they would allocate it back to my staff. Like, if -- if they needed an historian like Frank.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Or an ethnologist to help, you know, work on subsistence.

KAREN BREWSTER: With part of the project?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. So I would say -- but Park Service subordinates cultural resources, generally, to the resource manager.

[02:18:15]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Uh, well you were saying that, you know, it's obvious that being head of cultural resources was a hard job. But you liked it?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Were there things that you didn't like about it? Or what was something that was the hardest about it?

TED BIRKEDAL: The hardest. I would say dealing with administration. It just -- the administrative bureaucracy of the Park Service, for some reason just seems to me to be just, uh --

KAREN BREWSTER: But some people -- you obviously managed to put up with it. Other people don't -- aren't able to put up with it and probably don't have a career in the Park Service.

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, they get -- they get pushed out. I mean, what happens is --

KAREN BREWSTER: The people who get frustrated and say --

TED BIRKEDAL: Quit.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- "I can't do this." And leave.

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, I knew I couldn't do that. I just had to roll with the punches is probably a good way to describe it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: So sometimes I won, and sometimes I lost. And I just have to keep plugging. And Sande will give you a similar story about that you'd get beat up.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And you don't have a lot of power, so you've got to convince people all the time. You're always trying to be persuasive without being outrageous. It's taxing, and my successor has found that. She started working on weekends soon after she got there. And I used to work late.

[02:20:02]KAREN BREWSTER: Did you -- what did you do in life to counter that stress or those diff -- frustrations? Like, you didn't work weekends, or you did?

TED BIRKEDAL: I didn't normally, no.

KAREN BREWSTER: So what would you do with your free time?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, well, I -- I was -- I belonged to about three hiking groups before my feet got bad. Uh, I cross-country skied. I have two daughters. We had a cabin out at Big La -- it's really Flat Lake. [02:20:40]And uh -- oh, now I remember the guy's name. Tom Liebscher. I don't know if you ever --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, yes. I remember the name.

TED BIRKEDAL: We had a good relationship on the whole. I always try to be -- I try not to be, like I say, a Nazi.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I would, I guess, take blows, you know. And then, you just have to -- you just keep going.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because you have no alternative. You don't have power. So you gotta convince your bosses to be your power. You've got to convince parks to do the right thing. So you're always selling them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. That sounds tiring after a while.

TED BIRKEDAL: It did. It was -- um, I liked the work. But it was not easy, like Jennifer has found out. Because you -- you're always fighting for the budget, to have enough people to have the ability to do the work. To have publication money. To -- and you're dealing with the external public, like on historic landmarks. Um, we had a fair amount of authority on that, and you're dealing with the state and other entities. And then, once in a while, like when I piss off the army, you got beat upstairs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: But the weird thing is, the army had to ask me to be their advisor. 'Cause I was the only one who could mediate between them and the SHPO (State Historic Preservation Office).

KAREN BREWSTER: This was for Site Summit?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And uh, so I would get beat up -- I would just -- but I liked the work. I felt I was accomplishing things. You asked me if I had any regrets. The only regret I have is I couldn't do more.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: But I don't have anything like -- I would say overall, it was satisfying.

[02:22:47]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I was thinking, it must have been worthwhile to continue to put up with the being beat up and --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- the stress of it all.

TED BIRKEDAL: 'Cause you could get beat up by parks. You could get beat up by Washington, and --

KAREN BREWSTER: So something about it was worthwhile to you to stick with -- ?

TED BIRKEDAL: Well, that was the cultural resources to -- to -- I'm a -- basically, a historic preservationist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And also, I mean, I liked the ethnology parts that we were doing. We felt -- these were things that were important to people, living people. And then, the past is important, and we felt the public needed it. That's part of our orientation in our publications.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: At least get the information out there so somebody else could do something with it. Um, like the Seward people did.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I think it was an interpreter who wrote down the little brochures from the archeological work we'd done there. And then Becky writing hers, which is very accessible. And that was the intent, to get it to the public. This is -- this is your -- this is your history, you know.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And it's through archeology. Now there's history, too. But archeology can inform history.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, so all of that stuff was -- I think the satisfying thing is, yeah, I think I may have said that there in the interview that it was being able to accomplish important stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[02:24:26]TED BIRKEDAL: And I -- I'd planned to become a professor, and I wasn't -- on Guam, that was my trajectory.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I actually wanted to eventually get a job at University of Oregon. That was my big goal then.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because they had a Pacific orientation. A guy named Ayres (William S. Ayres) was doing great work. And I thought -- well, I was the only one in Guam, but I was thinking then, well, I have something unique. Nobody else has much worked on Guam except me and Fred Reinman and a few others. And uh, I thought, that's where I'm going to go. 'Til I came back, finished the dissertation, and then got the call from my friend.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I went, "That sounds intriguing."

KAREN BREWSTER: That's sometimes how life works.

[02:25:21]TED BIRKEDAL: So then, I learned about Section 106, and I actually had an epiphany in 1976. When I was -- I finally understood how it all worked, and it was one of the most beautiful laws in the world. It is a funny -- I -- it's like, ah, I can see the light, how this works, because you've got to account for cultural resources.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's this planning operation. And it's got a federalist nature to it because the states are involved.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And then the tribes became involved. So you're consulting. And for some reason, that appeals to me, this -- a consultative relationship with people you work with. Uh, be they external or in the Park Service. And so, that was -- I would say I -- yeah, I took a turn in life. And I -- somebody said -- once told me, said, "You're really good at it." And I went -- that kind of encouraged me to stay in that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Because I was negotiating for a while to go back to Guam to get an associate professorship there. And then I realized, no, this is probably my -- my way.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: I'm -- I -- people think I'm good at it. I feel satisfied by it even though it can be frustrating. [02:26:50]See, I was used to -- Guam is very frustrating. It's got rotten politics.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: The SHPO just now was fired for corruption. I'm not kidding you. And I just sent her a bunch of stuff. Because I sent -- I had some artifacts from that period that I was supposed to look at. And I sent everything back to her. And I was corresponding with her because I'm working on a second report. I did an earlier report. These are all volunteer things I just do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I -- I -- she got fired. A friend of mine is the naval archeologist there. Well, one of my students.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: From back then.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's fun.

TED BIRKEDAL: And she said, "Don't send any more. There's chaos." Uh, so that was -- I got trained in frustration in Guam because I had to deal with salvage archeology for no money. Just a little pittance to write up stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And have work-study students. And then I had a marine biologist doing the artifacts -- the shells and fish bones. And I had to pay her something out -- you know, help her

out. And I got -- I got the Isla Arts Council (sp?) to give me money. But most of the time I was -- I had too many classes to teach. I had -- I was so frustrated because I couldn't work on the dissertation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: That was driving me crazy, and my committee was going nuts. So Guam -- see, people would come to me and they'd say, "Would you call out the -- the -- the Republicans for having a party on the beach and ruining artifacts and sites?" And I said, "No, I'm not going to do that." Because they were trying to politicize the thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I stayed out of trouble in Guam. But I had to negotiate very carefully among the faculty. At one point, I had a tug-of-war with one of the administrators over a table that I had for my work-study students. And then they stole it and took it -- after I had gone home, they took it and put their coffee on it. And it was -- things --

[02:29:19]KAREN BREWSTER: So yeah, you were well-practiced in that by the time you got to the Park Service?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah, and then I had a second thing, which was the Indian Assistance Program, where I'm dealing with energy people.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: Mobil Oil. And I turned a guy around. Dan Hurley first had to deal with me on drilling. And sites was right in the middle of one of the more important site areas in the Southwest. I mean, it's thick. And he was pretty hostile. But he came around and won a historic preservation award by the state. Because I -- I convinced him the importance of the stuff, and I got him to start -- I said, "If you're worried about archeologists being inaccurate, why don't you measure it? You're an engine -- you know, a mining engineer. You know how to do this." And he did beautiful work. He could drill amongst ruins and protected the ruins from people who were looters.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, he be -- and he did win an award for his work. And he was a gruff Mobil Oil guy, but we became friends. And so, I dealt with some, like, I told you the story about people trying to fire me who, you know, with the Reagan administration and all this stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I got used to --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:30:51]TED BIRKEDAL: And working with Indian people is not always easy. Like the Hopi.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: They can -- there can be some difficulties. But we did archeological work with the Hopi. I had an Indian boss for a while.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so, that gave me a perspective. Guam prepared me for that. Then that was -- you're still advisory. You're a secondary person. The BIA didn't love archeology, and especially Section 106, but they -- they were pretty good on the whole in listening to us. We had a -- the program had a credibility, trust thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And we had a good trust relationship most of the time with the Indian peoples.

[02:31:38]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and it sounds like and then coming to Alaska, you'd learned this cross-cultural communication, which is very important in Alaska, as well.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. And that's why I got involved in the Indian Assistance -- excuse me. I always get -- the --

KAREN BREWSTER: The Rural --

TED BIRKEDAL: Native Alaskan and Rural Development Program at UAF.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Sande was the founder of that, and then when she left, I continued the work, but I used to participate. And I -- that was one of my favorite things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And we put on a seminar every year and helped fund that. And one of my things was to get the cooperative agreement in place so we would get paid.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And help the students because they got scholarships to come to the seminars, which we held all over Alaska.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Yeah, I remember when that went on.

TED BIRKEDAL: And now, I think it's died. Rachel was dealing with it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, there's some of it -- there's still some of going on, I think, but I'm not sure to what extent.

TED BIRKEDAL: But the money's shrunk.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[02:32:41]TED BIRKEDAL: But uh, so I was used to frustration.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: And cultural resources for -- Sande'll tell you, are frustrating because you're always a secondary citizen.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: So you're sort of like a black in a white society.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: Especially in the Park Service. Which the highest ranking people are -- the most respected are, ranger, rescue rangers, law enforcement rangers. And that's where they get the superintendents from, usually.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. They come from that pool.

TED BIRKEDAL: Unless they -- unless they -- well, if they want a hard park. And a hard park is like Denali.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's mainly natural resources. That's why Wrangell-St. Elias didn't want Kennecott in there 'cause that's soft.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And so, a hard park is Glacier Bay. A soft park is like Fort Union.

[02:33:36]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And Klondike is more considered a soft park?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Even though it has the Chilkoot Trail?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, yes. That doesn't count as much as the -- yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And Sitka.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: They're not --

KAREN BREWSTER: They're soft parks?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. They actually use that term, hard and soft.

[02:33:52]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I think I've heard that. Well, Ted, you've talked for a long time today. You're probably exhausted.

TED BIRKEDAL: Eh, I can talk. But I'm sorry I can't always remember.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, no, no. I just thought maybe we'd wrap up. If there was anything else --

TED BIRKEDAL: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- related to Klondike that -- or --

TED BIRKEDAL: I had good fun there. I didn't do the archeology there except through the write-up. My job was to -- to get the archeology done.

[02:34:22]KAREN BREWSTER: Were there other things that you helped get done for Klondike besides archeology? Like history or projects?

TED BIRKEDAL: Sande did much more with that and Frank. And my job was to make their job easier.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: I did a lot of administrative interference. I -- I tried to give them the platforms they needed to do their job. So I didn't have a lot to do with it. I did with the landmark on that occasion.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And that's where I'd come in. When the going got tough, that was when I had to do what I could. And I can't say that there was -- you know, relative to the Klondike, I was happy with the outcome. Like I said, it's kind of dessert, even with --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I did what I set out to do, which is to get -- I'd say, ninety percent of the reports were written up and published.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: Uh, and then -- then the dessert one by Becky Saleeby, which also gave the public access to it.

[02:35:35]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. So you didn't have anything to do with any projects on the Chilkoot or out in Dyea?

TED BIRKEDAL: Oh, well, only as a over -- secondary oversight supervisor. Like the White Pass report.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, the Julie Johnson's --

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. That kind of thing. So I'd be involved in arguing for it, you know, or whatever. I was an advo -- my job was an advocate.

KAREN BREWSTER: But that Julie -- the White Pass one, was that something Sande spearheaded and got going?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yes. Yes. Yeah. She can tell you a lot about that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. I'll ask her.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I was more distant from that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: So I let Sande do her thing. It's when I had to step in when there was some messy stuff, then I --

[02:36:21]KAREN BREWSTER: And what counts as messy stuff? Funding or -- ?

TED BIRKEDAL: Funding, administrative problems, everything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: Like I -- shepherding cooperative agreements through. Or someone yelling, like, about the landmark in Skagway. That's a typical thing, where I had to deal with.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I'm -- like I say, I try to be diplomatic 'cause I don't have power.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: You -- your -- you have to convince people, and if you can't convince them, you lose.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Then you don't get anything done.

TED BIRKEDAL: And you can't just become stiff. You've gotta be flexible, and you've gotta roll with the punches because the punches are coming. I gotta say, there was a lot. It's a lot nicer being -- [02:37:18]I don't regret retiring. I liked the work, but it was hard. And I was -- I'd figured out it was fourteen years 'til I was eighty, so at sixty-six, I'm --

KAREN BREWSTER: It's time to go.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. And I've been ok with -- I'm actually -- I love not having administrative issues.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: I'm -- I'm feeling good about it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and you've been retired for seven years, so, a whole new life.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. And we moved here last year. I write for the "Norwegian American." I do cultural and heritage type things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

TED BIRKEDAL: I -- I like that.

KAREN BREWSTER: So yeah, and you're -- you're still doing things.

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. And then, well, we also -- I go to the gym here five days a week. I try to keep myself up because I don't want to become a feeble eighty-year-old. And I've got some health issues, so uh, and I have more -- [02:38:16]I have to finish a report on Guam. Then I go back to writing stuff for -- I have a good relationship with the resource manager at Jean Lafitte (National Historical Park and Preserve).

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, in New Orleans?

TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. Uh, I had one with the cultural resource person, but I don't know the current one. And he's the guy I deal with. But I have a write-up of an 18th-century house testing. It's only testing. And then another test that we didn't -- I didn't get to write up. Then I'll be near done with that. I can't believe how much I did then.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: It's unbeliev -- it's like endless.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

TED BIRKEDAL: But that's what informed me about -- and Jim Bradford, who was the regional archeologist, just wrote me a Christmas card, and he said, "I'm still working on my reports." And Sande got him to finish. She took my example and made him finish. Maybe he was

the Elmora (sp?) one? It wasn't Bruce. Bruce had something else that -- but it was -- and so, he got that done 'cause she got him to do it 'cause she said, "Well, Ted got that other thing done. And why can't you get this done?"

KAREN BREWSTER: It's the never-ending saga of archeology, that you never get the reports done.

[02:39:32]TED BIRKEDAL: Yeah. So that's why I came with a premise for Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I'm most happy with it. I'm -- I feel good about that place.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

TED BIRKEDAL: And I discharged what I -- the debt that I said I would do for -- for Samantha. I'm done my duty.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. There you go.

TED BIRKEDAL: So that's --

KAREN BREWSTER: All right. Anything else about Skagway or Klondike?

TED BIRKEDAL: No, and you -- I've repeated myself, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, well we will end it.