

RECORDED INTERVIEW OF BROOKE CHILDREY

CONDUCTED BY KAREN BREWSTER

IN EATONVILLE, WASHINGTON

APRIL 26, 2019

ORAL HISTORY 2017-01-93

KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

TRANSCRIBED BY RUTH SENSENIG

[00:00:00]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok, today is April 26, 2019, and this is Karen Brewster. And I'm here with Brooke Childrey at her home in Eatonville, Washington, near Mount Rainier, on a beautiful, sunny day. And, um, this is for the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park Oral History Project. [00:00:24]So Brooke, thank you for letting me come down and visit you today.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Mm, you're welcome.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um, and you -- you were the curator at Klondike Seattle, is that right?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, not quite.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Curatorial assistant?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

[00:00:41]BROOKE CHILDREY: I am the curator at Mount Rainier National Park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And the curator of record for Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Seattle Unit.

[00:00:52]KAREN BREWSTER: What does curator of record mean?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It means that, up until recently, I went up to the park and, um, helped them with their cultural resource issues, helped them with their curation issues, made sure that things were accessioned, cataloged. That sort of thing. Helped researchers. [00:01:15]I brought in interns from the University of Washington and oversaw their internships and then started a exhibits program with the University of Washington where the park gives them themes, they design exhibits based on those themes, and then we select one of the themes to be fabricated and installed, which the students do, and then it's installed at Klondike.

BROOKE CHILDREY

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KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

KAREN BREWSTER: So are those museum studies students or -- ?

BROOKE CHILDREY: They are museology graduate students.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool. [00:01:57]Well, I'm going to take us back a little bit. When did -- well, when did you first start doing work for Klondike Seattle?

BROOKE CHILDREY: 2008. I am still the curator of record, but in 2018, we were able to hire a museum tech -- museum curator, Tarin Erickson. She's a GS-9. She's not a full -- I think they call 'em -- they call 'em journeyman, curator. So I'm still the curator of record. My responsibilities have changed, so I'm now a technical person. They can call me. I can go up there. That sort of thing. But Tarin's running the whole --

KAREN BREWSTER: You don't go up on a regular basis?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Not anymore.

[00:02:41]KAREN BREWSTER: So when you were curator of record, did you go up every week, or -- ?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Uh, it depended. It started out ten days a year and turned into three and a half pay periods a year. So it would just -- when it started at ten days, it was the superintendent would call and say, "Can you come up? I have a meeting." That sort of thing. When it turned into three and a half pay periods, it was every other week to go up there, work on things. At one point, we were doing, like, every week, two or thr -- two days every week, so we were front-loading is what we were calling it, because something else was happening at Mount Rainier that I needed to not be at Klondike.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Or something was happening at Klondike that I needed to be at.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So, pretty flexible.

[00:03:37]KAREN BREWSTER: Now why did they have you as curator of record and bring you in from Rainier instead of hiring a full curator stationed at Klondike Seattle?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, the collections at Klondike were not large enough at the time to justify having a full-time curator. The responsibilities weren't as defined at the time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And so over the last ten years, we say, the responsibilities have grown. Um, so I started out with just doing the accessioning and the cataloging. There was no exhibits program. The permanent exhibits had been installed in 2006, and that was it. So, um, as we -- superintendents came in and came out, the superintendents and I talked. Some of the interpretive staff got on board, and we started -- there was a curator's exhibit that was supposed to be temporary to highlight what the -- what was in the collection. It had been up for two years. So that was the first thing that changed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:04:59]BROOKE CHILDREY: And with interpretation's help, we started bringing in rotating exhibits about Historic Seattle. And then, I forget how we got the connection with University of Washington. Jacqueline or Karen might remember. Um, but anyway, we got a connection with the University of Washington's Museology Graduate Program, and the first year, they just designed exhibits. I think they called us and said, "Hey, we're looking for museums to help us with our class. Could you give us some themes, and the students will design exhibits?" So the first year, it was just designing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Then the second year, 2010? 2011 or '12, they expanded the program, decided to have two classes. [00:05:58]So the first class was in the winter time, and they designed exhibits. And then they fabricated in the fall.

KAREN BREWSTER: Mm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They still do that. They've now this year added a third class. So in the winter, they design. In the spring, they, um, go more in-depth on their designs, more research, that sort of thing. And then in the fall, the one design that's selected will then be fabricated and installed, and the exhibit will open the first of December and run until, um, at least 'til April. It just depends on the quality of the exhibit and whether we have something else coming in after it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:06:48]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so the very first exhibit was actually on the Elwha River. The dams on the Elwha River up at Olympic National Park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And that exhibit was fantastic. It was very well received. The Natives came to see it. Locals and dignitaries in the area came in and saw it. The students went above and beyond, and they set the bar high for all the other students following them, which is why we now have three classes --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- to give them that more time to do the research. 'Cause the Elwha crew, they went on their days -- you know, outside of school hours.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Weekends, and went up to Olympic to do the research.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[00:07:38]BROOKE CHILDREY: So, um, so you can see, we don't just do the Klondike in our temporary exhibits.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that was my question. That was what I was going to ask, is, oh, so you don't just do Klondike?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, we have -- we have criteria. Uh, the criteria started out with, it has to be a Klondike theme, which means it has to be about the Klondike Gold Rush or Seattle's involvement in the Klondike Gold Rush. It then expanded with discussions with the regional office, who said, you know, you guys are located in the perfect spot --

KAREN BREWSTER: In the heart of Seattle.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- to tell the national park story, so could you tell in your exhibit space that you have, could you tell stories about some of the parks and what's going on in the parks in this region? Um, so it actually, it's not the region, it's the network. So we can do Klondike, we can do historic Seattle's role in the Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:08:38]BROOKE CHILDREY: We can do things that are happening in the parks within our network, so science. One year we did fishers, the reintroduction of fishers in the big national parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Uh, Olympic, North Cascades, and Mount Rainier. Um, we can do a theme that is related to something that is significant to the National Park Service. So we did the centennial of the National Park Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: This year, I don't know all of the things because Tarin's taking over.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So I only know the one that affects my work at Mount Rainier. They're doing climate change.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. I was going to ask, well, climate change.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. [00:09:19]Uh, so there -- there's a lot. Klondike Seattle, um, is -- what's it called now? It's got -- it's -- it's -- it's expanded.

KAREN BREWSTER: The name of it?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So it's still Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Seattle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Seattle Unit, yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But their responsibilities have expanded. They now are, um, the NPS liaison for the Wing Luke Asian Pacific -- I'm going to shut it off -- Museum. It's a really long title. Um, they are the liaison for the Bainbridge Island Exclusion Memorial. Um, which is part of Minidoka National Historical Park, but they're in Idaho.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which was one of the intern -- internment camp.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. The first internment camp during World War II was at Bainbridge because it's closer to Seattle, even though it's --

KAREN BREWSTER: It's part of Minidoka.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. It's part of Minidoka, we're the ones that staff it and oversee it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: On their behalf. [00:10:43]So our responsibility is to expand it. With that is partnerships with Historic Seattle, and Wing Luke, and Bainbridge. So the curator position, instead of just being accession and cataloging stuff that's coming in, that we're receiving over the two -- you know, in between the times you're coming up, is now being a liaison, acting as a liaison for the university, for the Wing Luke Museum, for Bainbridge Island, for Historic Seattle. Um, the responsibilities have expanded. You're also responsible for cultural resources. There is no other cultural resources person on staff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh really, there isn't?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Huh-uh. [00:11:28]It's a staff of interpreters and a curator.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm. And no historian?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No historian.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: No maintenance. So you have the park superintendent, you have, um, the administrative assistant, a chief ranger interpretation, an education specialist, and interpreters. And then they had me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:12:03]BROOKE CHILDREY: And, um, working with Karen and Jacqueline, we were able to first get seasonal museum tech. Then we were able to get a museum tech full time. And then working with Charles, we were able to say, "Ok. Look at what the responsibilities are, what her workload is, this really is -- "

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: A 9 or 11. And we were hoping for an 11, but they didn't have the budget for it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. [00:12:33]And so Karen and Jacqueline are --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Karen and Jacqueline were superintendents.

KAREN BREWSTER: So what's Karen's last name?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Beppler-Dorn.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. And then Jacqueline was?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Ashwell. She was the superintendent after Karen. And Charles Beall is the current superintendent.

KAREN BREWSTER: What's Jacqueline's last name?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Ashwell.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Is she the one who is in Hawaii now?

BROOKE CHILDREY: She's in Hawaii now.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. [00:12:58]So the three of them were what I would call forward-thinking.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They recognized that, um, without the collections, without the collections manager, somebody was dealing with the cultural resources because they're in a historic building.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That, um, the park -- it was a pri -- it was the primary resource. It was the reason the park was established.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That unit was established, um, was to exhibit artifacts.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they realized that and worked diligently to expand the responsibilities and look for the budget to make it happen.

[00:13:41]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Well, and you say, it's -- it's the collection of artifacts and the use of those to tell the story. Whereas other parks, their collections are, you know, plant samples and archeological excavations and photos and artifacts, but they're not all designed to be seen and used by the public.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: And I would think Klondike Seattle would have more for exhibits than, um, just collections.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. The majority of the collection is on exhibit.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So. [00:14:16]But it was specifically -- when Klondike Skagway and Klondike Seattle were established, they had the same superintendents.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And if you look at -- at the documentation, it says, we need to collect artifacts for Seattle so we can open an exhibit to the public. To bring the public in and teach them about Seattle's role in the Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So without those resources, without the collections, there isn't a park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And that's what these last three superintendents have realized, and that's what was driving -- the driving force behind expanding the role of the curator and bringing on the museum tech and working with the university and all that stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

[00:15:13]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, ok. I'm going to take us back in time, which is what I usually start with, but I wanted to first hear a little bit about the kind of work you did. So to take us back is your personal history, where you're from, how -- your education, how you got to be doing curatorial work.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Huh. It's a long story. I have a degree in -- from the University -- from Oregon State University. My degree's in resource management and zoology. So when I graduated, I immediately, on graduation day, started working for the Park Service. And I was working for interpretation at Crater Lake. And I worked there two seasons.

[00:16:01]KAREN BREWSTER: What year would that have been?

BROOKE CHILDREY: 1985.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And 1986. And in 1986, Abraham Lincoln's home in Springfield, Illinois, started calling me. And I had to keep putting 'em off and putting 'em off because of family stuff that was going on. And they kept calling. So I -- once the family stuff was over, I accepted the position there. I was interpreter at Crater Lake, and I was an interpreter at Lincoln Home, but at Lincoln's Home, they got funding for a restoration project that they weren't aware they were receiving funding for. And the project was to completely dismantle the home.

KAREN BREWSTER: (Gasp) Man.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then do an archeological excavation underneath, and put it all back together.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[00:17:04]BROOKE CHILDREY: Unfortunately, because they didn't know -- it was a last-minute, we have extra money, let's do this project, their museum technician had been detailed out.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So there was nobody on staff to deal with the collection, which was in the house.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It was a house museum.

[00:17:19]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, if you're going to take it down, you have to record it all first.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So that was my job. I was selected out of everybody on staff to, um, take care of the collection. And so I had to inventory it. I had to make decisions as to whether or not it needed conservation treatment before it went back out on exhibit. This was doing -- having no experience whatsoever. Pack it up, find a storage -- temporary storage facility that was climate-controlled, all that stuff. I worked with conservators at Harpers Ferry, um, and did all of this. It took seven or eight months of my time. And the end result was, this is kinda something I was -- getting it organized and figuring all this out was something I really liked doing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It was like a jigsaw puzzle and trying to figure it all out. Um, and it was tangible. It was Abraham Lincoln's things, so you could relate to it. [00:18:26]So after I left Lincoln Home, they helped me transfer to Boston National Historical Park. And I transferred as an interpreter but was picked up right away as their museum technician.

KAREN BREWSTER: What is Boston National Historical Park?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Boston National Historical Park is the USS Constitution, the USS Cassin Young, the Freedom Trail. So Paul Revere's House, Old North Church, Bunker Hill Monument. It's Revolutionary War. So. And it goes all the way through, um, actually, it's through Nixon.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, really?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. He decommissioned the naval shipyard at the time. Because the Boston Naval Shipyard is part of all of that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

[00:19:15]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um. So I became their museum technician. That was my first curatorial job. I spent, um, we went to training, museum methods training, back when they had it, back then. And in our -- I was lucky, I was in the northeast region, or what was called the North Atlantic Region at the time, and, um, the regional curator of the North Atlantic/Northeast Region was John Mayones. And he held follow-up classes for two years.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And so for two years, we would meet with John, and he would teach us something about curation that we needed to know. So he taught us how to photograph artifacts. He taught us how to do environmental monitoring, you know, everything that you need to know how to do it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:20:11]BROOKE CHILDREY: It was before museum studies was ever offered in the universities. And then from there, I became the first curator for Acadia National Park and St. Croix Island International Historical Site.

KAREN BREWSTER: You see, and there's --

(Chiming noise)

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oop, sorry.

KAREN BREWSTER: Is that your phone or your computer?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Computer.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. You see, there you go. Acadia National Park, I think of as beautiful landscape, and the wagon roads, the trail system, and all that. You don't think of a collection that needs to be curated.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's huge.

KAREN BREWSTER: Maybe the -- the plant and bird samples?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, no. Acadia has both. That was the first park where I actually used the training that I had from Oregon State, all that natural history stuff. It has natural history. It has a collection baseline data from the 1800's of insects that were collected and specimens that were collected by William H. Proctor. You think of Proctor & Gamble toothpaste and stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, William was one of the, um, what do you call them -- he was part of the Proctor family, and he was taking care of the -- the company.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, he -- what, like being the president or something.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Something like that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It'll come to me, probably in the middle of the night.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[00:21:35]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, but he would rather go out and collect specimens, so he ditched the life of Proctor & Gamble. Again, that was before it became Proctor & Gamble.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It was just Proctor at the time. Um, and so he started -- he was collecting, and his collection is huge. There's like 20,000 specimens that he alone collected.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. [00:21:59]Now, are there cultural artifacts?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Absolutely.

KAREN BREWSTER: Huh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Acadia National Park's on an island in Maine, and there are 2000 islands in the archipelago. And, um, so Mount Desert Island, and then there's two Cranberry Islands, and, um, there's five islands. Mount Desert, Cranberry, Cranberry, Sutton Island, and this little one is Bear-something. Um, anyway, so they're all part of Acadia National Park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: There's some aspect of -- of stuff that we own. [00:22:41]The Cranberry Islands Museum, out on Little Cranberry Island, was donated to the park by William Otis Sawtelle. He collected about the history of the islands, that five set -- set of five islands, and that history goes all the way back to King Henry IV.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

[00:23:01]BROOKE CHILDREY: And so the documents, the archives that are in the collection, the objects, um, in the collection there pertain to the -- the islands. Um, and so like I say, they go back to -- they're French settlers. So they come -- they'd go back to King Henry IV, King Louis XIII and XIV, um, don't ask me why, but Diamond -- Diamond Jim Brady, who was a gambler -

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, yeah. Well, apparently he had some connection to the islands.

[00:23:43]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was going to say, there's also a Native history, I'm sure.

BROOKE CHILDREY: There is Native American history. Um, the Wabanaki tribes of Maine, it's a group of tribes that when NAGPRA came through --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: The Native American Graves --

KAREN BREWSTER: -- Graves Repatriation Act.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. When that came through, Maine was the first one that got their act together, and instead of each tribe competing for human remains and funerary objects, they banded together as the Wabanaki. And so the collections were repatriated immediately.

[00:24:17]And there's the Abbe Museum, which is also on Mount Desert Island, and we worked closely with them to make sure those sort of things happen.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. So how long were you at Acadia?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Ten years.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Acadia and St. Croix.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So St. Croix Island is the first settlement by Europeans in the New World. It's not Jamestown.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, I think of Labrador, Newfoundland.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: With the Vikings.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, probably. I guess that would be in North America, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Newfoundland, maybe, because it's off the coast. I don't know. Anyway.

[00:25:02]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, I don't think anybody -- I don't know why we don't, but anyway, um, they were settled in 1604. Jamestown was settled in 1607. So they settled in St. Croix in 1604. There were something like seventy-four settlers. It was the worst winter on record, ever, and they did right -- I mean they built their fort here on the island. They built their garden over here on the mainland, and then everything froze, and they couldn't get from here to there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, my.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To get to the vegetables. Um, so they literally died from complications of scurvy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But not all of them. Those that survived, because of the latitude-longitude of France, is where they're from, they -- in France, if you go north, it's warmer. And they were thinking the same thing would happen in North America. So they went north, and they settled Quebec.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

[00:26:05]BROOKE CHILDREY: So they are, um, Acadians. During the wars with Britain -- so Britain claimed north/south.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: France claimed east/west.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they claimed all North America.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And Britain claimed here. So every time they were battling over who had what --

KAREN BREWSTER: There were lots of those battles.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, they either went north towards Quebec, or they went south and inland to you know where?

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Jazz country. New Orleans.

KAREN BREWSTER: New Orleans.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. Those are Acadians.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, that's right. They are. I knew that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So they came from Acadia.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:26:52]BROOKE CHILDREY: So St. Croix Island International Historical Park is the island they settled.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It is an international park between Canada and the United States, and it literally sits in the middle of the water. So the collections there are primarily archeological.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They excavated the island and re-excavated it and excavated it again. It was primarily archeological. As I left from there, we were building up -- we had inherited property, and so they were building up the visitor program and that sort of thing, so.

[00:27:34]KAREN BREWSTER: And then did you come here to Washington?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Came to Mount Rainier in November of 2005, and I've been here ever since.

KAREN BREWSTER: Nice.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then, like I say, in 2008, I was informed I was curator of record at Klondike.

[00:27:51]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. So you didn't -- had no choice in the matter.

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. I was actually reading it in some document and called the regional curator and said, "Kent, what is this?" And he said, "Oh, yeah. I assigned you Klondike." And he assigned Gaye, at Olympic, she had Hawaii. And, um, Kelly at North Cascades had Ebey's Landing and San Juans.

[00:28:20]KAREN BREWSTER: And that was just because those were smaller collections that couldn't --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- justify having a position?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. And in the Pacific Northwest Region, Kent Bush was the regional curator, and, um, Diane Nicholson was for the Pacific West. And then they combined the two regions and made one region, and both of them were working the same way. We don't -- we're a big -- we're a big region. We have lots of parks, but we have no curators.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Literally, there were no curators. Yellow -- or not Yellowstone. Yosemite had a curator and archivist staff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But the rest of the parks didn't.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Until very recently, so.

[00:29:08]KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. Well, and it's interesting that they assigned you from Rainier to Seattle rather than somebody from Skagway, when those two units are connected, but I guess it's closer to come from Rainier.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right. Exactly. So. And they're in a different region.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, yeah. That --

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

[00:29:28]KAREN BREWSTER: I have a question about that, but I want to -- you mentioned going to Oregon --

BROOKE CHILDREY: State.

KAREN BREWSTER: Were you from Oregon originally? Where did you grow up?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um-hm. Yep. Yeah. So I spent twenty years trying to get back from the East Coast. But when I started in the Park Service, that's what you had to do. You had to go east to get permanent, and then you have to work your way back.

KAREN BREWSTER: Uh-huh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, so. And that's ok because I've seen quite a few national parks, and --

[00:29:57]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and it sounds like all your curatorial work has been sort of on-the-job training.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It has. When I was in Boston, the regional curator sent me to Harvard University when they started having a museum studies program, um, but I never finished that program because he had at that point convinced the superintendent at Acadia National Park that they needed a curator.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:30:21]BROOKE CHILDREY: And that's sort of what Diane and Kent had to do out here was work on superintendents and convince them that they needed curators. So at Rainier, the first curator came in in December of '98, and she was a third-person interpreter. So she was an interpreter who did third-person interpretation. Um, costume interpretation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But she was a hardship transfer, so she had no curation background whatsoever. She provided access to the collection, but not processing. Processing and actually preserving the collections didn't start until I came in December of 2005.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So, and Gaye, I think -- Mary was hired in 2005 at Crater Lake. Gaye was hired, I think, in 2005 or 2004 at Olympic, so we're talking in, you know, the late '90's, early 2000's, before curation in the Pacific Northwest happened.

[00:31:25]KAREN BREWSTER: And does that coincide with a change in academic/professional training that now is available, so people came in as -- already as curator, you know?

BROOKE CHILDREY: I would say, um, when I went to Harvard, they were start -- it started out as certificate programs. And I think -- I want to say, and I could be remembering wrong, the University of Oklahoma had a online, but you had to show up in Oklahoma for, like, a month.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: At some point in time of your studies. [00:32:08]And I think that was an actual degree, a master's degree. And now lots of 'em have 'em, and I'm starting to see more and more that have bachelor's degrees in it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And that's like a museum studies --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- or curation or -- what about archives?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, there's still -- there's still museum studies certificates, but more and more, universities are offering museum studies master's degrees, and some are offering bachelor's degrees.

[00:32:36]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And it's different than being trained as an archivist?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, yes. They're totally different.

KAREN BREWSTER: In how -- what way?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, museum studies is, um, cultural and natural artifacts.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Some archives, administration, running a museum, a full-blown museum, art history, and exhibits. Um, registration, big -- big on registration. Archives is, um, it's all two-dimensional. So you're dealing with paper, photographs, magnetic media, that sort of thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Recordings.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Recordings, right. Not so much three-dimensional objects.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

[00:33:30]BROOKE CHILDREY: It's a different skill set, um, and it's kind of a different way of doing things. Like, if I'm cataloging, I'm writing numbers on things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Archivists don't.

KAREN BREWSTER: No.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They'll write it on the folder, but they won't write it on the artifact unless the artifact goes out on display. Sorry. Got a frog in my throat.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, sip of water. [00:34:01]So what are the different skill sets?

BROOKE CHILDREY: What are the different skill sets? Um, I'm not an archivist.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, well, I guess, what would you say -- you said you sort of fell into this curation work, and it's something you enjoyed. And --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- so what -- what is it you think makes you -- what skills do you think you have that make you able to do curation work?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, I know that the parks that I have moved to are parks that needed somebody to come in and organize the collections, so that's my skill set. I come in, and I -- I organize the collection, meaning I track down the registration information. I make sure that they're tagged and properly housed. [00:34:53]I'll go find collections. So I found the Proctor Collection when I was at Acadia. It had been missing. They thought it had burned in the fire, Mount Desert Island fire, in the 1940's. I found it in Massachusetts, at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and brought it back to Acadia. [00:35:15]So that's my skill set, is digging into all of this, figuring it all out and getting it all organized. Other people are sort of the historian side of things. They are object specialists. They know exactly what this object is. They know what every piece of that object is. That's not my skill set. I'm what would be called a generalist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[00:35:44]BROOKE CHILDREY: In a sense, I can come into any park and do my job. I can accession, I can catalog, I can organize.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, and others are specialists. You have your art historians who specifically deal with just artwork.

[00:35:58]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Or like as -- or a conservator. Like, you're not a conservator, but you can tell if something needs help, and you bring a conservator in to preserve it?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right, because of the training that the Park Service provided. Yeah. Um, and I do have some conservation training. So they did teach me how to conserve wood, how to conserve metals. To a certain point, you have to send it to a conservator to deal with.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And there are even fewer of those around.

BROOKE CHILDREY: There are now, yes. Yes. A lot fewer. [00:36:29]Um, but archivist side of things, the regional archiv -- we used to have a regional archivist here. It was a term position. We don't have a regional archivist in this region at this point. Uh, his skill set was being able to come in, look at a record and documents and tell you if they were government records or not. So we have historical archives, things that are being donated by visitors, and then we have

government records. And, um, everything that we create, like what you're creating right now, is it a government record, or is it a non-record? And our archivist could come in and say, in seconds, he just knew, that's a record, that's not a record, you know. And he knew disposition schedules. How many -- how long you had to keep it, if you had to keep it at all. He knew all of that. But he also knows how to preserve paper documents or magnetic media, that sort of thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And what will make it last the longest. The goal is a thousand years.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So he knows what containers work and don't work. So as curators, we have that basic training.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we can do some of it. [00:37:44]But like here at Mount Rainier, I'll do the smaller collections, but I will send the bigger collections to Yosemite or contract for people at Yosemite to come up and do it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because they have -- they know how to do all the different types. They know how to handle a blueprint versus a diazotype, you know, versus a photograph.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They know how to do all of that, and they can do it quickly, whereas I have to sit there and do the research each and every time.

[00:38:14]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And the Klondike unit, have they had an archivist?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: So no curator or archivist.

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, um, when I became curator of record, they had a park ranger, Keith Routley, who had other duties as assigned to deal with the collections. But they rightly hired him from the University of Washington's Museology Graduate Program, so he had training as a museum person, but not as a National Park Service museum person.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:38:54]BROOKE CHILDREY: How the Park Service deals with its collections is different than how, like, um, what am I going to say, Seattle --

KAREN BREWSTER: Burke Museum?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Burke Museum. Stuff like that. They deal with it differently than the Park Service does.

KAREN BREWSTER: And how so? How does the Park's different?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, we have a different cataloging program altogether.

KAREN BREWSTER: You mean, like, a computer program?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So we -- we used what's called -- it's changing, but it's called the Interior Collections Management System, and we will -- how am I going to say it? So like, in archives in the Park Service, we lot-catalog. So if a collection comes in, whether it's one item or a million items, from an individual, it gets the same catalog number and same accession number, whereas other places will individually catalog their archives. We lot-catalog 'em.

[00:39:56]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, so if it's, like, John Smith donates a thousand items, it's not like, say, you know, it's 2019 dash 1 (2019-1), the first collection, 01, the first item in that collection, dash 02 (-02).

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, that's non-Park Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Park Service would be KLSE dash --

KAREN BREWSTER: 2019.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Nope.

KAREN BREWSTER: No?

BROOKE CHILDREY: So, KLSE, um, 29 is the catalog number, KLSE dash 29 (KLSE-29) is the accession number.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh. That's totally different.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Uh-huh. Right.

[00:40:32]KAREN BREWSTER: How do you keep track of all those thousand items in that person's collection, for example?

BROOKE CHILDREY: You create a finding aid. So it's basically a box-and-folder list of what's in it. So, um, each accession -- you have multiple accessions -- you have multiple accessions within the same catalog number for archives.

[00:41:01]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I'm used to the year, which accession of the year it is, and then each item has a number.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: And so I can't fathom how you could do --

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't even know that system, so --

KAREN BREWSTER: That's the system I know. I'm like, how could you just do it as a big lot, 'cause how could you ever find anything? What if somebody wants to find that rusty nail. It doesn't have a number on it.

[00:41:22]BROOKE CHILDREY: No, objects are different. Objects all get their own individual catalog numbers unless they're archeology. Then they get 'em by bag.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, so you're saying that lot-cataloging is for the archival material?

BROOKE CHILDREY: For the archives. But we will lot-catalog objects if they're exactly the same. So for example, at Boston, I had literally, it was a wire cage box, um, that was probably four feet high, four feet square, full of battle helmets.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And all the battle helmets got the same catalog number except one.

KAREN BREWSTER: 'Cause it had a bullet hole in it or something?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It had a drawing inside.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, cool.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Whoever had that helmet did a drawing inside of his helmet, so that one got an individual catalog number. But all the rest looked identical, so they got the same number. [00:42:21]For naturalistic specimens, insects, birds, mammals, they get individual numbers except for vials of wet specimens. The vial gets a number.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: For objects, they get individual numbers unless they're identical.

[00:42:41]KAREN BREWSTER: And so at Klondike, they obviously have photographs.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We have photographs, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And those are all numbered individually?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, those are archives.

KAREN BREWSTER: They're lot-numbered.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They're lot-cataloged.

KAREN BREWSTER: So how would somebody, if they want to see, you know, do you have a photo of, you know, my grandfather so-and-so, there's no -- how do you find photos in a collection that's not individually cataloged?

BROOKE CHILDREY: We have a finding aid. So the finding aid will have, um -- it's based on the folder.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So the folder will say, like, Soapy Smith. And so all the photos of Soapy Smith are in that folder.

KAREN BREWSTER: Within that collection. Not --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Not all the photos from across collections, ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So, and it's all computerized.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:43:25]BROOKE CHILDREY: So I can just put in "Soapy Smith," and it'll bring up every folder that's got Soapy Smith in it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it's kind of like Christmas. There are stuff in there that you don't know, and it's like, "Hey. Never knew this was here."

[00:43:38]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, that's what I think the fun thing about curatorial work, whether it's archives or museum objects. The things you must come across, like that helmet with the drawings on it, or --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cause you're the one who gets to look at everything.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Exactly. [00:43:54]At -- at Rainier, what we did was we worked with the staff, and we said, "Ok. We have over 70,000 photographs. How do you want us to categorize these so that it'll be easy for you to retrieve them?" And they chose geographically, and then within that. So "Paradise -- Buildings." So it was "Structures" --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: "Equipment." "Roads." That sort of thing. So if you want to find the Guide House, you're gonna first go, "Paradise," then you're gonna go "Structures," then you're gonna go "Guide House."

[00:44:39]KAREN BREWSTER: And what about for Klondike?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Klondike is not that detailed. They don't have 70,000 photographs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they don't worry about that. Um, so they are within the collections. So, um, like the Hielscher Collections, it'll say photographs, and you can go through and look at the photographs.

KAREN BREWSTER: But it won't -- it won't say, like "Buildings," or "The Chilkoot Trail," or it's not that --

BROOKE CHILDREY: It might say Chilkoot Trail, it just depends on how detailed the archivists got when they were processing it. I can't off the top of my -- without looking at it, I can't tell you.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I'd have to look at the finding aid, and nothing's coming up right now.

[00:45:23]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. No, I was thinking about, yeah, when you -- things you dealt with when you were there, and just how people go and find things again.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We use -- Klondike Seattle uses their finding aid more frequently than we use it at Mount Rainier.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm. Why is that?

BROOKE CHILDREY: More. Because they're more into research. Their staff, their interpreters. Because the key is to get interpretation on board, and most parks don't have interpretation on board for curation.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Klondike does. They're like in the same building. They're right next to each other.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And if you want to do anything in interpretation, you have to go see the curator down the hallway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because they're in charge of all of the collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: That was what --

BROOKE CHILDREY: The reference collection, the museum collection. They were in charge of all of it.

[00:46:15]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, that was one of my questions from the beginning. When you talked about getting these student interns and doing exhibits and just the asking about that connection between interpretation and exhibit staff and curatorial staff and how that meshes.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, at Klondike, um, the exhibits program is under curation.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that's unusual?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. Most parks, it's under interpretation. So Mount Rainier, it's under interpretation. At Klondike Seattle, it's -- it is the responsibility of the museum curator to do the collections.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To do the exhibits. [00:47:01]Um, that does not mean that interpretation doesn't come up with ideas and do their own exhibits. We had, um, Ruth Kerr, who did beautiful exhibits. She worked with -- with Historic Seattle and different businesses in Seattle and came up with some rotating exhibits that we -- we put up while she was there. Um, we work with interpretation. They help -- they help with identifying themes. They help with reviewing exhibits, so like our liaison with the University of Washington interpretation throws in theme ideas, and they will review the exhibit designs. They will assist with the development of the exhibits. So, um, we require that the students come up with press releases, with like little coffee cards to go in the coffee shops around town 'cause there's a million of them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, that sort of thing. Interpretation is involved in all of that. We don't do the press release in curation. That's an interpretation role. They do that. The students work directly with the person responsible for press releases, um.

[00:48:27]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, it seems to me like exhibit work would have to be a collaboration between curatorial staff and interpretation staff in any park.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It should be, yes. At Klondike also, we have -- there's an education program, an education coordinator, and they work closely with the curator on all the exhibits to make sure there is an educational component to every exhibit that goes up. So, um.

[00:48:57]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I think that's sort of the point of exhibits, right?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Is to educate.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, it's -- it's -- there's -- there's -- the exhibits that I'm produced or Tarin's producing, the university students are producing, are going for a certain audience. And then we have a requirement that they also hit, it's like, third, fourth, fifth grade level.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That there's some kids activity, and that's where our education coordinator comes in. She oversees that, helps the students to define it and refine it so that by the time it hits fabrication time, it's a full-blown component of the exhibit.

[00:49:43]KAREN BREWSTER: So the education person -- does that education person help review the text of the exhibit and all that kind of stuff as well?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: To make sure it fits the right level -- reading levels and all those things?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. Yes. So um, it's a -- Acadia -- or Acadia, sorry.

[00:50:04]Klondike Seattle is a small staff, and because they're a small staff, it requires that everybody cross and work together as a team to make things happen. So it doesn't matter what you're doing, if you need help, you just go down the hallway and say, "I need help. Can somebody come help me for a little bit?"

KAREN BREWSTER: But that's not typical for parks?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Not for your big parks. Acadia, it was -- it was. It's not -- it's sort of a medium-sized park, so if I needed anything, I could call maintenance up, or I could call interpretation or law enforcement, and they'd come over and help. At each of the parks I've worked at, we have to do what's called an annual inventory, and I was able to, at every park, still working on this one, to get people from every division to do those annual inventories. Got them into the collections, interested in the collections, and they started thinking about ways that they could use the collections for their interpretive programs, for, um, restoration programs, you know, restoration of buildings, facilities, that sort of thing. So Klondike, it's -- that's the way it's done. The superintendent all the way down to the GS-3 interpreter is involved in the annual inventory. They all donate their time to get it done.

[00:51:44]KAREN BREWSTER: So that means that the superintendent has a sense of what's in the collections?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Absolutely. Yep.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which makes sense.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. And it was the same at Acadia. The superintendent and all the other staff were involved.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, we don't need the entire staff. I mean, at Acadia there was like 250 people.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. But it does make sense --

BROOKE CHILDREY: But ,you know, you have it in the wintertime, and -- and, you know --

[00:52:06]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was going to say, it does make sense that the superintendent at least has a sense of what is there, so they -- when they go advocate on behalf of their park for funding or --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- whatever, that they're informed.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. And they have an id -- I mean, I don't know if -- you could ask Charles what his favorite item in the collection is, but he knows about the collections.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: He's -- he's been there. He's had to handle it to do the inventories.

[00:52:35]KAREN BREWSTER: So do you have a favorite item in the Klondike Seattle collection?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, I have the same favorite item that Keith Routley has, but for different reasons.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's the John Hielscher Collection. And the John Hielscher Collection literally walked through the door one day.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: In a steamer trunk. Um, and it is objects like gold pokes, mining tools, but it is also archives. It is fourteen years of documentation dating to the Klondike Gold Rush from the beginning of the gold rush. Hielscher worked for George Carmack. He worked the claims for Carmack, and then figured out he wasn't going to make any money, so he came up with his own way of making money off the gold rush. And he set up a series of stores between, um, towns and the miners. And he expanded it. [00:53:51]So it was just originally just the Klondike Gold Rush area, but then Alaska sort of had a gold rush explosion.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So there was a gold rush in Fairbanks. There was a gold rush in Nome. And he had a series of these stores set up all the way between Fairbanks and Nome.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But they weren't grocery stores. They were stores for storing your food for your dogs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So there -- there was -- there was -- warehouses, basically.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: For dog food.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Which was -- helped out the miners and anybody else in Alaska because your mode of transportation was dogsleds.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And you didn't have to carry the dog's food as well as all of your food and supplies because you could have it warehoused.

[00:54:50]KAREN BREWSTER: But it was your supply that then you paid him to store, or he provided it and you just bought it from him?

BROOKE CHILDREY: That I haven't figured out yet. So, but that was kind of cool.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That -- that, you know, you could go along this trail, and you didn't have to carry the dog's food with you.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[00:55:09]BROOKE CHILDREY: The other thing -- the thing I like about the Hielscher Collection, though, is he did a series of fifteen or eighteen books that he wrote on his experiences in the gold rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And he researched, he sent notes, letters, to other stampederers that he knew, prospectors, and he said, "Hey. Give me your stories."

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And so he gathered their stories, and he started writing these books. [00:55:45]I am hoping that -- I'm still curator of record. I still have a responsibility to Klondike, um, for -- I forget how many days it is, but it's a certain number of days every year, and so I'm hoping to be able to take those books and put 'em together. So it's not eighteen books, it's Book One is in this booklet. It's like a composition booklet. And then he sent it off to his wife and an editor. And so while that one was gone, he started Book Two. And he, you know, sent that one off and he started Book Three. And then Book One came back, and so he started Book Four in Book One.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You have to piece them all together to get the whole story.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right now, they're sitting in a box. They're not accessible. But those -- those stories, fifteen or eighteen of them, are extremely valuable to the history of the Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that sounds great.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So that's my goal, is to see if we can't get those typed up, transcribed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Put into order.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. [00:56:59]And that -- you have to have the whole collection because you know, Book One's in Book One, it might be in Book Six, it might be in Book, you know --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Book Twenty.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I mean it sounds confusing.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. But it's a whole series of stories. So that to me is my favorite part of the collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

[00:57:20]BROOKE CHILDREY: And then the other part of that is his wife apparently wrote and published a story, but I don't know if it's his story or her story, what it was like being the wife of a stamper. She was in, like, Illinois or Minnesota, and he's in Alaska, and then they moved to Seattle. So trying to find that story.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that would be really --

BROOKE CHILDREY: To make a complete picture.

[00:57:50]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I mean, so much has been done on the stampede and all that, but, yeah, to hear the side of the wife left behind.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep, with the kids and --

KAREN BREWSTER: That would be pretty amazing.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: So that -- her writing is in the collection, or you've just heard about it, and you have to --

BROOKE CHILDREY: We have to find it.

KAREN BREWSTER: If it exists.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We've got to try to track it down, yeah. So and hopefully it does. The Hielscher family still lives in the area, so somebody in the family might have it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow. So yeah, you're sort of a little bit like a private investigator. A curatorial investigator.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's always a game of Clue.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Putting it all together. So that's mine. [00:58:30]Obviously, the collections that came in during my tenure are pretty, you know, cool to me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we've had jewelry made out of gold nuggets that were mined in the Klondike Gold Rush that came in. Um, journals from prospectors who went up there. Those are all really cool --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- um, things that have come in.

[00:58:54]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, how are decisions made about whether it stays in Seattle or it should go up to the Skagway Unit?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, it depends. Everything that's come into Seattle, the donors have brought it in and specifically donated it to Seattle. We had one donor who came in who asked if we could send it up to Skagway, so that collection went up there. It was, um, a rifle and some letters that were written on wood.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To children.

(Dogs whining in the background)

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, we've got some dog noise, let's pause it for a second.

(Break)

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um --

[00:59:40]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, 'cause I was thinking, like that Hielscher Collection, that sounds like, you know, it's so very much focused on --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- the Alaska part of the story, versus the Seattle part.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Your, um, scope of collections tells you what you can and cannot collect, and Klondike Seattle's says they can collect about the Klondike Gold Rush as well as Seattle's role in the Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I'm guessing that Skagway's says they collect about Skagway's involvement and Dawson City, Chilkoot Trail.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Probably not Dawson, 'cause that's Canada now. Um, so --

[01:00:20]KAREN BREWSTER: But about the gold rush -- that the Skagway Unit probably doesn't say that they can collect about the role of Seattle, for instance.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right, and it won't say that they can collect about any of the -- the sites that are part of Canada.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we each have our specific sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so.

[01:00:42]KAREN BREWSTER: Have you ever felt like there's competition between Skagway and Seattle for collections that are specifically about the gold rush, since you kind of have that overlap?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, not really. It's, um -- we leave it up to the donor. We let them know, and if it's something that, like, um, when Samantha Richert was the curator at Skagway, she got a collection in, and she took out of that collection the things that she wanted at Skagway, and she specifically asked the donors, can I share the collection with Seattle? And we do the same thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Or we'll just make the call and say, it's more appropriate for it to be up in Skagway than it is in Seattle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But a certain amount of what we have to do is to tell the Klondike Gold Rush story, so we have to have some items.

[01:01:37]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right. And are most collections that Klondike Seattle has, are they from donors? Or how else are collections obtained?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, when the collection was first started, it was started by the Pacific - - uh, from the Pacific Northwest Regional Office. The interpreter and cultural resource specialist, along with the superintendent that was assigned to both parks went out and collected objects. And they physically went out into the field onto the Chilkoot Trail and around the area, um, that was federal land at the time and collected things. So we had, like, folding canvas boats and horseshoes and horseshoe teeth -- or, horse teeth, and, um, that sort of thing that were collected specifically for Seattle. And that stuff, for the most part, has been sent back to Skagway over the years. So the rest of the collections are coming in through purchases or through donations, but primarily donations.

[01:02:54]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And so purchases are those from individual people, or those are, somebody sees an item on eBay and then decide they should have it, or how does that work?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, most of the purchases have been not eBay, but places that have -- repositories that have collections, period pieces. So antique stores, that sort of thing. And they were purchased specifically for exhibits. So, um, like, crosscut saws, mining tools, that sort of thing. [01:03:28]We do have a large component of our collections that are on loan to us for -- there's a lot of assay companies around the area, because remember there were no assay offices up in Sea -- in Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: They had to come down here?

BROOKE CHILDREY: They had to come down here. So we have on loan to us the scales and the assay tools that were used in the Seattle Assay Office.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, which is pretty cool.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because they are huge --

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- scales that came in. And they've got, you know, little weights and -- of course, they're not little. These ones have big weights. But we also have the smaller ones.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Like the Carma -- George Carmack, it would be what you would call a pocket scale, but -- it couldn't fit in your pocket. It's about this big.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And the weights are all the way down to little tiny.

[01:04:26]KAREN BREWSTER: So is it like two feet tall or -- ?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, it's about like this by this.

KAREN BREWSTER: So four by two, something like that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Which --

BROOKE CHILDREY: And it comes apart, and -- you know, so they could put it in their bag or whatever.

[01:04:38]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Or that's like our old days of what a quote-unquote "laptop" or portable computer was.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right? A portable assay set was --

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we have that sort of thing. We have people who have loaned for the exhibits, journals and photographs and objects from their ancestors, and then turned around and donated them because they were on exhibit for so long.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That they, you know --

KAREN BREWSTER: That's what I was going to say, is if somebody loans it for an exhibit, do they eventually donate? Or why --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Sometimes.

[01:05:14]KAREN BREWSTER: Why loan versus donate?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, at the time, that's what they want to do. I mean, that's what's happening with the Seattle Assay Office. It's a private individual family that purchased it. When they closed the assay office, they recognized what it was and they purchased it. And so it's -- let me see if I remember this. Um, the husband owned it, and he passed away. So the wife, who's like in her 80's or 90's, um, loaned it, and with the intent that upon her death, it would be donated. And so the children have a trust.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We're talking children who are in their 40's, 50's, 60's, have a trust, and they all know that the collection will, upon her death, be donated to the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. But she's still alive?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

[01:06:21]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And that makes me think about, you know, curatorial work. You guys have to keep track of all those things.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that -- how does that knowledge get passed along? I mean, you're curator of record, but you're not up there anymore, and what if that situation comes up?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh. It's in the acquisition records.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That's -- that's all the stuff that we keep in the acquisition records, so you can go through and see. So, like, Terin knows the loan -- the loans renew.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So she knows when it renews, and every time that it renews, then we also send the paperwork that says, you know --

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you still want to renew?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Do you want to renew the loan, or at this point do you want to transfer it to a -- roll it over to a gift?

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:07:11]BROOKE CHILDREY: So, and we have some who took it back. They had a discussion with their family, and, you know, they discovered that, okay, nobody in the family really is going to take care of it, so then they send it back to us. And we have to then turn it into a gift at that point.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We have some where they loaned it, and then they -- the loan ended, and they've kept it. And we're hopeful that someday the collections will find its way back either to Seattle or to Skagway.

[01:07:45]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And do you make contact with those people every once in a while? To say, "Hey, are you interested in donating?"

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think some curators do. It's not my thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But I will follow up if they've called and said, I want to do this.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But I won't hound them. It's just not something I do.

[01:08:07]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, it does sound like curating is, as you say, a lot of organizing, a lot of details.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And keeping track and making sure you keep good records.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Of everything.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's a very, very important role. If you don't keep the records, then you end up doing what I'm doing at Mount Rainier, which is the reconciliation project. And Mount Rainier has 2.2 million items, and so I have to track down every item and all the paperwork that goes with every item.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To get it back -- cross-referenced back together. Because they didn't have a prog -- curatorial program until 2005, but they've been in existence since 1899. They've been collecting --

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- for like, thirty years before that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so somebody was collecting natural history specimens, so we have to make sure we get all the paperwork and all the objects tagged and cross-referenced.

[01:09:04]KAREN BREWSTER: We were talking about, you know, the sharing of collections from Seattle up to Skagway. During your time working with the Seattle Unit, how was that collaboration? Is there a lot of collaboration between the two units, or are they pretty independent?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Not as much as we'd like, but we -- there's a lot of collaboration with exhibits, particularly since we started the University of Washington Museology Graduate Program.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do those exhibits ever travel to Skagway?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. The students do not have the capacity to develop traveling exhibits. Um, we've only -- how long's it been going on now? Nine years. In that time, we've done one traveling exhibit, and it hasn't traveled yet. But that was -- we own the exhibit designs, so when the students -- we give them, like, three themes, so there's three teams of students, of four to six students each. So if we select Exhibit A to fabricate and install, Exhibits B and C designs are at the park, and we can fabricate them and install them on our own. So we chose one. We chose the fisher exhibit, and it was beautifully designed. But the students only had like sixteen hours to actually install the exhibit.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[01:10:41]BROOKE CHILDREY: So, because they only have two-hour class, eight weeks, that's it. So we didn't think they could actually get it done in that time because they were hand-painting the walls.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To make it look like a forest. And they were building this log that visitors could crawl through and see fishers and that sort of thing. [01:11:05]So when Tarin came on board, that was one of the exhibits that she was assigned to take and make it happen. And she worked with the students, who had since graduated, and they came back, volunteered their time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And they got a bunch of scientific illustrators involved. They -- I'm not kidding you, the community of Seattle was invited to come in and paint the walls.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

(Dogs barking in the background)

BROOKE CHILDREY: So the scientific illustrators drew it all out, and then the community came and painted it. And it was all overseen by Tarin and the students.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:11:51]BROOKE CHILDREY: And then they fabricated the logs, and at that time -- by that time, we actually had fishers. When the students designed it, there were no fishers in any museum collection in the Park Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, but because of the fisher reintroduction program, there's a certain amount of attrition, where the specimens are lost. So we were able to put in -- I think when the exhibit opened there was one, No-Name. That was his name, No-Name. So he went into the exhibit. And then before the exhibit ended, Karen also was added to it, and she had -- she has the capability of -- you could track -- see her tracking device that's still inside of her.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[01:12:41]BROOKE CHILDREY: The University of Washington not only has the Museology Graduate Program that helps with the exhibit designs, they also have taxidermy office. So because the specimens belonged to Mount Rainier, I was able to get the University of Washington to do the taxidermy on it. And they knew that it was going immediately on exhibit at Klondike.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they worked to get it so that visitors could come in and turn on the tracking buttons and, um, see all the -- what was going on.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

[01:13:09]BROOKE CHILDREY: So it made it really hands-on. But she was able to take that exhibit then, which would've been like three months, but a lot of work for three months, and it was up for, I think, nine months. And it's in pieces, so it can travel.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But we just haven't found any place in the state of Washington that it can travel to.

KAREN BREWSTER: I think Olympic Park.

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. The problem with the big parks is they don't have any exhibit space. They have a visitor center.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But they have permanent exhibits in their visitor centers, no --

KAREN BREWSTER: They don't --

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- temporary exhibit rooms.

KAREN BREWSTER: They don't have any space for traveling exhibits?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So we've thought about Northwest Trek, who actually collaborated on the whole exhibit.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which is a park just up the road here.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. It's a little wildlife park up the road.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They helped with collaboration. Trying to figure out, ok, where do you find fake log --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- debris and stuff? [01:14:10]So the students don't have the capacity to do the traveling exhibits, but what we do do is, um, they will do an exhibit -- what'd we just do an exhibit on, that they borrowed stuff? They did one on photography at the Klondike. Um --

KAREN BREWSTER: Which is -- there's a lot of. It's one of the --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Presidents -- of the proclamations and stuff. I can't remember what it was, but basically we -- the students have access to Seattle and Skagway's ICMS. We can show it to them. So they can come into -- into Seattle and look at the --

KAREN BREWSTER: And ICMS is the cataloging program?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Cataloging program, yeah. So they can go through and look at the catalog records. Skagway has a large portion of theirs photographed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:15:15]BROOKE CHILDREY: So you can see the data and the image of the item at the same time. And then they will, as part of their exhibit design, they come up with a list of what artifacts that they're interested in and what graphics they're interested in. And then it's been my role to then contact the museums and repositories that have the graphics and the artifacts. So with Skagway, I just call up Sam, or this last time it was Ann, and say, the students would like to borrow these artifacts for this exhibit, and it runs from this date to this date, type-thing. And they've always -- we have discovered that it is cheaper to borrow artifacts from Skagway than it is to borrow artifacts from, like, California. Um, not because they charge a fee, but just the shipping is cheaper.

KAREN BREWSTER: From Alaska, that's interesting.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I know. It's more complicated, but it's cheaper.

[01:16:16]KAREN BREWSTER: And now does -- does Skagway, have they borrowed items from Klondike Seattle?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. No, not that I'm aware of. They might've when Keith was there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But no, not since I've been there. And I don't know if they've got more permanent exhibits. We have -- because we have a rotating exhibits program, at one point, we were tasked with changing the exhibits four times a year.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That's a lot of work.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[01:16:46]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so with Charles now, he's just, whatever works for you guys is -- he's happy with. But it has to rotate. It can't be on exhibit for two years in a row, which is what I was finding, too, for years.

KAREN BREWSTER: And as you say, in many parks it's permanent.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: They put it in once, and maybe they dust it every once in a while.

[01:17:08]BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, that's -- we have -- when you go up to visit Seattle, you'll find the permanent exhibits. They're on the first and second floors. And then there's a 200-square-foot rotating exhibit area by the theater and gift shop. And that's our rotating exhibits. And those rotate every three to six months, about.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's a lot of work.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It is a lot of work. That's -- that's why the university program works very well because we're working with the students to develop exhibits. So we don't -- we do. We can come up with our own exhibits, but we don't have to because the students have already created designs.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we can just pull from that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That cache of designs.

[01:17:54]KAREN BREWSTER: And what year was that internship program started? Do you remember?

BROOKE CHILDREY: 2010. It's not really an internship. We had student interns. The University of Washington Museology Program requires all of their students to do internships, not just one, but like three at a time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they are interning at the Burke Museum. At the same, they were interning with me at Klondike, and maybe they were at Seattle Art Museum at the same time. So they do three interns.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They're very well trained.

[01:18:30]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And so the internship was different than -- this exhibit is part of their coursework?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's part of their coursework, their exhibit coursework, right.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that started around 2010?

BROOKE CHILDREY: That started in 2010, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. And the internship part was --

BROOKE CHILDREY: We'd been, um -- I think internships started in 2010, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So some of the students in the exhibits program also are interested in interning with me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But they also have, um, it's like a job fair, but it's called an internship fair, and all the museums in the Seattle area, greater Seattle area, are invited. And all of the students in the museology program come in, and you talk one on one with the curators of each of these institutions.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Find out what is going to be happening in the internship program that year, and you're making connections. And then some places will call the students, or some places will rely on the students to then get in contact with them when they're available. [01:19:41]So

that's been going on since about 2010. There's been a few years where, um, we haven't at Klondike had any interns because the priority was to train Tarin.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: She came from, um, a historical society into the Park Service, so I spent two or three years, might have been four years, sending her to Park Service sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So she's been to the Channel Islands. She's been to San Francisco Maritime to learn NPS exhibit design.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, she went to Yosemite to learn archives processing and care. She went up to North Cascades to learn natural history. She went to Ebey's Landing and San Juans to learn archeology.

[01:20:32]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, it sounds like you experienced this, and now she is, that the Park Service provides a really good training ground.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. Yes. We don't have museum methods anymore, so it's now all mentoring.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And so because I'm a generalist, so I have -- as a generalist, I have knowledge -- a little bit of knowledge about everything, but I'm not a specialist in anything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Except organizing. Um, so the best way for somebody who works for me to learn is for me to send them off to those specialists.

[01:21:08]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. But it's great that the Park Service has those opportunities and is willing to support somebody to move up in their position and their field and learn that stuff.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So Klondike Seattle now has a very well trained curator. She's not a full -- full-level curator.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But she has the ability to do full-level. She's got the skills.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And you learned it, you know, along the way as well.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

[01:21:37]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, so the other parts of Klondike Seattle and Klondike Skagway work together, cooperate?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Uh, you mean interpretation?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I mean you were --

BROOKE CHILDREY: I mean, that's all we have is interpretation and education. I want to say, keeping in mind here, I only work there every other week.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, for ten years. So, um, but in my dealings there and the time that I was in meetings and stuff, there was always, "How do we involve Skagway?" I don't know if the same thing was happening on Skagway's side, but I know interpretation and curation always, in Seattle, have been trying to somehow make that connection, make it stronger.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I know that the administrative history that they want to rewrite, they're trying to -- Skagway is the one that's initiating a stronger connection on that side.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so there is both within the individual divisions and from the superintendents' office, I think on both sides, trying to find a way to strengthen those connections.

[01:22:51]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Which implies that in the past, there have -- those connections have not been so strong.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think when there was a superintendent, one superintendent for both parks, there might've been a stronger connection, but, you know, it would be guesswork on my end.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think we realized that we're telling the same story, and we have sides of our story that -- that only we can tell, and sides of the story that both can tell.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: For Seattle, we're trying to also involve Parks Canada. Some of the collections that we have are on loan to us from Parks Canada, so we have a connection with -- with them. And just trying to tell the story of all the parks involved in Klondike.

[01:23:44]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. I know on the Skagway end, you know, they're connected with Parks Canada. I mean, the trail management and stuff like that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: But, and, you know, the story. They went from Skagway into Canada. But the Seattle part of the story, how does that connect with Canada?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, it's -- it's the same story, obviously, because they came from Seattle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then they went up to Skagway, and then they went up to --

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To Canada. And just working with them, you know, to borrow artifacts for exhibits and that sort of thing. Tell their story down here. Um, help get visitors up there to find out more. [01:24:23]So we're sort of the jumping-off part for the Park Service in this area. You want to know about the parks, go to downtown Seattle, and they'll tell you all about what's happening in the park in the area.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. So you like become a park information service?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right. So, and -- which is, you know, it's good. And we do the same for Klondike. You're going up to -- we have the ships are here.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we had it, um, for a long time, a ranger that went on the ships, gave a program, and introduced them to what they were going to see when they got up to Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And if they were going beyond that to Dawson, and that sort of thing. And that was the -- uh, as far as I know, a very popular program. I want to say, but you'll have to ask Sean (O'Meara) to confirm it, but I want to say at some point, our rangers actually went on the cruise.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But I could be wrong.

[01:25:27]KAREN BREWSTER: So you're -- is that when the cruise were docked in Seattle before they left, a ranger would go on and give them a lecture and things?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. A Klondike ranger went on and gave 'em a lecture and then they went off to Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they don't do that anymore?

BROOKE CHILDREY: I believe they do not do that anymore. I don't know when it ended. I want to say in the last year or two.

KAREN BREWSTER: Do you know why?

BROOKE CHILDREY: I do not. That would be the superintendent that you need to talk to.

KAREN BREWSTER: Sean might know.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Uh, no, it was still going on when Sean was there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it ended in Charles' time period. And it may just be it -- I think it's the cruise ships, that they've just changed directions.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: As to how they want their passengers --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, with security and everything. It's like that, they might not have time anymore.

[01:26:14]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Did you ever get the opportunity to go to Skagway and work with the staff up there?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. And we're trying to get Tarin up there. So Tarin is, um, been requested to help out with the collection up there, but the project hasn't been funded yet or something like that, so. But, yeah, Tarin's very big on, we want to get that connection --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- across.

[01:26:44]KAREN BREWSTER: Do you wish you'd had the chance to go up?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: I mean, I guess if you're still officially curator on record, you still could?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, yeah. If there's something really going on, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: You don't get to just go up to, just to see it? There has to be a specific project?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, the government has -- it has to be beneficial to both parks for the government to pay for it, so.

[01:27:10]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. I guess if you're an interp ranger, there's an easier justification so you could see what you're explaining down here, maybe?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No.

KAREN BREWSTER: No?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It'd be the same thing. There really has to be funding for it, and, um, some sort of benefit. So the benefit is the same, whether it's interpretation or it's curation, and that is to benefit your home park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And knowing about what's being interpreted there, what the collections are up there. So, um, for Tarin, when we were sending her to the other parks to learn about curation, she was also benefiting that park by having to do a project for them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, after they trained her.

KAREN BREWSTER: Like, oh, we need this collection processed. That's what you get to do.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Or she had to create a wayside for San Francisco Maritime.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it would be the same thing. She still does that. That's part of her funding is, different parks are hiring Klondike -- her, through Klondike, to come help them with their collections.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And so Skagway has requested it, and it's been approved, but it's just, there's no funding. The funding hasn't come through yet.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so when that does come through, I think that would be good because Tarin has worked -- when her position was first established, she did 60 percent curation and 40 percent interpretation. So when she goes up there, she's now 100 percent curation. She

will have the background of both divisions going up with her. So she will not just go up and look at artifacts. She will be looking at their interpretive program and everything else and bringing back that information to benefit the whole park.

[01:29:03]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, it sounds like, you know, your experience doing curation, you learned so much about the history and the stories. I mean, you're almost like the park historian that you -- you know, you do exhibits. You're an interpretive person. You're not just sitting there looking at bags of nails.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Oh, yeah. Debitage. Yeah, in order to curate or to interpret at any park site, to do any job, whether -- it could be law enforcement or maintenance, you need to do the research and learn the history of the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: In order to do a good job. Um, so, it's kinda -- it's just part of the job description. You learn about your park. We move around primarily on our own, but particularly as a seasonal, you have to move to get a job.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So you're learning -- it's the first thing. Like the first two weeks, you're just inundated with history. And then you're developing programs or doing whatever else that you were tasked to deal with. And then you move on to another park and you gotta learn it all over again.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:30:22]BROOKE CHILDREY: So parks hire -- um, we're given a cert. And for example, the cert I just hired, the museum tech at Rainier, I had people from Arizona, um, people from Massachusetts, Florida. I want to say there was somebody from Alaska. They're -- they're not from the Pacific Northwest. They're not from Mount Rainier. So I can't expect them to know the history of Mount Rainier. But I can expect them to learn the history of Mount Rainier. And you'll find that park people do that very well.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We -- we -- it's just the way we are. We know that when we go in, the first thing we have to do is learn the history.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then you learn the history of the site, and then you learn the history of the program within that site, and then you start your job. So.

[01:31:25]KAREN BREWSTER: So for Klondike-Skagway, did you do a lot of reading of various books, or how do you learn that?

BROOKE CHILDREY: For Klondike Seattle?

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that's what I meant.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because I've never been in Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, I meant Klondike Seattle.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, there's -- there's a library here in the Pacific Northwest.

[01:31:44]The curator's also the librarian, so it's -- it's a tough --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's two different responsibilities, and you can do things with the library that you cannot do with curation, so it's -- it's kind of a tightrope. [01:32:00]But in the curator's office is the park library, and there are, like, a whole wall of library books. And then so when you come on, you get a list of the recommended library books to read. And then when you start doing your programs, if you're an interpreter, you just -- everybody else in that park is an interpreter, so um, they're developing programs and that sort of thing, so they've got their core that they have to read. And then when they figure out what they want to do programs on, then they start reading all these other books. You spend a lot of time reading and researching. We have microfiche, and old newspapers and that sort of things that are microfiche that they use. Um, so.

[01:32:47]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I would think the Seattle collection would be a lot of old newspaper stories for people going up to the Klondike or --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. Yes. There's -- there's -- we have The Seattle Times, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer -- Intelligencer, or something like that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Intelligencer.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I can never say that word. Um, but we have a lot of newspapers that are microfilmed. [01:33:13]We have reference collections from people -- from places we were able to gather Klondike information from, but it's copies. It's not the originals.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So there's the whole reference collection, um, that staff can go to and do research there. [01:33:31]We also have the University of Washington Library Special Collections. They're right down the road, and they have a large Klondike collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Or, and a large Historic Seattle collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That we can pull from. Uh, so they've never -- they've never denied us loan rights.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We just develop an exhibit, send them a list of what artifacts or graphics that we're interested in, and they walk them right over.

[01:34:04]KAREN BREWSTER: And did they -- did the ships that people took up to Skagway and Dyea, are there manifests of passengers?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Some of 'em, yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that's in the Seattle collection?

BROOKE CHILDREY: We have, I know of at least one. We have the logbook for. And I think we have a manifest for at least one of the ships, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: So those sorts of things have survived.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. And I'm not sure if UW has more of them.

KAREN BREWSTER: And, of course, some of the ships didn't make it.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right.

[01:34:42]KAREN BREWSTER: Which is, I guess, part of the story that is told at the Seattle Unit is the ships and --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, yeah, we'll tell anything that has to do with like, building the ships, um, because it was huge. The money coming back, what the money was used for, how Seattle was built using that money. So Seattle is a lot higher in elevation than it was before the gold rush. Um, and has a lot more buildings. Yeah, they raised the --

KAREN BREWSTER: They --

BROOKE CHILDREY: They raised the streets.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I know there's that old -- you can take that underground tour.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And I've never understood how that happened that there was a whole sort of city underneath the city.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They raised it. It's the same with the -- where the Cadillac Hotel, where Klondike Seattle is.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: The basement was -- the basement was really the first floor, but it's underground.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that just doesn't make sense.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So, I want -- it has -- I don't know. You have to ask somebody. I've never been on the underground tour, so I don't know.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I was on it when I was, like, twelve, so I don't quite remember the details.

[01:35:55]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So I don't remember why, but somebody decided we needed to raise the -- the streets. But see, the gold came back to Seattle, and hotels were built to - - quickly, to house stampedeers and get them on their way.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, there were -- there was competition between Seattle and um, several other coastal towns to outfit the stampedeers, and so Seattle was successful in drawing stampedeers, prospector.

KAREN BREWSTER: Versus coming from San Francisco, for instance?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Don't get your stuff in San Francisco. Wait 'til you get to Seattle, then you know, instead of having to carry it all up to Seattle, which is the jumping-off point.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, that's where you had to come to -- to go.

[01:36:48]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, the ships from San Francisco stopped in Seattle anyway, or did they just go straight?

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't know.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't know.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't know. I just know that the -- a lot of them were built here and left from here.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

[01:37:04]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and it adds to sort of the side story of the gold rush. There were the stampeders, who staked claims and may or may not have found gold, and then there's all those people who made money off of that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: With hotels and --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Most of the gold was made before news of the gold rush even made its way down to the Lower 48. [01:37:27]But Hielscher is a good example of somebody who made his fortune off of the gold rush, off the prospectors.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Soapy Smith was another --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- good one.

[01:37:38]KAREN BREWSTER: But as you say, building a hotel down here --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep.

KAREN BREWSTER: You made money off of 'em down here.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: You didn't have to go to the Chilkoot Trail to make your money.

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. We have pictures of like, Cooper and Levy. They were suppliers, outfitters, and they've -- there's just supplies out into the street. They were stocked full, you know. Floor to ceiling.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And they had to go outside, um, to keep their supplies, you know, enough supplies in stock.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

[01:38:13]BROOKE CHILDREY: And part of that was because they were required to carry a ton of --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We've wrestled with that. Were they really required to take a ton of goods up? And I think it came down to that, yeah, they were. Something -- somebody came across something that said that they were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: By the Royal Mounted Police.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so you couldn't get a ton of goods in Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: No.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So you had to take it with you, and Seattle capitalized on that.

[01:38:46]KAREN BREWSTER: And that must've cost a fortune for -- I mean, the reason you were going to the Klondike was to get rich, supposedly.

(Dogs are yelping in the background.)

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: But to get there, you had to have money to outfit yourself.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Exactly.

KAREN BREWSTER: And I don't know how those guys did it. Your dogs are getting impatient.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, it's just her. Yeah. [01:39:08]And what I find interesting is some of the stuff that was taken. I mean, we have pictures of them hauling a piano. It's like, you got people dying on that trail, horses dying on that trail, and you're hauling a piano up it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Unless you think you're going to open a saloon somewhere along the way.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then you need a piano.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Maybe that was it, but --

BROOKE CHILDREY: And I think in that particular picture, it was. That it was --

KAREN BREWSTER: But it does look pretty ridiculous when you see them carrying all that stuff.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um-hm. Yeah. But, you know, there were -- there were towns that were popping up.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:39:51]BROOKE CHILDREY: So, and before the Klondike Gold Rush, at least Seattle, I don't know if the rest of the country was, but Seattle was in a depression. Um, they'd had the Great Fire, and then the depression hit. So the Klondike Gold Rush was an infusion of money, a lot of money all at once. And they did well with it. I mean, that's where we got all our buildings.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That's why we're in the Cadillac Hotel. It was built with Klondike Gold Rush money.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And how, you know --

KAREN BREWSTER: And that Pioneer Square part of town was sort of the jumping-off point?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. It's where the boat-building is. It's where all of your, um, suppliers, where your outfitters, um --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[01:40:45]BROOKE CHILDREY: So it's now -- it's historic part of Seattle, it's not as built up, but you can walk around Pioneer Square, and you can see, um, the names of the old buildings.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Still on the bricks that are still there. They're brick buildings, so they're still standing. They had an earthquake in -- Nisqually earthquake of 2001 or '03. I think it was 2003, that collapsed a lot of the buildings in Pioneer Square.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But they've all been, um, for the most part, rebuilt. So all the bricks that came down, they put 'em right back up.

[01:41:35]KAREN BREWSTER: So did the Cadillac Hotel suffer --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- during the earthquake?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. Cadillac Hotel had to be completely rebuilt, except for the bottom floor. And all the buildings that were rebuilt were rebuilt to be earthquake-proof. And they kept it to -- the exterior is historic, so the way it looked historically. The interior, there are historic features in there, so like where our offices are on the third floor, you can tell it was a hotel, but

the first and second floor are exhibits. The third floor are offices. So the third and fourth floor actually you can kinda tell that it was a hotel, and they have like the hotel numbers, room numbers, that sort of thing. But they're all offices. And then the first -- first and second floor, which is really the basement and the first floor, those, like the basement was a speakeasy. It's now collection storage and exhibits, um, and classrooms. And then the main floor, which is now the second floor, is exhibits and theater and gift shop. But they've tried to keep historic pieces --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- components, there. But while adapting the building.

[01:43:07]KAREN BREWSTER: So that earthquake, did that affect the collections? Were things damaged?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, the collections were not in the Cadillac Hotel. We did not have the Cadillac Hotel at the time. It's on lease to us. So um, when the um, Nisqually earthquake hit, the building was owned privately, and they didn't have the funds to rebuild it. So Historic Seattle stepped in, and they purchased it. And they purchased it, knowing that they wanted to lease it to the National Park Service as a permanent home for the Klondike Seattle Unit. We were in the Union Trust Building prior to that, and -- which was jigsaw down about a block and a half. But that was a lease with no, um, real -- there was no Klondike connection. [01:44:09]So the Cadillac Hotel has a Klondike connection. It's built with Klondike money. It has housed prospectors going to the Klondike. So the Park Service, through the Government Services Administration, leased the building with rights to purchase it. I think it's like forty years, within forty years. So -- Charles will know the exact date.

[01:44:35]KAREN BREWSTER: But so that earthquake didn't cause any damage to park collections or exhibits or anything?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Not at the Union Trust Building, no.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't think the Union Trust Building was damaged at all.

KAREN BREWSTER: No valuable artifact fell off a shelf in the earthquake?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Hm-um. No.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's good.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It was more of not-modern buildings, so, um. Not as modern as current buildings, but, yeah, as far as I know, nothing.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's good.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So. That would be a question for Keith, but I haven't seen any records in the acquisition files that it was lost due to damage from the earthquake. So.

[01:45:21]KAREN BREWSTER: And so the two units, Skagway and Seattle, being under one superintendent and one administration, that was before you were involved?

BROOKE CHILDREY: That was when it was first started.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then after that superintendent, I believe all the following superintendents were individual parks. So I think it was difficult across regions because even though we all report to Washington, we also have to report to our region, and so if you're working two regions, you've got two different bosses telling you what to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: As a superintendent, yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So. So for management, it's easier to have them separate.

[01:46:02]KAREN BREWSTER: And in terms of at the staff level, do you think it would matter whether you reported to a superintendent in Seattle versus one in Skagway?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, if you're at Skagway, you'd want to report to the one in Skagway. Because it'd be really hard to be working in Skagway but have your boss in Seattle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was thinking if you were in Seattle, the other way around, too.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. So even from a staff side, it makes more sense.

[01:46:26]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Because we have -- well, you have the park's work plan. You have the region's work plan. You have the network's work plan. You have the Washington work plan. So then if you -- you're working here, but your boss is over in this group, they have a whole different --

KAREN BREWSTER: Agenda for you.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They have their own, what we need to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so. But it's good to collaborate, and that's what we're trying to do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Is set up that collaboration and make it stronger. It's -- reality is funding.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we do what we can.

[01:47:11]KAREN BREWSTER: And so, when you came on as curator of record, what was, sort of, the condition of the collections at Klondike? Because it sort of had been collateral work by interp staff and rangers.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So the ranger, Keith, was a ranger, but he had museology background, and so it was actually -- it mostly just catching up on accessioning and cataloging, and which is why I was able -- had free time to start developing exhibits and that sort of thing. So they're -- they were pretty well cataloged. There's a small backlog. [01:47:58]Klondike Seattle has um, one of the most cataloged collections, percentage-wise. Their collection is more cataloged than most of the parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so, and that's --

KAREN BREWSTER: And why do you think that is?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, partially because of Keith.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then he paved the way so it was easy to just keep up on stuff that was coming in, and then the regional curators at the time were funding backlogged cataloging projects, so um, we were able to hire people to come in and get those cataloged.

KAREN BREWSTER: That does seem unusual.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. Yeah. So, I can't say that at Rainier. I can say that the insects are cataloged.

[01:48:42]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and it may be, as you -- that Klondike -Seattle, being a smaller park and a smaller collections, maybe it's easier to catch up on the backlog, I don't know.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Mm, yes and no. Um, I think the concern now is, we've caught up on the backlog. We don't have a real backlog. I mean, it might be from year to year, and that's it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, but we have a huge partnership program and exhibits program now, that we could create a backlog by dealing with these areas and forgetting about this area. So

that's the concern now. [01:49:27]And that's part of -- as curator of record, that's part of what I will be driving is, "Hey, have you done your cataloging this year?"

KAREN BREWSTER: Don't forget that part.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Registration is the key. If you don't do registration, then um, your collection's history is lost.

KAREN BREWSTER: You don't know what you have.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So um.

[01:49:52]KAREN BREWSTER: So while you were doing work in Seattle, it was Karen and Jacqueline were the superintendents?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Karen, then Jacqueline, and then -- now Charles. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. So you talk about them, I mean, in terms of as superintendents and working with them and --

BROOKE CHILDREY: They were -- all three of them were really good. Um, the superintendents that I worked under before have had limited curation experience, limited cultural resource experience, so working with Karen and Jacqueline and Charles has been fantastic because they have some cultural experience, and they're very interested in the collections and recognize the fact that without the collections, they don't really have anything to interpret.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They can interpret the story, but um, they don't have anything to support that story if they're not taking care of the collections. So um, actually it was really nice working with them 'cause they understood, and they wanted to learn what it is that the curator does, what the collections contain, what their responsibilities are.

(Dogs yipping in the background, sound grows louder.)

[01:51:22]KAREN BREWSTER: We may have maxed out the dog patience.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Do you want to --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I'll pause for a second.

(Break)

BROOKE CHILDREY: Jacqueline.

[01:51:33]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was also thinking about, sort of, their management styles.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Sort of, they're not -- none of them are micromanagers. They're not, you know, breathing down your neck. They allow -- they recognize that they've hired professionals, and the professional -- let the professionals do the jobs. But they want to know what it is that you're doing, which is refreshing because most of the superintendents I worked under don't have a clue what I do.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Not even my supervisor has a clue what I do. Um, so it was refreshing to have them say, "Hey, what do you do? How do we help? What's our responsibility to this?" [01:52:26]I think the biggest thing was -- was they didn't want to make mistakes. And there'll always be mistakes, but they didn't want to make a mistake. So they would -- they would call and ask the questions. So even though I'm down here at Rainier, I would get phone calls and emails.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: "This person wants to do this. Can I let him in the collections?" And so they recognized that you can't just open the collections door and let people in.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, somebody's gotta be responsible for that, and they realize ultimately, they're the responsible one. If something walks out, they're responsible for it. So they always will call or email. They still do it, um, you know.

[01:53:13]KAREN BREWSTER: And from your experience at other parks with superintendents, that's unusual?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Yeah. They don't get the connection there. Some of 'em do.

KAREN BREWSTER: And again, I wonder if that's just because Klondike Seattle is small, and its focus is so specific, telling a story? It's not like, oh, we have this big mountain to look at or --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, it's -- it's -- Klondike has one resource.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And that's the collections.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Whereas Rainier has the plants, the animals, um, the history of the park, the glaciers, geology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We've got lots of resources, and those are resources that visitors see, that interact. I mean, when the mountain floods as a lahar (violent mud and debris flow that flows off a volcano), that's a big resource that you have to deal with.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, collections don't say anything.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They just sort of sit there and slowly deteriorate. They don't scream as loudly.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:54:14]BROOKE CHILDREY: So the superintendents of big parks don't have to -- you know, they can go their entire career without interacting with the collections at all. But Klondike is established specifically because of those artifacts. And that's different than other parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[01:54:36]BROOKE CHILDREY: So it -- it -- the superintendents from my tenure at Klondike have recognized that -- that fact, that their resource is the collections, and they've also realized that now that they're in the Cadillac Hotel, that that's also a resource. We don't own that resource, but we plan on owning that resource, so they're now connecting those two.

[01:55:08]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And that's like what they've done in Skagway with the historic building restoration and leaseback program.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: That those buildings are a resource.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Exactly.

KAREN BREWSTER: As are -- they are -- they are part of the collection.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. [01:55:22]So and then, starting with Karen and then working through Jacqueline and Charles, they started to see, "Ok, well, what else is there? What other resources are out there?" Which is why we now do Historic Seattle.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then the Wing Luke and Bainbridge are partnerships, basically, um, where they have a story to tell. It isn't Klondike. It isn't, -- it isn't, um, Historic Seattle, but it is a story that nobody else is telling that needs to be preserved.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we've expanded what it is we do.

[01:56:08]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and that sounds like they understand that those are important stories, and being in downtown Seattle is a venue for maybe a larger visitorship than out on Bainbridge or in Idaho.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Exactly. And -- and that's why we now too, um -- we have two programs. We've got the outreach program for letting visitors know about what's happening in the Washington parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So your big parks -- actually all the parks in Washington, so you've got that. We do that through exhibits, we do it through our websites, that sort of thing, social media. [01:56:55]But we also have ORIC, which is the Outdoor Recreation Information Center.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Which is a collaboration with the Forest Service, the state parks, the Park Service, and it's housed in REI.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right smack in the middle of REI, where people who are interested in going to visit recreational facilities, sites and stuff, they go there to get their camping gear and everything, and here's this visitor information center right in the middle of it that will give you information about North Cascades. It'll give you information about one of the state parks, the Forest Service sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's great.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So you're getting the information about them, what's happening in those parks, and then they're also being directed for history information to go down to Klondike Seattle --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- and -- and see the exhibits and learn about what's going on in those parks.

[01:58:00]KAREN BREWSTER: Sort of like in -- in Anchorage and Fairbanks, we have Alaska Public Land Information Centers.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um-hm.

KAREN BREWSTER: Which are a similar concept, that it's a one-stop shopping to find out about everything --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- federal lands-related. And they may provide state park information, too, I don't know. But it's not in REI, but it's the same concept. It's a place people can come to and get what they need in one place.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So all that's coming out of Klondike Seattle.

[01:58:30]KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm. And didn't you have, like a history website or something? What is that called? Um, I can't remember.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I have no idea.

KAREN BREWSTER: HistoryLink.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, that's Park Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Is that a -- it's a Park Service-wide thing?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And is Klondike Seattle somehow connected into that? Do you know?

BROOKE CHILDREY: I'm going to say yes, 'cause it --

KAREN BREWSTER: But you don't know about it? Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't know. I mean, I know that Rainier is, but I have nothing to do with it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. I thought as curator, you maybe knew something by giving materials to it or something.

[01:59:02]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, HistoryLink at some point, I'm gonna say, in the late 1990's, early 2000's, were um, scanning a lot of historical documents and things.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So for example, there's a series of documents called Nature Notes, which were written by park naturalists from about 1922 to the 1980's, and they scanned -- digitized a lot of those for the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So like, all of Rainier's have been digitized. Yosemite, Yellowstone's. So that's what HistoryLink is. You can go to HistoryLink, and it has these digitized Nature Notes. I know, like, Yellowstone has a bunch of things that were digitized, so we know, um, you can just go there and learn the history of the park through there. But that was a historian program, park historian program, not a park curator program.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So from the park curator point of view, we would've provided them with access to photographs and to the documents. But it's not our program.

[02:00:18]KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Now, we were talking before about how curators, you know, and interp staff working together to do exhibits. If you were in a park where there was a historian, what would that collaboration be like with a curator? Is there one?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, it depends on what the historian is doing. When I worked at Boston, the regional office cultural -- the regional office's museum program was in Boston National Historical Park. They were in one of our buildings. And the regional historian was in that building as well. So his role was to help the parks with their history. So there's a regional historian who then does all this research on the history of the parks, and he hires people and that sort of thing. So for Boston -- was it Boston? No, it was when I -- they were at Boston, but I was at Acadia. So we hired the regional historian, the regional archivist, um, and object specialist, and then they hired specific people to come in and help. But we had a military base that was decommissioned while I was at Acadia, and it was literally -- well, Acadia's like this and there's a donut hole in the middle of it that was owned by the Navy.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And that was decommissioned. It was a base, secret base within the national park. When it was decommissioned, it was, well, you'll have to tell the story because it was part of the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:02:07]BROOKE CHILDREY: And so the historian, regional historian, is the one that coordinated who got hired. And we were hiring object specialists, military object specialists who understood what these objects were and what, um, was important about them to preserve them. So I know nothing about military history, so that's what we did. We hired somebody who did, who could come in and say, well, that object does this, and it connects to this specific story that's unique to this base. Or no, you know, all military bases have this, so it's not unique to the story.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they were able to tell us what should be preserved and what shouldn't. And then at that point, then we take it and we either bring in conservators, or if you already know how to preserve it 'cause it's like all the other objects.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Then you go on. But yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's -- that's --

[02:03:12]BROOKE CHILDREY: So we will collaborate. I mean, I collaborate with Harpers Ferry Center conservators, with conservators at Lowell, Massachusetts. Collaborate with the what's called e-TIC, which is the electronic Technical Information Center to get maps and drawings and documents digitized, um, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: I guess that's the benefit of being in the Park Service. You have this whole network of expertise that you can plug into.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right. So you don't -- not everybody has to be a specialist, but we have -- 'cause we have access to specialists.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And that's helpful, very helpful. It allows us to do that, so, you know, even though the curator at Klondike isn't a full-fledged curator -- a GS-11 is a full-fledged --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: She has access to a regional curator in Seattle. She has access to myself at Mount Rainier. She can call Olympic. She can call North Cascades. She can call Fort Vancouver.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: She can call anybody for assistance. She needs conservation, she calls Harpers Ferry. They tell her who out here can do the work, or they'll do it for us. So.

[02:04:36]KAREN BREWSTER: Is there a time lag in that stuff? I mean, it sounds all nice and --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, absolutely.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah, yeah. We just call somebody in, but are there funding issues involved?

BROOKE CHILDREY: There can be. I mean, right now I'm working on one involving fireplace screens. Um, and for us, the time lag is the conditions of the mountain because you couldn't get to the items to photograph them to send them off. But then it's also finding the funding to do the conservation work.

[02:05:05]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. So even if you call Harpers Ferry and ask for somebody to help you, you have to have the money at your park to pay for it?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes, 'cause they're all project-funded. Um, so they're not base-funded.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Parks are base-funded, and um, service centers are project-funded.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So um, so yeah, if it's an emergency, you know, it's -- they'll step in.

[02:05:30]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I was thinking, it's funding and/or they are already working on other things, and you have to get in line.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Yep. There's that. There's that. So, but that's ok. I mean, it -- It's -- I can -- out there, it was really easy because the conservators were in Boston.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And they moved to Lowell. So when I was in Boston, I'd just walk into the office and say, "Hey guys, I've got this. What do I do with it?" And they could tell me or they would teach me to do it. While they were working on something else, I'd learn how to do it, and I could go back and do it. But that's a rarity. They can do that in Lowell. They can do that at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, any of the parks there. [02:06:15]But what they will do is -- we had a painting that was donated to us. It was a series of paintings. There's like twenty-seven of them. But the first one the guy ever painted had a hole in it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Uh-oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then some sort of, like something had been laid against it, so there was a streak. So instead of it being sent back to Harpers Ferry or to Lowell, they said, "You know, such-and-such is a paintings conservator, deals specifically with oil paintings. Located in Bellevue."

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, and so, they have the res -- they can do it themselves, or they know the resources. It's the same thing with -- I'm doing nitrate motion-picture film.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, that's bad news.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So I called Harpers Ferry, and they said, "Well, you need to call Monique at Northeast Document Conservation Center in Lowell." Talk to Monique. And Monique is saying, "Ok. Well, these are the contacts I have that I know of in your area that can deal with that."

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. 'Cause it's highly flammable is my recollection of nitrate film, right?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Spontaneously combusts.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yes.

[02:07:31]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So having those resources to be able to talk to the people and figure out what to do is -- you're not a museum isolated by yourself. You know, when I was at Acadia, we have twenty museums on Mount Desert Island.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So we formed a group, um, IMHS. I can't remember what it -- Island Museum Association -- something like that. Island Museum Association. No, Island Museums and Historical Societies. But of those, there were, I think, three or four that were -- had museum staff that were professional museum staff on them. So we formed this organization where the historical societies and the smaller museums could contact us.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And we would hold training workshops, or we'd help them out with a collection they'd just gotten and how to take care of it. And that resource is still going on. They still do that. And it's taken collections from being like, photographs pushpinned onto the wall to actually being framed and hung on the wall, and out of direct sunlight. That sort of thing. And that's what the Park Service, with its service centers --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Do for all of us.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Sort of technical assistance programs.

KAREN BREWSTER: I know they do that with historical architecture stuff.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep.

KAREN BREWSTER: They'll do that for private owners in a region. [02:09:17]Um, with the Klondike -- work you did in Klondike Seattle, is there anything that you can look back on as was a particular success that you dealt with?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or something you're most proud of that you contributed?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Talking about, well, I would say the University of Washington -- collaboration with the University of Washington Museology Graduate Program is the success.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's one that other parks are looking at and have called us on. Like, how did you get this going, and what are the rules?

[02:09:53]KAREN BREWSTER: And you were a key part of that development?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. I was the liaison for the whole thing.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so what we've done is, they -- I have wrote an MOU, a Memorandum of Agreement (Understanding) between the university and the park, um -- It establishes that the university provides the students and the expertise to teach the students. The park provides the funding and the themes and the venue for the exhibits. Um, it's been -- it's been a great working relationship. The students that have come out of that program, I can honestly say, they've come out of the program -- they come out of there, they've interned with me, they're working at places like the Air and Space Museum in the Smithsonian. They're professors of museology.

KAREN BREWSTER: Great.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So, yeah. Department of Defense. They're -- they're coming out, and they're getting jobs, high-level jobs from the beginning, from the get-go, and not having to do the slep-work.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so that, I think, is a good outcome of the relationship there. [02:11:04]Um, the other one is obviously taking the program, the curatorial program, from being an "other duty as assigned" to being the primary resource of the park, and it's acknowledged by everybody that it's the primary resource of the park. And they've acknowledged it by finding the funds to hire a museum curator. [02:11:27]So the only reason I'm still connected, it was supposed to be a clean break, is because they didn't have the funds to hire as a GS-11.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. So you're sort of there as a mentor still?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right. Tech --

KAREN BREWSTER: Help Tarin along.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Technical supervisor. I don't supervise her, I just provide technical information. And that's because HR required it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So. Which is not to say that I want to be separated from them. I absolutely loved working there. It's -- for ten years, every other week. Hopped on a train, went to Seattle. It was a great -- it was -- it's a stress reliever, basically. It's totally different than Mount Rainier. Totally different program, totally different staff, policies, directions, how it's managed. [02:12:15]Um, there it was teamwork. Because it's so small, you had to interact with everybody, so you learned not only your job, but everybody else's job and how it all played together. So uh,

loved working there. Sad that I'm not there anymore, but, you know, I am there. I get calls and emails everyday.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, you're still connected.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes.

[02:12:40]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, it's funny that -- it's nice that it turned out for the best for you, considering you didn't have a say in it at the beginning.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. I mean, I actually, when I saw that list, it was like, can't really -- you couldn't have given me Hawaii? Why are you sending Gaye?

KAREN BREWSTER: But as you say, it sounds like you've enjoyed having that connection to the Seattle Unit.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes, I do. A lot.

[02:13:07]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and it sounds like you're enthusiastic about the stories that are being told there, and you've kind of gotten into the Klondike history part.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um-hm. Yeah. History -- like I say, I have a degree in resource management through forestry and zoology, so history was not where I was going.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But, you know, you -- you get tasked with packing up Abraham Lincoln's things, and history suddenly becomes important, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And, you know, I went from Abraham Lincoln's stuff to Revolutionary War, you know, and World War II was mostly what Boston's about. And then up to Acadia, and suddenly I'm back in 1596 with King Henry IV, so um, yeah. History's played a huge role in my career.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

[02:14:10]KAREN BREWSTER: And with the Klondike Seattle -- you just -- you just talked about some of the successes that you're proud of, what about particular challenges or obstacles you've faced?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, challenges. Challenges. I think, well, we're working on a reconciliation project right now. There -- um, the collections that were collected in the beginning of the park's history --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, were returned to Skagway because somebody who had collateral duty thought that the new law that went into place meant that we couldn't have them legally, so they had to be returned to the State of Alaska 'cause the State of Alaska, at some point in time, in the '90's, I think, declared that they owned everything, um --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That was laying around Alaska. [02:15:12]So somebody interpreted that as, well, it can't be here in Seattle. It has to go back to Alaska. And Alaska said, well, give it back to Skagway. And it's like they didn't go through or didn't understand that they had to go through the paperwork to see that there was a legal document in there that said that we had the legal right to have it in Seattle, um, that it was specifically collected for Seattle. So that's frustrating, having to go through and -- go through that paperwork, and close those out.

KAREN BREWSTER: So are those collections coming back here?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. They're up --

KAREN BREWSTER: Or they're just staying up there?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, they're on exhibit at Skagway right now. So they will stay there. The decision on our end -- without talking with Skagway, the decision on our end is, they're at Skagway, they're being taken care of. If we need them for an exhibit, we can call them and borrow them.

[02:16:06]KAREN BREWSTER: But so you reconcile the paperwork so they become officially part of the Skagway collection? Is that --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um-hm. Yeah. Yeah. So we have to do a de-accession on our end.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Officially de-accession on our end. They've officially accessioned them on their end, but we'll de-accession them on our end, and they'll get copies of all that paperwork.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Saying that we no longer legally claiming those -- these objects.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, that sounds like a big project.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It is a big project. [02:16:34]Um, but something that needs to be done, and when you changed hands, curators, the outgoing curator should leave the collections in better condition than they received it in, and the new curator should immediately do 100% inventory. So with the transition from myself to Tarin being officially the hands-on person, we're doing a

reconciliation to close out all of the other previous people who were taking care of it who were not curators, close out all of the issues with those collections and do 100% inventory, so that Tarin has, by the end of her first year as curator, has a complete understanding of what is in the collection and where the legal paperwork stands on all of it. So she'll be able to then know -- what it'll do is it'll help her to know where the gaps are in the collection, and what she needs to seek out.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: She's -- somebody walks through the door with something, she can say, "No, I have twenty of those. Maybe it should go to Skagway or Dawson or -- "

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, one of the other sites.

[02:17:59]KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And now, when you were doing the work in Seattle on a more regular basis, is there something that you wished you could have done, that you didn't get the opportunity to do with the collections?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes. I spent a lot of time in meetings, and so even though the superintendents all were interested in what I was doing and understood that I needed to do this, I kept getting called into meetings. So Charles has made it his policy that I don't come up there and attend meetings. I come up there to do work.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't consider meetings work. They're important, but it's not what I was hired to do for them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So -- at least at that time period. So he always made it a point that if he had a meet -- needed me for a meeting, he either did a conference call, or he made a specific date for me to come up to do meetings. [02:18:56]When I was there on my Klondike days, I did the registration work that needed to be done. Or the exhibit work that needed to be done. So that was good. But to answer your question, the thing that I would've liked to have been able to do is get those Hielscher books transcribed.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, and I'm still going to -- I've talked to Charles about it, and we're going to see if we can't move forward on that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. It sounds like a great project.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think it would be beneficial to all of Skagway. Or not Skagway. Klondike. So all the Klondike sites. [02:19:33]Um, I do not understand why we are not calling ourselves Klondike Gold Rush National -- International Historical Park. That's what we are.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, because they -- they -- I don't remember what year it was they made it --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Clinton administration.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Declared it an international park.

KAREN BREWSTER: In the '90's, I think. Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So the name should've changed. And maybe it's because I worked at St. Croix Island International Historic Site, I understand the importance of the name.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I don't know --

BROOKE CHILDREY: It makes it bigger than it is.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. What does it encompass on the Canadian side? Is there a Canadian --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Five parks.

KAREN BREWSTER: Is there a Canadian Klondike Historical Park?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, there's, um, on the Canadian side, they actually call themselves Klondike Gold Rush International Historical Park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, they do?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And it includes Dawson. Um, it includes -- I'm going to say it wrong, Twenty-Mile? Five-Mile? Ten-Mile? One of those sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't know.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I can look it up. But -- you can look it up. But there's -- there's like five sites. There's Seattle, Skagway, and three Canadian parks that make up Klondike --

[02:20:46]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, I know that part of the Chilkoot Trail goes through the Canadian side of it.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: I don't know if that's officially in a Canadian national park?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's part of the system, but it's not -- it's managed by Skagway.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. And then there's the White Pass Unit, but that's Skagway -- that's from Skagway.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, so there's three parks in -- three separate parks in Canada that are Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: That make up that international component?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then our two sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Seattle and Skagway, and the components within Sea -- Skagway.

[02:21:21]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, Wrangell National Par -- Wrangell-St. Elias, I think, also now has an international component.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they don't call themselves an international park.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, it's just this side of the coast, 'cause the East coast, you're international -- it's big.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's a big deal. And it's because you're no longer just the United States.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You're now --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right, that's the whole idea of getting --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Part of the world.

KAREN BREWSTER: Is that idea of getting that designation is to bring everybody together.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So that -- I would've liked in my tenure to see them actually recognize that -- the importance of it. That -- How do I say it? For example, if you start out as a national monument --

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You dream of someday getting a national park status.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because national monument can be managed by whomever owns the land at the time. So like, Mount Saint Helens is a national monument. It's not part of the National Park Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because it's owned -- it's managed by the Forest Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: At the time that it became a national monument, it was Forest Service. So it's still Forest Service.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Ok. So they form Mount Saint Helens, and they want to change how the management of things are done, um, like stop clear-cutting, for example, then I want national park status. So I want to go from national monument to national park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, or national historical site or national -- or historical park, one of those statuses.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Where you're under the umbrella of National Park Service. [02:23:04]But then you want -- so then you want to go from -- actually, Acadia is a good example. Acadia was Saint -- was Sieur de Monts National Monument in 1916 when it was established. It was a national monument. In 1919, it became Lafayette National Park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it went up. Ok? Um, then it acquired management of St. Croix Island. Well, St. Croix Island went from a historic -- I think just a historic site, I don't think it was a monument. But it went from a historic site to an international site, so we're collaborating now with Canada to manage that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: That site and the collections in that site and all that. So you're moving up. You start as a national monument, suddenly you're an international site.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You've moved up. And it's recognizing that, that you've moved up. You're no longer a single site, you know, an island to yourself. You're now collaborating with partners across boundaries that man has drawn.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And we're saying, those boundaries don't exist.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, and --

BROOKE CHILDREY: This is a story bigger than our man -- our created boundaries.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I was going to say, if you -- an international park implies you are of a more global importance of a story.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right. Those little lines, it's sort of like the animals.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: They don't know that there's a line drawn there. So the lines disappear.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so. [02:24:42]Um, and I think that we need to focus on that international relationship, because there's a lot to tell. I mean, it was only three years.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But it's a huge story.

KAREN BREWSTER: It is.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

KAREN BREWSTER: And there must have been Canadian stampeders.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Oh, sure.

KAREN BREWSTER: You know, but we don't hear about them. All of ours are, you know, they came from Seattle to Skagway and up. You know, what about the people who came in from Canada? Did people come all the way across Canada to go to Dawson?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, the Natives.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, I know, but I mean, were there gold rush stampeders --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, that came through Canada? Probably, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Yeah. But there you go. You could tell that story. We don't know -- as Americans, we don't know that story. Maybe they tell that story in Dawson. I can't remember.

[02:25:30]BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, I know that Dawson had a lot of Americans in it, so --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But it is a global story.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I mean, what happened to Seattle -- it went from a depressed area to it's now huge.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hub, yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's, yeah. It's a huge hub. Um, sort of happened in Skagway and Dawson and -- where it was big for a few years, and then it dwindled.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Because gold was found other places. Or ran out. But the effects of it, like Seattle, are still going on.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, whether it's -- it's the Europeans, white man, or the Natives. The effects of the Klondike Gold Rush are still happening.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Well, and it's interesting --

[02:26:34]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, and the money's still around. I mean, in Seattle, we -- that's one of the exhibits that we did was, where's the Klondike Gold Rush now? In Seattle, where is it? Where are all these businesses that were created in the gold rush? Where are they now?

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And you're looking at Nordstrom's. Still exists.

KAREN BREWSTER: And that was --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Filson's. Still exists.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they were outfitters?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. Or they were stampedeers.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And they came back and started a business. There's a funeral home, actually. I remember that because that's the angle that the exhibit class took was, hey, there's a funeral home that still exists from the Klondike Gold Rush era.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's funny.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um.

[02:27:20]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and it is interesting, you say that Seattle benefitted from the gold coming back and developed into a big city, whereas Skagway and Dyea, Dyea especially, died out, as soon as the --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- White Pass, the train route, was put in. You know, Skagway didn't become a huge metropolis.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Hm-um.

KAREN BREWSTER: And it would be interesting why. But maybe Seattle was already on its way that way?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, I think Seattle was on its way that way, which is why they were able to capitalize on the opportunity, but Skagway is capitalizing on the tourism.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Yep, it's their second gold rush.

[02:28:06]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. Yeah. So everybody does something different. That was one of the things that, I was just talking to somebody is, there's nobody in this area that's capitalizing on the fact that they live and work at the base of a national park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But I came from a park that's surrounded by businesses that capitalized on the fact that they're next to a national park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it's totally opposite.

[02:28:37]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. So Eatonville is the closest town to Rainier?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, you have to go through Eatonville to get to Mount Rainier if you're coming from this direction.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So there's Eatonville, there's Ashford, um, is the clos -- it's right at the base. Packwood's right at the base. Um, but Morton's -- you have to go through Morton to get to

Packwood, or to Ashford. Where you go on the other side, you have to go through Enumclaw and you have to go through Greenwater to get to --

KAREN BREWSTER: And they haven't capitalized like at Acadia?

BROOKE CHILDREY: None of them have capitalized on it, which is totally foreign to me.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, but they haven't. You cannot find a Mount Rainier souvenir without getting on top of Mount Rainier.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You might find something like the Space Needle, but --

[02:29:29]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, like you say, everybody's different, that's their thing. Um, well, were there any other things that you had in mind to talk about when I approached you with this idea of doing an interview?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, not really. I did go through the collections to see what the collections were.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: What stood out. So like, the Hielscher, we talked about. Fourteen years being -- he was at the gold rush, worked for George Carmack, but then spent the majority of his time building up stores.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To move. Make it easier to do your transporting of dog food. And then collected -- wrote his own story and collected the stories of stampedeers.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[02:30:24]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, the gold scales. We have a lot of gold scales. Um, we have George Carmack's, we have the Seattle Assay Office, and then we have um, assay tools, crucibles and molds and tongs, that sort of thing. Um, that all have to do with what happened to the gold after they dug it out of the ground.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:30:46]BROOKE CHILDREY: One of the interesting collections that we have is a patent and the accompanying sleeping bag that was created by Sarah Winters, a woman.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So they were created for the Klondike Gold Rush, and we have the sleeping bag that she created and the patent that goes with it.

KAREN BREWSTER: The patent or the pattern?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Patent.

KAREN BREWSTER: The patent. 'Cause she registered it?

BROOKE CHILDREY: She registered, right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. I thought you said patent, and then I wasn't sure.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, patent. [02:31:18]Um so we have logbooks and diaries. So like the steamship Willamette, Robert Moran's voyage from Seattle to St. Michael's. Will Wooten and Samuel Goodwin's diaries. We have a collection, a photographic collection by Joe Williamson, which I'd never heard of, but apparently, he was taking photographs of the Klondike Gold Rush, which is cool. We have access to, and I just digitized -- one of the collaborations as curator of Mount Rainier and Klondike have been able to collaborate, so my volunteer who's digitizing Mount Rainier's collection is also digitizing Klondike's collection for us. And we have, um, Kinsey Photo Studios, who are up in Skagway, um, their grandson is -- lives in Seattle, so he loaned us the Kinsey photographs, and we've just digitized those.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So there's a lot of pictures of Ron as a boy, but so -- but, we digitized that, and then there's a new collection, and Tarin would know what it is. It just came in at the end of last summer, and we had it digitized. I think it's called Atwood, and it's got some great photographs in it. [02:32:52]So and then we have rare books and newspapers. We have dogsleds, gold jewelry, children's toys.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: From the Klondike Gold Rush.

KAREN BREWSTER: Huh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Did you ever hear of the Klondike babies?

KAREN BREWSTER: No.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Charles Ingalls' family, first white babies. I hate to use the word white.

KAREN BREWSTER: Non-Native?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Non-Native babies born in the Klondike are the Ingalls children.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And these are their toys that were either created for them or purchas -- well, they're all created.

[02:33:35]KAREN BREWSTER: Now was that somebody that he was like a storekeeper in Skagway, or he was on the trail and took his family with him?

BROOKE CHILDREY: He was a prospector, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And he took his family with him?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Took his family with him, yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Holy cow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we have they're -- they're not toys that you would think of, but they are toys that the Natives were using, so they're fishing lures and they're um -- I'm gonna -- it's like a kayak, but it's not a kayak. Um --

KAREN BREWSTER: A boat of some kind?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep, that the kids were playing with, and all kinds of toys that --

KAREN BREWSTER: Like hand-carved out of wood and things like that?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep. Yeah. Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So those are kind of fun.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, 'cause you don't think about families.

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, you don't. Not on the Klondike.

KAREN BREWSTER: Being out on the Klondike.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So, and we had the newspaper clippings, and articles and stuff that the family brought with the toys. [02:34:30]The Alaska Yukon Pioneer Exposition, the world's fair, was held in Seattle in 1910, so we have a lot of memorabilia from that. Um, and I already told you that we have Nordstorm/Filson.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Bartell Drugs. Those are all Klondike gold -- or um, businesses. So they either were founded by the gold, or they outfitted to go to the gold. [02:34:59]And then we have a collection, um, that is documents, photographs, some objects, of pioneers. So there's Alaska Yukon Pioneers, the Ladies of the Golden North.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: The Yukoners. The Sourdoughers. We have a collection that we received from them. They disbanded in like -- they were individual organizations, and then they banded together as one organization, then they split up again. And in the end, I think 2008, I think, was the last time they ever met.

KAREN BREWSTER: Well, we -- in Alaska, we still have a Pioneers of Alaska organization.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: And they -- they -- their separate chapters call themselves igloos.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yep.

KAREN BREWSTER: Igloo No. 4, Igloo No. 8.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think they call 'em cabins down here.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But I -- the ones in the Seattle area are no longer --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, I see. Ok. There was a chap -- a group or a cabin --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Igloo, or whatever, in Seattle?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, I see. Ok.

[02:36:11]BROOKE CHILDREY: So the -- the early collection, early part of their collection, from right after the Gold Rush when they first formed, that part of the collection is really good. But the later years, if you were -- lived in Alaska at one point in time, you could be a member.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it's been watered down a lot, which is why I think they finally disband.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[02:36:38]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, and then the archives. And they have -- the archives is the biggest part of their collection. So they have newspapers, whole newspapers, mine stock certificates.

KAREN BREWSTER: Like claim papers?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Mining claims and indentureships.

KAREN BREWSTER: Hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, like I say, diaries, journals, ledgers, and a whole bunch of receipts. So you get receipts for underwear. You got receipts for dogs. You got receipts for dry goods. And it's a lot -- there's a lot of 'em.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, but that's how you could tell how much it would cost somebody to outfit --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Exactly.

KAREN BREWSTER: And do this trip?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Exactly.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, cool.

[02:37:30]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So um, so it's -- it's a rich collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's not a big collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: No, well, I'm glad you did that summary.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But it is rich.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's very helpful to hear that --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- the different types of material and the different collections.

[02:37:45]BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. And then there's -- there's, like I say, Tarin was, a couple months ago, somebody called her up from Des Moines. And I'm thinking -- she said, I drove to Des Moines, and I'm thinking Iowa. You drove out to Iowa?

KAREN BREWSTER: There's a Des Moines right near here.

BROOKE CHILDREY: There's a Des Moines here. But that's what we -- we just get a call from somebody saying, "Hey, I was going through my aunt's attic after she passed away, and she's got all this stuff. Do you guys want it?"

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. That's often how museums and archives acquire things.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's -- yeah. And honestly, it's -- it's great that people are thinking about donating it instead of selling it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[02:38:33]BROOKE CHILDREY: There was a time period where everybody was selling everything on eBay, and you weren't seeing anything coming in.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Well, that's why I asked whether you guys acquired things through eBay because I know some institutions have done that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Park Service doesn't really have a budget to do that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Occasionally, like, um, like we were doing an exhibit on the 1935 Winter Olympic ski trials, and we had programs, and we had photographs, but we had no objects. So visitors are ok with two-dimensional exhibit, but it's not as well-received as if you can put objects in there.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we searched eBay and found, like, the pins that they handed out to participants were for sale.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So we bought those. But they didn't become part of the collection.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, it didn't?

BROOKE CHILDREY: They're just exhibit props.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, if they're -- I think these were reproductions, which is why. If they're period pieces, then they're treated like artifacts.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But if they're reproductions, then they're props.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, that's interesting.

[02:39:46]BROOKE CHILDREY: So we will -- if we have exhibit money, we'll -- we'll purchase items. Occasionally, somebody will call us and want to sell us their collection, and I'm going to tell you, nine out of ten times, we can't do it. We don't have the money. We can't get it readily.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But there are occasions. When I was at Boston, part of World War II, documenting World War II was a bunch of people who painted the scenes at the shipyards, and that sort of thing. So there were three paintings documenting the Boston Naval Shipyard during

World War II, building the ships and outfitting the ships and getting them ready to go, and we were able to talk the person into waiting until the Park Service could get the money, and so we were able to acquire those paintings.

[02:40:49]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. That's the downside of the Park Service, is the bureaucracy. You can't just act right away.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, our money is only one year, and it's usually already programmed for or completely spent before we even get it.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so if we want to do something like that, you have to know in advance that this is coming up.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

[02:41:11]BROOKE CHILDREY: And what I do, like, if I know that there's a collection coming up, I'll put it in the budget and request in advance. And then it's all based on, ok, well, what's more important. Is getting this item more important than, you know, stocking toilet paper in the bathroom? So you're competing with things that have nothing to do, you know, apples and oranges, and we don't go to the budget table, so they just see --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You want a painting, and you want toilet paper. So um, and it's up to -- that's why it's important that Klondike having the superintendents there understand the importance of the collection, the apples and oranges can compete better.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Whereas at Mount Rainier, if I wanted a painting and they needed toilet paper, it's going to be toilet paper that's going to outcompete the painting.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so it just -- it -- if the funding's there, we get it. [02:42:16]Some parks will do year-end funding.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So you take -- our budgets go from October 1 to September 30, and year-end funding starts in July. So some parks will take all the funds that haven't been expended by a certain date, pull it all back into the general pool, and then -- and that's what happened --

KAREN BREWSTER: And reallocate it.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, so that's what happened at Boston is, they put in all that money back together. We needed \$30,000 for those paintings. So we had -- at that time, we had requisition forms. So we had the requisition forms already done. We had documentation on the paintings that told the history of them and explained why they were important. We had an exhibit plan, so we had all of our ducks in a row when we went into that end-of-year funding meeting.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And that's why we were able to get the money. Because they had -- they did it that way.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:43:26]BROOKE CHILDREY: I've worked at several parks where there isn't end-of-year money. It's, we know what our priorities are. We know that we're x number of thousands of dollars in the hole, so all the money goes to cover that hole.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, or we know that we're gonna need an influx of toilet paper, so we do that. It's -- it's just different management styles.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I personally like the end-of-year.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: 'Cause then you can -- you know, if they didn't spend it in the first --

KAREN BREWSTER: Nine months.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- ten, eleven months, then that brings it back.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Instead of them spending it.

KAREN BREWSTER: And then other people can benefit from it?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

[02:44:19]KAREN BREWSTER: But also, you say different management styles, it also may be, parks with different, you know, missions. You know, if you're a high-visitor use park, you maybe have to make sure you spend your money on visitor services more than you have to do on preserving insects.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: You know, and so that you're fighting that -- that tide as well.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. Right. And there's always the, what is the goals, the objectives, for the year?

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And where does what you need fit into those?

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And for some, it -- it works. And for some others, it doesn't.

KAREN BREWSTER: And if it doesn't work one year, you try again the next year?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Every year. Every year. So I mean, it's -- it's not that it's falling on deaf ears because everybody hears what you're requesting, and if you don't get it with the base funding or the end-of-year funding, um, there's other funding out there, and if somebody hears about it, and they'll -- they'll call you and say, "Hey, we just heard about this funding."

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You know, for -- it'd be perfect for what you need to do. And that's how we got the oil painting at Mount Rainier fixed because funding came from a different source.

[02:45:47]KAREN BREWSTER: And then, like, that end-of-year money, or the reallocation, who makes those decisions? The superintendent?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's a group of people.

KAREN BREWSTER: It's a group of people? In the park?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: They -- ok. So it's by committee, kinda?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So.

[02:46:03]KAREN BREWSTER: Um, you were talking about digitizing some of these photos. When you do that, is that then -- do they get put on a public website, so people can search the collections themselves?

BROOKE CHILDREY: That's the end goal. We're not there yet.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So I -- I think I just gave Tarin, yeah, she was just able to -- because we have a limit as to how much we can send electronically.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And one photograph --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- is beyond the limit already. Um, so um, we had to figure out how to get it to her without me having to drive it up there.

KAREN BREWSTER: SendThisFile or Dropbox? Can't you guys -- don't you have an FTP site?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, we have an FTP site.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, but I also have direct --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Drive.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it took days, but we were able to get it onto the right drive, and then she was able to upload it there at the park.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Because they're high-resolution images.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah, they're anywhere from 25 MB to 90 MB, I think.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

[02:47:14]BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, so the end goal is that they be usable. For the Kinsey photographs, that is the agreement. We don't own the photographs, but we have written agreement to share them with the University of Washington, Washington State Historical Society. Um, we can share them with Skagway, Dawson, all the Canadian parks, but they -- Seattle is also tasked with putting them up someplace where the public can see them, too.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, because like, University of Washington, University of Alaska, you know, we have all these digital archives.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: So you can just -- you can be in Boise, Idaho, searching for gold rush pictures at your computer, and so I didn't know if -- Seattle Unit doesn't have that yet?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, 'cause we've used -- we've had either "Other duty as assigned" person or a curator who isn't there working on this collection. Um, and it's the same with all the Park Service sites. We have one curator for two or three sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think there's one curator who's got seven sites that she's responsible for.

[02:48:27]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and even in Skagway, I don't think their collections are on a public site.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. You're only -- you're only -- they only have one person.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So.

KAREN BREWSTER: So I don't think most parks, I don't think, have their materials on digital archives websites, like, the way university libraries --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah.

KAREN BREWSTER: Or they don't have all of their material -- or Library of Congress or whomever.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: They don't have all their stuff, but they at least have a place you can look at some things. But the Park Service doesn't do that.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We don't have the staff, and honestly, we don't have the funding for it. You have to pay for those sites.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

[02:49:01]BROOKE CHILDREY: So we don't have the funding. Plus, there's -- there's I/T issues.

KAREN BREWSTER: The security issues?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Security issues, yeah. So.

[02:49:09]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, I always wondered why the Park Service doesn't have those kinds of sites.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It's primarily lack of staffing, is what it is. But the -- the goal is there. Um, the desire is there. It's just getting to that point. That's why I have Dwight, and he's scanning. So we have 70,000 photographs of Mount Rainier.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's -- wow.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And he's scanned --

KAREN BREWSTER: 200?

BROOKE CHILDREY: No. He's actually up to two years now, so 8000, I think?

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, that's a lot.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So he's doing about 3000-4000 a year.

KAREN BREWSTER: Wow, good for him.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Last year, he did about 4000 from Mount Rainier, and then he also did Klondike.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So he did the Atwood Collection at Klondike, and he did the Kinsey photographs, which are privately owned.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But they were put in the public domain for the purposes of providing them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Great.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So those will be available. [02:50:12]Um, and I know Tarin's big on social media, so she will get the high-resolution ones up and going as soon as she can.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So. Takes time.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. And so, yeah. [02:50:27]So if somebody wants to use the collection at Klondike Seattle, they have to physically go to headquarters and do research in the collection?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Yes and no. If you know specifically what you're looking for, um, and we have the time and resources to look for it, then we'll do that. If you're in the Seattle area, we may tell you you need to come in and do it, make an appointment and do it. But if you're not in the Seattle area, generally, we'll do it.

KAREN BREWSTER: But like, your finding aids and -- none of it's online, available. It's all --

BROOKE CHILDREY: No, but we can send it to people.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah, it's all PDF's you could send or something? Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY

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BROOKE CHILDREY: Yeah. So if somebody calls me, I will send them the finding aid.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: If that's what they're looking for, or I will suggest photographs.

[02:51:21]KAREN BREWSTER: Do you ever do collections research for -- if there's a researcher, let's say, you know, doing a book on the women, and they -- and say, oh, I want to know what you have in your collections, would you guys do that for a researcher, or you'd say you have to come and do it yourself?

BROOKE CHILDREY: It depends on the extent. If they just want to know what books we have on women in the Klondike?

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Then yeah, we can tell 'em what books we have. If they want to know what's inside those books, they're gonna have to either come themselves or hire somebody.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We just don't have the -- the staffing levels to do that.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: We have more staff than we did when I started, but it's still -- the levels aren't enough --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Given the responsibilities we have.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But the workload. [02:52:09]But it -- there are -- the collections are open to the public. We welcome the public. But it's legitimate research, not just come and see what's in our attic, type stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right. Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So, and we do give, um -- I was going to say, like, Washington National Park Fund is a big friends organization that raises money for the national parks in this area, and they will do membership work groups. So at one point, they did a work group where they came and helped out in the collections at Mount Rainier, um, and as part of that, we gave them a tour of the collections area so they could see what a collections --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- storage facility looks like.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, well, an example of one, sort of.

[02:53:12]KAREN BREWSTER: Well, and that's like -- there's National Museum Day and things like that, that museums will open the back rooms --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: -- for people to come tour, you know, escorted in a tour setting.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. We do that with school groups.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: The education coordinator at Klondike will work with curation and the school groups to get 'em exposure to curatorial work. Out here, the school actually contacts me directly to set up a day where --

KAREN BREWSTER: Cool.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- the sixth, seventh, and eighth graders come through. So every three years, I get all three -- three age groups coming in.

KAREN BREWSTER: That must be fun.

BROOKE CHILDREY: It is. It's a challenge, though, because the teachers are on the ball, so they're teaching things. So for example, they said, "Well, we're going to do natural history." So they have a theme.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: One year it was natural history. Well, they'd already taught 'em how to mount specimens. You know, plant specimens.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: So it was like, ok, well what's the hands-on that we're going to do? Because that would be the easiest --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- natural history one for us to do. Um, so we're always having to come up with something that they have not already taught.

[02:54:29]KAREN BREWSTER: And the idea is that it's a hands-on? It's not just showing them, hey, this is this cool --

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right.

KAREN BREWSTER: You know, gold pick that somebody used.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Right. So we work -- we do, um, we split the kids up because there's so many of them.

KAREN BREWSTER: Um-hm.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And so one will learn what the curator does. One group will go to that spot, learn what it is we do, learn a little history about the park and the Park Service. And then another group is actually taking tours, going through the collection. We're showing specific things that are relevant to the theme the teacher's trying to teach. I think the last one was cultural resources. Um, so we did a lot of cultural -- showing them archives and three-dimensional objects, not so much the natural history stuff.

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: And then the last group is a hands-on, that they --

KAREN BREWSTER: Like, build an acid-free box?

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, yeah. Something like that. Which is a good one. So it's making it - - going around. I think we did for the hands-on was -- exhibits, um, making, um, fake document reproductions --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- to go on exhibit so that you didn't damage your --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- your original.

KAREN BREWSTER: That's cool. You could also make a mount for something. That might be too technical, I don't know.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Well, it involves knives --

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, yeah. That's true.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You're talking sixth to eighth grade, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. No, no, no, that's true.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I mean, they -- they'll listen to you, and they'll do what you say, but there's a lot of them, and very few chaperones, so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But it's a lot of fun.

(Dog noises in the background)

[02:56:21]KAREN BREWSTER: And did Klondike do that kind of a program, too? You said they bring the kids in.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Um, I don't think we have. I think we've, um, it's more we come -- they learn about the history of Klondike, and um -- so they use the collections to make reproduction props and stuff for the teachers' kits.

KAREN BREWSTER: Oh, ok.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I think the curator or um, one of my volunteers or interns, may have talked to the groups.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: But not an actual, what does a curator do --

KAREN BREWSTER: Right.

BROOKE CHILDREY: -- type thing. Keith may have done something in his time period. It's hard when you're --

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah.

BROOKE CHILDREY: Two hours away.

KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. You're only there part time.

BROOKE CHILDREY: To accommodate it, yeah.

[02:57:11]KAREN BREWSTER: Yeah. Ok. Well, your dogs are telling us, I think, that it's time to stop, unless you have something else that you thought you wanted to talk about.

BROOKE CHILDREY: I don't think so.

KAREN BREWSTER: Ok. Well, let the dogs out. Who let the dogs out? Well, thank you, Brooke.

BROOKE CHILDREY: You're welcome.